



education sciences

Understanding School Success of Migrant Students An International Perspective

Edited by

Elena Makarova and Wassilis Kassis

Printed Edition of the Special Issue Published in *Education Sciences*

Understanding School Success of Migrant Students: An International Perspective

Understanding School Success of Migrant Students: An International Perspective

Editors

Elena Makarova

Wassilis Kassis

MDPI • Basel • Beijing • Wuhan • Barcelona • Belgrade • Manchester • Tokyo • Cluj • Tianjin



Editors

Elena Makarova
University of Basel
Switzerland

Wassilis Kassis
University of Applied Sciences
and Arts Northwestern
Switzerland
Switzerland

Editorial Office

MDPI
St. Alban-Anlage 66
4052 Basel, Switzerland

This is a reprint of articles from the Special Issue published online in the open access journal *Education Sciences* (ISSN 2227-7102) (available at: https://www.mdpi.com/journal/education/special_issues/School.Success.Students).

For citation purposes, cite each article independently as indicated on the article page online and as indicated below:

LastName, A.A.; LastName, B.B.; LastName, C.C. Article Title. <i>Journal Name</i> Year , <i>Volume Number</i> , Page Range.
--

ISBN 978-3-0365-3100-7 (Hbk)

ISBN 978-3-0365-3101-4 (PDF)

© 2021 by the authors. Articles in this book are Open Access and distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license, which allows users to download, copy and build upon published articles, as long as the author and publisher are properly credited, which ensures maximum dissemination and a wider impact of our publications.

The book as a whole is distributed by MDPI under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons license CC BY-NC-ND.

Contents

About the Editors	vii
Elena Makarova and Wassilis Kassis Understanding School Success of Migrant Students: An International Perspective Reprinted from: <i>Educ. Sci.</i> 2022 , <i>12</i> , 69, doi:10.3390/educsci12020069	1
Zuzanna M. Preusche and Kerstin Göbel Does a Strong Bicultural Identity Matter for Emotional, Cognitive, and Behavioral Engagement? Reprinted from: <i>Educ. Sci.</i> 2021 , <i>12</i> , 5, doi:10.3390/educsci12010005	5
Nanine Lilla, Sebastian Thürer, Wim Nieuwenboom and Marianne Schüpbach Exploring Academic Self-Concepts Depending on Acculturation Profile. Investigation of a Possible Factor for Immigrant Students' School Success Reprinted from: <i>Educ. Sci.</i> 2021 , <i>11</i> , 432, doi:10.3390/educsci11080432	23
Chulpan Gromova, Rezeda Khairutdinova, Dina Birman and Aydar Kalimullin Educational Practices for Immigrant Children in Elementary Schools in Russia Reprinted from: <i>Educ. Sci.</i> 2021 , <i>11</i> , 325, doi:10.3390/educsci11070325	39
Christos Govaris, Wassilis Kassis, Dimitris Sakatzis, Jasmin-Olga Sarafidou and Raia Chouvati Recognitive Justice and Educational Inequalities: An Intersectional Approach Involving Secondary Grade School Students in Greece Reprinted from: <i>Educ. Sci.</i> 2021 , <i>11</i> , 461, doi:10.3390/educsci11090461	53
Albert Dueggeli, Maria Kassis and Wassilis Kassis Navigation and Negotiation towards School Success at Upper Secondary School: The Interplay of Structural and Procedural Risk and Protective Factors for Resilience Pathways Reprinted from: <i>Educ. Sci.</i> 2021 , <i>11</i> , 395, doi:10.3390/educsci11080395	75

About the Editors

Elena Makarova (Prof. Dr.) is a Full Professor of Educational Sciences and the Director of the Institute for Educational Sciences at the University of Basel, Switzerland. She studied educational sciences at the National Pedagogical University of Kiev, Ukraine, and at the University of Bern, Switzerland, where she received her PhD and her Venia Docendi. Her main research interests are acculturation and adjustment of minority youth, school dropout, value transmission in the family and school context, and gender and career choice.

Wassilis Kassis (Prof. Dr.) is a Full Professor for Educational Psychology at the School of Education, University of Applied Sciences of Northwestern Switzerland. He studied educational sciences and completed his PhD and at the University of Zurich. He received his Venia Docendi at the University of Basel and University of Zurich, Switzerland. His major research interests include academic and social resilience processes and outcomes of adolescent students.

Editorial

Understanding School Success of Migrant Students: An International Perspective

Elena Makarova ^{1,*} and Wassilis Kassis ^{2,*}

¹ Institute for Educational Sciences, University of Basel, 4132 Muttenz, Switzerland

² Institute for Research & Development, School of Education, University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland, 5210 Windisch, Switzerland

* Correspondence: elena.makarova@unibas.ch (E.M.); wassilis.kassis@fhnw.ch (W.K.)

Despite existing educational inequalities, the literature provides hardly any empirically validated insights into the school success pathways of migrants.

One of the main challenges migrant students experience while adjusting to the mainstream culture of the country they have moved to is acculturation. The term acculturation refers to behavioral and attitudinal changes among individuals of different cultural heritage, that occur under conditions of direct and continuous intercultural contact. The most common conceptualization of acculturation is bi-dimensional and suggests that it is possible to maintain or avoid the culture of the host society and simultaneously retain or lose one's culture of origin [1]. The most recent research on acculturation, in the context of school, stresses the necessity to understand and to assess acculturation as a reciprocal process among native and migrant youths, where the school itself functions as an agent of acculturation [2]. The outcomes of acculturation in the school context can be measured in terms of students' sociocultural and psychological adjustment. There is empirical evidence that adjustment to the new teaching and learning environment, as well as to the new academic culture, is a highly challenging process for migrant students [3,4] and that its success depends on resources which serve as protective factors [5,6]. It is therefore important to consider the risk and resource factors that can affect the process of acculturation and its outcomes, when discussing the academic success or failure of migrant students.

Deliberation about how to address the specific risk and resource factors for school success in students' lives often starts a conversation about resilience, but is still rare. We endorse Masten's [7] definition of resilience, as follows: "The capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten system function, viability, or development" (p. 10). Related to this, the OECD [8] pointed out that migrant students' school success should become one of the central pillars of educational policies internationally. However, the stability of school resilience in the developmental pathways of migrant students under various risk factors is almost entirely unknown.

Therefore, the aim of this book is to empirically identify the school success pathways of migrants for policy actions in schools and communities, in order to tackle barriers to migrant students' school success. These resilience pathways highlight differences in individual and social risks and identify protective factors for young migrants, to help them overcome obstacles linked to discrimination and low educational outcomes. It presents international empirical research comparing and explaining school success factors for migrant students in various countries, namely Germany, Greece, Russia, and Switzerland.

Zuzanna M. Preusche and Kerstin Göbel analyzed the role that minority students' (bi-) cultural identity plays in successful school adjustment. Their study used survey data from 457 seventh-grade students in North-Rhine Westphalian schools who, according to their self-identification, belong to at least one culture in addition to the German one. The findings of the study highlight that minority students who develop a strong bicultural identity are more likely to successfully adjust to their school culture, as they indicate significantly

Citation: Makarova, E.; Kassis, W. Understanding School Success of Migrant Students: An International Perspective. *Educ. Sci.* **2022**, *12*, 69. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12020069>

Received: 14 January 2022

Accepted: 17 January 2022

Published: 20 January 2022

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2022 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

higher emotional, cognitive, and behavioral school engagement than their peers with a weaker bicultural identity, even when gender, socioeconomic status (SES), and cultural capital are controlled for.

Nanine Lilla, Sebastian Thürer, Wim Nieuwenboom and Marianne Schüpbach empirically investigated the meaning of students' acculturation orientations for their academic self-concept. Based on data from the German National Educational Panel Study (NEPS), comparing outcomes among migrant and non-migrant students, the acculturation profiles of students were related to students' general and domain-specific academic self-concept. This study suggests that migrant students' academic self-concept is influenced by their acculturation orientations and that this relation can serve as a protective factor and a source of resilience for migrant students.

Chulpan Gromova, Rezeda Khairutdinova, Dina Birman and Aydar Kalimullin present the results of a qualitative study, conducted in multicultural schools in the Republic of Tatarstan (Russia). Based on interview data collected among elementary school teachers who work with migrant children, this study focused on teachers' educational practices aimed at facilitating the school adjustment of migrant children. The results of the study show how teachers adapt their pedagogical practices in order to foster the psychological adjustment of migrant students. The study suggests that teachers' adaptive teaching and communication strategies could serve as resource factors for the successful school adjustment of migrant students, especially when institutionalized support is lacking.

Christos Govaaris, Wassilis Kassis, Dimitris Sakatzis, Jasmin-Olga Sarafidou and Raia Chouvati adopt the theoretical approach of recognitive justice and the degree of students' recognitive experiences, with regard to empathy, respect, and social esteem, focused on educational inequalities in the multicultural school and the factors that affect their appearance and reproduction in a sample of secondary school students in Greece. By applying an intersectional approach, the authors were able to identify that migrant students, and students from families with a low level of education, experienced a significantly lower degree of recognition. Additionally, differing levels of recognition among teachers explained a large amount of the variability in academic achievement and self-esteem.

Albert Dueggeli, Maria Kassis and Wassilis Kassis analyzed the school success of young male migrants in Switzerland, particularly those who are at a higher risk of not completing upper secondary education and do not have the same opportunities to put their educational resources to use in existing educational contexts. By applying the resilience concept of navigation and negotiation as proposed by Ungar [9], the results show, firstly, that inter-individual processes of navigation and negotiation differ depending on the specific people involved and their objectives. Secondly, different forms of the development of navigation and negotiation are seen within a single individual. Thirdly, the importance of institutional flexibility becomes apparent when adolescents experience successful processes of navigation or negotiation.

Overall, the studies published in this book demonstrate that the school resilience of migrant students can be manifested in different ways, related to the dynamics of the acculturation process, gender, socioeconomic status, and individual differences. Because of this complex conceptual framework, it is important to take international comparisons into account, when including students' responses about processes towards school success and educational outcomes. Moreover, it became clear when analysing the data on migrant students' school success that we need to address the interplay of structural and procedural risk and protective factors, for a better understanding of resilience pathways. School resilience is better understood if protective and risk factors are modelled not only on individual factors, but also on contextual factors, such as those at the family and class, or school levels. If we continue to structure our analysis of migrant students' protective and risk factors only in terms of individual traits and characteristics, we also continue to run the risk of victim blaming, that is, turning back to the individual migrant student as the sole source of explanation for why resilience is not achieved.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

1. Berry, J.W. Conceptual approaches to acculturation. In *Acculturation: Advances in Theory, Measurement, and Applied Research*; Chun, M.K., Organista, P.B., Marin, G., Eds.; APA: Washington, DC, USA, 2003; pp. 17–38.
2. Sidler, P.; Kassis, W.; Makarova, E.; Janouscha, C. Assessing attitudes towards mutual acculturation in multicultural schools: Conceptualisation and validation of a four-dimensional mutual acculturation attitudes scale. *Int. J. Intercult. Relat.* **2021**, *84*, 300–314. [[CrossRef](#)]
3. Makarova, E.; Birman, D. Cultural transition and academic achievement of students from ethnic minority backgrounds: A content analysis of empirical research on acculturation. *Educ. Res.* **2015**, *57*, 305–330. [[CrossRef](#)]
4. Makarova, E.; Birman, D. Minority students' psychological adjustment in the school context: An integrative review of qualitative research on acculturation. *Intercult. Educ.* **2016**, *27*, 1–21. [[CrossRef](#)]
5. Makarova, E.; 't Gilde, J.; Birman, D. Teachers as risk and resource factors in minority students' school adjustment: An integrative review of qualitative research on acculturation. In *Acculturation and School Adjustment of Minority Students School and Family-Related Factors*, 1st ed.; Makarova, E., Ed.; Routledge: Abingdon, VA, USA, 2020; pp. 4–33.
6. Makarova, E.; Döring, A.K.; Auer, P.; 't Gilde, J.; Birman, D. School adjustment of ethnic minority youth: A qualitative and quantitative research synthesis of family-related risk and resource factors. *Educ. Rev.* **2021**. [[CrossRef](#)]
7. Masten, A.S. *Ordinary Magic: Resilience in Development*; Guilford Press: New York, NY, USA, 2014.
8. OECD. *The Resilience of Students with an Immigrant Background: Factors That Shape Well-Being*; OECD Publishing: Parice, France, 2018.
9. Ungar, M. Pathways to resilience among children in Child Welfare, Corrections, Mental Health and Educational settings: Navigation and Negotiation. *Child Youth Care Forum* **2005**, *34*, 423–444. [[CrossRef](#)]

Article

Does a Strong Bicultural Identity Matter for Emotional, Cognitive, and Behavioral Engagement?

Zuzanna M. Preusche* and Kerstin Göbel

Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Duisburg-Essen, 45141 Essen, Germany; kerstin.goebel@uni-due.de

* Correspondence: zuzanna.preusche@uni-due.de

Abstract: In the course of their acculturation process, minority students need to negotiate the adaption to the host society's culture and the maintenance of the culture of their country of origin. This identity construction is complex and may encompass contradicting and competing goals. The adjustment to school is seen as a relevant acculturation marker. An increasingly prominent multidimensional construct is students' school engagement because it can provide an insight into the way students feel and interact with the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral domains of school. Successful adjustment to school culture, and acculturation in general, can be closely related to school engagement. There is yet no common knowledge about the role bicultural national and/or ethnic identity plays for the three dimensions of school engagement. The present study focusses on minority students in Germany who report a strong bicultural identity (in comparison with single stronger ethnic or national identities, as well as weaker bicultural identification) to explain students' emotional, cognitive, and behavioral school engagement when controlling for gender, SES, and cultural capital. Data is derived from paper-pencil questionnaires administered in secondary schools in Germany. Regression analyses show that students with a stronger bicultural identity have a significantly higher emotional, cognitive, and behavioral school engagement than their peers with a weaker bicultural identity, when controlling for gender, SES, and cultural capital. The results hint at the relevance of fostering students' ethnic, but also their national, cultural identity to support their school engagement. Implications for teacher education are discussed.

Citation: Preusche, Z.M.; Göbel, K. Does a Strong Bicultural Identity Matter for Emotional, Cognitive, and Behavioral Engagement?. *Educ. Sci.* **2022**, *12*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12010005>

Academic Editor: Orhan Agirdag

Received: 30 September 2021

Accepted: 14 December 2021

Published: 22 December 2021

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2021 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Keywords: ethnic identity; national identity; acculturation; school engagement; minority youth; bicultural identity

1. Introduction

Due to several waves of historic migration, but also because of relatively recent developments in the possibility of global contact through travel and communication advances, Germany is becoming an increasingly culturally diverse country [1–3]. Although travel possibilities were limited within the last 1.5 years, intercultural contact via online media has expanded during the COVID-19 pandemic. Immigrant and non-immigrant members from various communities (or in this case, cultures) co-construct their daily life based on their sociocultural (virtual and offline) environment [4]. Minority youth who have migrated themselves or who were born in Germany are constantly confronted with the complex task of constructing their own multicultural identity, sometimes very overtly but often in a more underlying matter [5,6]. Within this process of acculturation, which is influenced by different agents and domains, schools represent a crucial institution of contact with the dominant majority culture, and therefore play one of the most important roles for students' identity construction [7–11]. A prominent acculturation component is school adjustment and achievement [12,13]. Despite the high school aspiration of immigrant families [14], students with a migration background tend to generally perform less well than their peers, as has been repeatedly proven in international student assessment studies [15].

It can be assumed that a better socio-cultural adjustment leads to higher achievement: school success is not just determined by the students' capacities and competencies, but by

a number of other factors and resources related to the cultural and habitual proximity and knowledge of the respective school system [1,16], such as the parental and student's language proficiency, especially in regard to the cognitive academic language proficiency [1,17]. A prominent topic in acculturation research has been the question of the role students' cultural identities play in their school adjustment. Does a stronger ethnic or a stronger national identity matter? Is a strong bicultural identity a decisive factor within the academic domain? Because students' engagement with school is highly responsive to variations in their external factors such as their cultural milieu, their school (climate), teacher and peer relationships, and their internal factors such as their developmental competencies and their self-appraisal skills [18], and because it closely resembles their adjustment to school in general, we use engagement as an acculturation marker in this paper. School engagement is a multidimensional construct; most researchers agree on the three main dimensions of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement. Although some studies have already tackled the topic of engagement and cultural identity, research has rarely investigated different profiles of cultural identity and different dimensions of students' engagement. The different types of engagement embody different kinds of involvement with school. The goal of this paper is to explore how different cultural identities could be interrelated with the three dimensions of engagement.

1.1. Bicultural Identity

Identity construction in general is an important developmental task [19,20]. In identity theory and research, it is agreed upon that there is not one identity, but that every individual owns a set of social identities [21,22]. A central social identity is the ethnic (cultural) identity, which derives from a person's cultural origin or heritage [23,24]. Van Oudenhoven and Benet-Martínez [20] state that "biculturals are individuals who have been exposed to and have internalized two or more sets of cultural meaning systems", (p. 48). Phinney et al. [25] understand that cultural identities are a result of "interaction[s] between the attitudes and characteristics of immigrants and the responses of the receiving society, moderated by the particular circumstances of the immigrant group within the society", (p. 494). From this proposal, one should assume that the construction of a cultural or multicultural identity is a reciprocal negotiation between the heritage and the target culture.

In acculturation research, one of the most prominent models for the explanation of a person's cultural orientation and negotiation between the heritage and majority culture is John Berry's acculturation model [10]. In this model, he differentiates between integration, separation, assimilation, and marginalization. Although this model still widely serves as a major indicator for the outcome of an acculturation process, as well as a policy marker, it has become evident that the construction of the individual's bicultural identity is a very complex lifelong process [23]. Still, Berry's model has been proven to be a firm acculturation attitude explanation and has been replicated in recent studies [26]. According to some researchers [25], a decisive factor for immigrant students' identity is not the respective policy in a country, but circumstances in their communities, which makes it even more challenging to grasp a generic acculturation model for adolescents. Those children and young adults need to switch between "different cognitive and behavioral frames tied to their different cultural identities", ref. [20], p. 47.

For immigrant adolescents, the expectations of both cultures can be experienced as challenging [27,28], especially in cases where the heritage family culture and the majority school culture are organized very differently (e.g., in terms of their complexity, their tightness, or their individualism or collectivism organization [29–31]). Additionally, cultural frame-switching can be performed more easily when the students' respective cultural identities are compatible [29]. The complexity of acculturation processes implies the difficulty of empirical measurements of acculturation and identity performance [26,32], and the question of what time frame migration research should be conducted in [33]. Although some models and a wide number of scales and qualitative approaches have been developed, there is no dominant method that is applied in most of the acculturation and

cultural identity research [32]. Cultures contain an infinite amount of coded information that, on the one hand, must be interpreted and decoded by outsiders, while on the other hand, those outsiders actively co-construct the new joined culture [34]. Chirkov [34,35] argues that because of an acculturation gap, problems can evolve between the home and host cultural community. Immigrants enter new communities with certain expectations from their heritage culture. If those cultures differ to a great extent, the respective immigrant “may experience [. . .] mental correlates of acculturation stress. If the [immigrant] does not understand the causes of such states, [their] mental health may deteriorate and prevent [them] from attaining successful adaptation and acculturation”, ref. [34], p. 15. Migrant youth do not only find themselves between their home culture and school culture—they also have the responsibility of navigating between the two and functioning as mediators [36], which can be a challenging task due to authority and responsibility disparities. It is important to mention that the gap between a student’s home and their school’s or individual teachers’ sociocultural expectations is not limited to intercultural relations but can also exist in intracultural settings [37]. Nevertheless, since ethnic heritages embody an immense amount of beliefs, practices, customs, and/or languages, which can be very different from the majority culture, the question of how students embrace their ethnic and national identity and to what extent their identity might translate into school adjustment is crucial in the quest to create successful diversity-oriented classrooms and inclusive school settings.

1.2. Bicultural Identity and Well-Being

The acculturation process is often accompanied by certain stressors, which can affect an individual’s psychological well-being [1,9,35,38–40]. Experiences of discrimination along the way of acculturation can have severe negative effects [41–43]. The impact of stress and discrimination experiences can lead individuals into a disengaged state with the majority culture [10,44]. A person’s ethnic identity (or racial identity) and the development of this part of one’s social identity has been a popular research topic [45,46]. Mostly, researchers are interested in the role of an individual’s ethnic identity in terms of their well-being or other similar constructs. A study by Balidemaj and Small [47] on the acculturation of Albanian–American immigrants in the United States shows that their acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being are positively correlated. The young adults’ ethnic identity and acculturation affect their psychological well-being. Kim et al. [48] found among their group of first-generation Mexican immigrants that self-esteem was negatively affected by acculturative stress. They also found that ethnic identity exacerbated the negative effects of the two observed types of acculturative stress (American-based and Mexican-based) on psychological well-being. The role of a person’s national identity within the process of ethnic identity construction and well-being has only sparsely been investigated. A national identification means that individuals feel an emotional involvement and connection to their resident country [49]. The national identification of minorities can depend on the perceived treatment of the respective group, leading to difficult conditions for some groups more so than others [50]. In general, the literature seems to promote the idea that the integration of a person’s two (or more) cultural identities is an important antecedent of beneficial psychological outcomes [51–53]. People belonging to cultural minorities need to balance their cultural identities, but it is important to point out that whether they feel more connected to their heritage culture(s) and/or their majority national culture can differ in specific life domains [54].

When looking into well-being, acculturation, and the school domain, some research has already proposed the importance of a strong ethnic identity, but there is still a broad opinion that a strong cultural orientation towards an individual’s ethnicity can also be associated with negative effects [22,55,56]. Makarova [57] confirmed the assumption that biculturally identified adolescents integrate better into the society of residence. Fuller-Rowell et al. [58] found interesting effects of ethnic identity and national identity as protective agents. Students’ experiences of discrimination in the first year of college were positively associated with changes in ethnic identity commitment during their following college years among

participants with a weaker national identity. This perceived discrimination was negatively associated with changes in ethnic identity commitment among those students who reported a stronger national identity. In addition, students with a strong national identity also had a greater increase in ethnic identity commitment. Phinney and Devich-Navarro [59] found evidence in their quantitative and qualitative study for a wide variation in the way adolescents identify with their ethnic and national cultures. Still, looking into the extreme group differences, about 90% of the students reported a combined bicultural identification, meaning that only 10% did not consider themselves belonging to two cultures. In their analysis of the PISA 2009 data, Edele et al. [60] found that more than half of students with an immigrant background feel a strong connection to Germany (integrated and assimilated group, cf. [61]), one third feels that they only belong to their ethnic heritage group (separated group), and about one fifth report not belonging to either culture (marginalized group). It is important to mention that there can be notable differences between ethnic groups; still, Molina et al. [62] found that, for most ethnic minorities, at least in the United States, higher perceptions of group discrimination were associated with lower levels of national identity and higher ethnic identity. Some research stresses the possibly problematic relation between heritage and national identity; Zander and Hannover [22] found in their German study that a strong identification with the culture of origin correlated with a rather marginal attachment to the host culture. Wolfgramm et al. [56] also proposed that one factor that can lead to a stronger connection with one's heritage is a perceived rejection, or the fear of being rejected, by the majority culture. These results are in line with the theory of rejection-identification [63], which states that when faced with discrimination, individuals' ethnic group identity increases and therefore serves as a protective agent. The protective power of a student's ethnic identity has also been proven by a recent study in Berlin; Kunyu et al. [64] found that students who had a strong heritage identity also reported a higher sense of socio-emotional and academic adjustment. An important factor that can have a moderating effect on discrimination experiences and well-being is a person's ethnic socialization; Harris-Britt et al. [65] found that when African American students received messages about race pride in their' socialization, it had a buffering effect on their discrimination experiences, and led to higher self-esteem, meaning that a strong ethnic identity, resulting from a positive ethnic socialization, can have a positive effect on well-being despite negative experiences directed towards the respective ethnicity. Spiegler et al. [66] were able to show that Turkish students in Germany who had strong ethnic identities and those who had medium ethnic identities both reported similar school adjustments, but the latter had lower school motivation. National identity was a mediator in both groups. Literature review of the relation between acculturation, bicultural identity, and well-being has proven that this topic is complex, and no general conclusion can be stated since research studies, as well as the respective heritage and host cultures, are very diverse. Still, most studies provide evidence for the importance of a strong ethnic identity to immigrants' well-being.

1.3. Bicultural Identity and School Engagement

Acculturation and the continuous construction of one's individual bicultural ethnic and national identity are influenced by different agents and domains, of which schools represent the central institution of contact with the dominant majority culture, and therefore play one of the most important roles for students' identity [7–9,11,49]. In the literature, educational success is widely considered as a marker for successful integration, alongside school adjustment [12,13]. Despite the overall high school aspiration of immigrant families [14], students with a migration background tend to perform less well than their peers [15]. There is a great amount of literature designed to answer the question of why there is an achievement gap between immigrant and non-immigrant students [1,67,68]. A comparatively new line of research points at students' sense of belonging as a main explanation for minority students' lack of success in academia [49,69–71]. Students who do not feel that they belong might unconsciously distance themselves from the educational do-

main. This can be a consequence of hegemonic practices in schools, but also discrimination experiences, and it might lead to stereotype threat experiences in school [72,73].

Within the last two decades, the concept of school engagement has been adopted by many researchers to explain the multidimensional commitment of students towards school. Students' engagement with school has become a widely recognized construct, because of its multidimensionality and ability to help explain students' paths between (hidden) dropout and school success [44,74–78]. School engagement “provides a holistic lens for understanding how children interact with learning activities, with distinct behavioral, emotional–affective, and cognitive components” [18], p. 1087. The body of work around engagement has grown rapidly in the last decade, leading to a constantly evolving conceptualization of the construct [44,77]. Despite some other conceptual suggestions of engagement dimensions, most researchers agree on the three different but interrelated constructs of emotional engagement, cognitive engagement, and behavioral engagement [74]. The emotional, or affective, component of engagement towards school embodies students' positive and negative feelings towards school and learning. Behavioral engagement is related to the active participation in class and other school-related activities. Cognitive engagement means the willingness to invest in complex academic tasks (for an elaboration of the origin of the three dimensions cf. [79]). Deriving from acculturation theory, one could assume that all three dimensions of engagement should be related to better school adjustment. An emotionally committed student can transfer this attitude into their thoughts towards school and learning, and therefore, also express behavioral (active) participation. There is very limited research regarding the question of how different bicultural identities relate to the three dimensions of engagement. Nevertheless, there are reports on how immigrant and native students differ in terms of engagement. In their meta-analysis of studies and their biculturalism and well-being in the school context, with students from 41 countries, Chiu et al. [80] found that non-immigrant students did report a stronger emotional engagement (sense of belonging) with school, but a weaker cognitive engagement in comparison to their immigrant peers. This result hints at a difference between the three dimensions of engagement, as well as “conflicting theoretical relationships” (p. 14). Chiu and colleagues also found that there were differences between first-generation and second-generation immigrants, and there was an effect of the language spoken at home. Although engagement and acculturation are very broad constructs, the results of the meta-analysis indicate that acculturation types can have an impact on students' commitment to their school and learning.

Most of the research on school engagement, and on the specific dimensions of it, in the field of immigration/intercultural studies focuses on relevant predictors. Therefore, it is important to mention that one of the strongest influencing factors is the perceived support from teachers and schools [81–85]. Two studies based on the data in this paper have already revealed that support from teachers and the quality of the relationship between the student and teacher have an effect on students' emotional engagement, and that teachers can protect students from the consequences of experienced discrimination [44,86]. In particular, the role of diversity orientation within school has been proven to be a highly relevant factor in the development of students' well-being and engagement [87–91]. Abacioglu et al. [92] found that teachers who have strong multicultural attitudes can foster their students' school engagement.

The question remains whether a strong ethnic identity, a strong national identity, or the combination of both can predict school engagement, independent of the influence of teachers and school climate. School adjustment and bicultural identities have been investigated based on academic success markers such as academic self-concept, self-esteem, or test results or grades [26,93]. Hannover et al. [94] found that students who reported (by pictorial measure) a national (in this case German) school-related self-view performed better in standardized competence tests in reading comprehension in German than their peers who reported a stronger identification with their ethnic heritage group. Edele et al. [60] analyzed the PISA 2009 data and were able to show that immigrant students who had an

integrated cultural identity performed statistically equally to their non-immigrant peers. In a recent study on bicultural identity, stereotype threat, and academic performance, Baysu and Phalet [93] were able to show that the effect of having a dual identity is complex and can lead to different outcomes depending on the respective threat. The authors found that students who identified with both identities outperformed their peers and reported higher self-esteem in low-threat conditions than their otherwise-identified peers in the control condition. However, in a high-threat context, having a dual identity came with costs: students reported more anxiety and they performed worse in comparison to the control condition. Those results point at the complexity as well as the importance of bicultural identity within the school context. Chu [95] found in her study that children who had stronger, more positive ethnic identities also had more positive academic attitudes. School engagement is thought to withstand situational effects, such as test results under stereotype threat conditions. Yet, it is still closely related to school performance. The existence of some contradictory findings regarding engagement and achievement [96] can add proof to the superordinated role of the construct; although school success is an important factor of successful acculturation and participation in the resident culture, it is not the only one. Feeling connected and belonging to one's social environment can have an equally important effect on a person's well-being and academic success.

1.4. The Present Study

A prominent topic in acculturation research has been the question "What role does students' cultural identity play in their school adjustment?" Does a strong ethnic or a strong national identity matter? Is a strong bicultural identity a decisive factor within the academic domain? Because students' engagement with school is highly responsive to variations in their personal and sociocultural factors [18], and because it closely resembles their adjustment to school in general, the present study focusses on engagement as an acculturation marker. Engagement can be divided into the three dimensions emotional, cognitive, and behavioral, which all interact with different kinds of academic areas, and which provide insight into the emotional attitude towards school, the willingness to engage in cognitive tasks, and the active participation in class and school-related areas. The advantage of the engagement construct is that it offers a glimpse into students' total engagement with their schools beyond their test results and their (final) grades. Referring to acculturation theory [10], we want to find out how different kinds of bicultural identities relate to the three dimensions of school engagement. With this paper we want to add to the understanding of bicultural identity and academic adjustment, and discuss the implications for schools, teachers, and teacher education.

2. Method

2.1. Study Design

The present study is a cross-sectional paper-pencil questionnaire study with 7th grade students in North-Rhine Westphalia, conducted during the spring and summer of 2017 and 2018. The study is part of a larger international cooperative project focusing on the (hidden) school dropout of immigrants in different European countries and Israel. The data collection in Germany was carried out by the authors themselves and by trained student assistants. Data collection involved the completion of a structured questionnaire with one open question at the end ("Is there anything else you want to tell us?"). The questionnaire was completed individually during regular class time.

2.2. Analysis

With the software R [97] as well as IBM SPSS, we first conducted a factor analysis to estimate if our three engagement subdimensions of school engagement can be divided according to Fredericks et al. [79]. We explored differences between the four bicultural identity types using an ANOVA analysis with the three subdimensions of school engagement as the respective dependent variables. Further, we conducted multiple regression

analyses in four single analyses to find out how much variance of the three subdimensions can be explained with the respective bicultural identity type as a predictor. Since immigrant families in Germany tend to have a poorer socioeconomic background, we controlled for the parents' highest *International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status*, as well as the families' cultural capital. In addition, we included gender as a control variable to find out whether there were differences between the two possible options (male and female) in the questionnaire (cf. [60] for a similar approach). The different sizes of bicultural identity groups (cf. Section 2.4) need to be considered when interpreting the following (exploratory) analyses.

2.3. Participants

The analysis of the present paper focuses on students who reported cultural self-identification with at least one other culture, in addition to German culture. This subsample consists of 457 students (47.9% female), mostly aged 12–13 years [60.4%], with 21.2% older than 13, containing more than 30 different cultural identifications. In this analysis, we did only consider those students who reported themselves as belonging to at least one other culture than the German one. We included those students regardless of their migration background [44,86]. We did not divide the participants further into heritage groups because, on the one hand, the sample size would be too limited, and, on the other hand, there was no clear theoretical assumption that there would be strong differences between the present groups.

2.4. Bicultural Group Comparison

In this paper, the operationalization of bicultural students is based on the students' own reports of whether they feel that they belong to at least two cultures (ethnic/heritage culture(s) and/or national German culture). Furthermore, those biculturally identified students were asked to estimate the intensity of their sense of belonging to their national and ethnic identities. To compare students with stronger and weaker cultural identities we first conducted a split of the theoretical mean (3.5 on the 5-point Likert scale) of the ethnic identity scale and the national identity scale. It needs to be noted that both scales scored relatively highly, with students reporting rather strong national identities and very strong ethnic identities (cf. Table 1).

In the next step we allocated students into one of the four categories: stronger ethnic and stronger national identity (Es_Ns) ($n = 112$), stronger ethnic and weaker national identity (Es_Nw) ($n = 219$), weaker ethnic and stronger national identity (Ew_Ns) ($n = 19$), and weaker ethnic and weaker national identity (Ew_Nw) ($n = 44$). Due to the high mean of the two scales, the four groups did not turn out to be equally distributed. Despite this uneven group size, the theoretical split seems to represent a more realistic picture of students' actual identity than a statistical mean split. We assume that this form of categorization is therefore to some extent in line with the four acculturation dimensions suggested by Berry [10,98] (for a similar approach cf. Phinney and Devich-Navarro, ref. [6], also [60]), with students with stronger ethnic and stronger national identities belonging to the integration dimension, students with stronger ethnic and weaker national identities belonging to the separation dimension, students with weaker ethnic and stronger national identities belonging to the assimilation dimension, and students with weaker ethnic and weaker national identities belonging to the marginalization dimension. Since we only included students who reported belonging to an ethnic, heritage culture, the majority of the students did not fall into an assimilated or marginalized category. John Berry's model was proposed several decades ago, but it still represents the major acculturation dimensions used in this research, which have been empirically replicated many times in recent studies [66].

2.5. Measure

The scales and items used in the present study regarded students' gender, their cultural identifications (Q: Which culture or cultures do you feel part of?), their parents' occupation (using the HISEI measure; International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status) [99] and their families' cultural capital (adapted version from PISA, [15,100]) school engagement was measured with the engagement scale developed by Fredericks et al. [79], which can be divided into the three subscales of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral school engagement. Ethnic and national identity scales were based on Phinney et al. [101]. The scales and their characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Scale descriptions.

Scale	Statistics	Source/Item Examples
Emotional Engagement	6 items, $\alpha = 0.839$, $M = 2.50$, $SD = 0.74$, $n = 444$, 4-point-Likert scale (completely disagree to completely agree)	Fredericks et al. [79] (adapted); e.g., "I feel happy in school."
Cognitive Engagement	7 items, $\alpha = 0.679$, $M = 2.54$, $SD = 0.67$, $n = 445$, 4-point-Likert scale (completely disagree to completely agree)	Fredericks et al. [79] (adapted); e.g., "I study at home even when I don't have a test."
Behavioral Engagement	8 items, $\alpha = 0.801$, $M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.47$, $n = 446$, 4-point Likert scale (completely disagree to completely agree)	Fredericks et al. [79] (adapted); e.g., "I pay attention in class."
National Identity	4 items, $\alpha = 0.932$, $M = 3.11$, $SD = 1.20$, $n = 361$, 5-point Likert scale (completely disagree to completely agree)	Berry et al. [10] based on Phinney [101] and Roberts et al. [102]; e.g., "I am proud of being German."
Ethnic Identity	4 items, $\alpha = 0.887$, $M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.82$, $n = 324$, 5-point Likert scale	Berry et al. [10] based on Phinney [101] and Roberts et al. [102]; e.g., "I am proud of being a member of my heritage culture."

3. Results

A confirmatory factor analysis was run to estimate whether cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement can be divided into the three dimensions of school engagement in our subsample. The analysis has shown acceptable model fit indices (TLI = 0.878; CLI = 0.892; RMSEA = 0.062; SRMR = 0.055). While the estimates of TLI and CLI are not good [103], the RMSEA and SRMR indicate a good model fit. Since the standardized factor loadings of school engagement for cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement are good (cognitive = 0.879; behavioral = 0.801; emotional = 0.795), school engagement was used as a construct with a cognitive, behavioral, and emotional dimension, as suggested by Fredericks et al. [79]. A one-way between-subjects exploratory ANOVA was conducted to compare the three subdimensions of school engagement under stronger ethnic and stronger national identity (Es_Ns), stronger ethnic and weaker national identity (Es_Nw), weaker ethnic and stronger national identity (Ew_Ns), and weaker ethnic and weaker national identity (Ew_Nw) conditions.

The ANOVA for the effect of bicultural identity for emotional school engagement was significant, $F(3377) = 3.735$, $p = 0.011$. Emotional engagement was normally distributed for the conditions Ew_Nw and Ew_Ns, but not for Es_Nw and Es_Nw, as assessed by the Shapiro–Wilk test ($\alpha = 0.05$). Despite the different group sizes, the homogeneity of

variances, asserted using Levene's Test, showed that equal variances could be assumed ($p = 0.328$). Post hoc analyses using the Tukey test for significance indicated that the mean score for the condition Es_Ns ($M = 2.648$, $SD = 0.73$) was significantly different from the Es_Nw condition ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 0.76$, $p = 0.006$) (Figure 1). There were no other significant group differences.

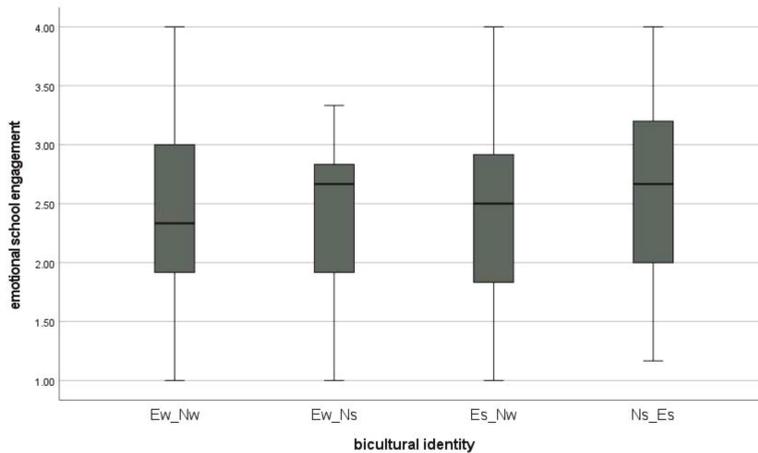


Figure 1. Boxplot of emotional school engagement and bicultural identity: Ew_Nw: weaker ethnic and weaker national identity; Ew_Ns: weaker ethnic and stronger national identity; Es_Nw: stronger ethnic and weaker national identity; Es_Ns: stronger ethnic and stronger national identity.

For cognitive school engagement, the analysis of variance showed that the effect of bicultural identity was significant— $F(3380) = 2.937$, $p = 0.033$. Cognitive engagement was normally distributed for the conditions Ew_Nw, Ew_Ns, and Es_Ns, but not for Es_Nw, as assessed by the Shapiro–Wilk test ($\alpha = 0.05$). Despite the different group sizes, the homogeneity of variances, asserted using Levene's test, showed that equal variances could be assumed ($p = 0.769$). Post hoc analyses using the Tukey test for significance indicated that the mean score for the condition Es_Ns ($M = 2.684$, $SD = 0.65$) was significantly different than the Ew_Nw condition ($M = 2.356$, $SD = 0.67$, $p = 0.032$) (Figure 2). There were no other significant group differences.

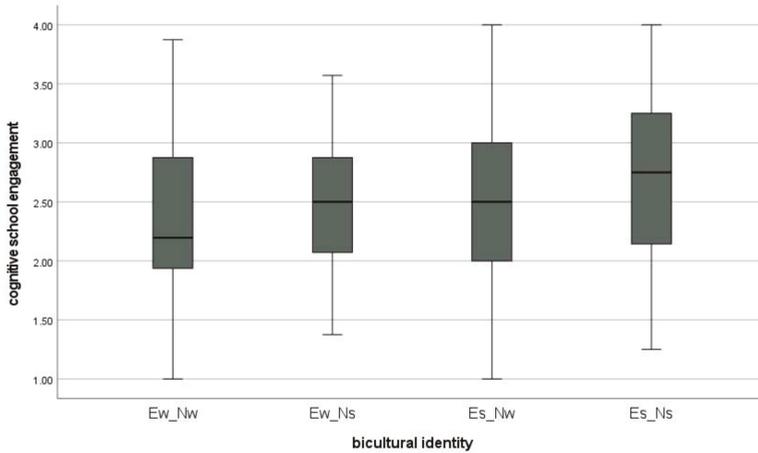


Figure 2. Boxplot of cognitive school engagement and bicultural identity: Ew_Nw: weaker ethnic and weaker national identity; Ew_Ns: weaker ethnic and stronger national identity; Es_Nw: stronger ethnic and weaker national identity; Es_Ns: stronger ethnic and stronger national identity.

There were no statistically significant differences in behavioral school engagement for the different groups of bicultural identity— $F(3380) = 2.12, p = 0.097$ (Figure 3).

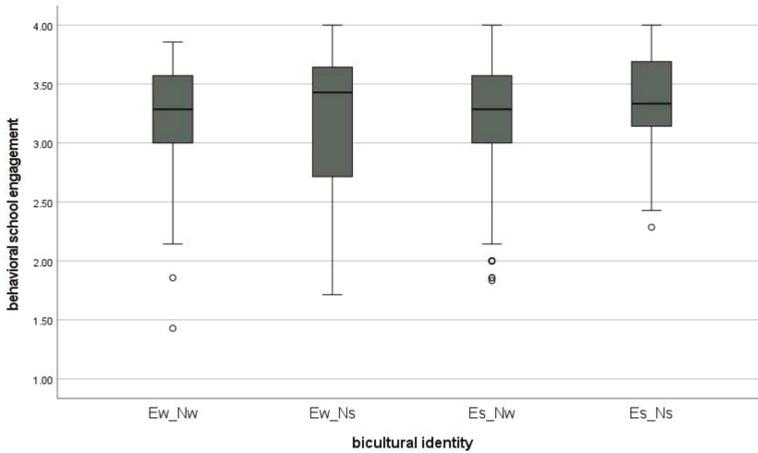


Figure 3. Boxplot of behavioral school engagement and bicultural identity: Ew_Nw: weaker ethnic and weaker national identity; Ew_Ns: weaker ethnic and stronger national identity; Es_Nw: stronger ethnic and weaker national identity; Es_Ns: stronger ethnic and stronger national identity.

To further examine whether the bicultural identity types are predictors for the three dimensions of school engagement, simple linear regressions were carried out. Gender, HISEI, and cultural capital were added as control variables. Before running the regression, assumptions for the linear regression were tested. The assumption of a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables was tested using the Rainbow test. Homoscedasticity was tested with the Levene test and Breusch–Pagan test. Furthermore, multicollinearity in the data was tested. With the Durbin Watson test, it was checked whether there was autocorrelation, and a Cook’s distance test was used to identify critical

outliers. All assumptions were met to a satisfactory level regarding the present exploratory analyses. The histograms hint at a normal distribution for emotional school engagement and cognitive school engagement, while behavioral engagement showed a slight left skew. For each dimension of school engagement, five regression analyses were run, one for each condition of bicultural identity including the control variables, as well as one regression including only the controlling variables as predictors. A Bonferroni correction of the predictors has shown that all presented significant p -levels remained significant at the 0.05 level. The results of the regression analyses are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Regression analyses—emotional school engagement.

	Model 0	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 1c	Model 1d
	β	β	β	β	β
BI_Ew_Nw		−0.051			
BI_Ew_Ns			−0.027		
BI_Es_Nw				−0.092	
BIt_Es_Ns					0.151 *
gender	0.008	−0.008	−0.010	−0.002	0.002
HISEI	0.063	0.052	0.048	.042	0.051
cult. capital	0.237 **	0.236 **	0.241 **	0.227 **	0.223 **
adjusted R ²	0.059	0.054	0.052	0.060	0.074

* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.001$. DV: emotional school engagement. Bicultural identity—Ew_Nw: weaker ethnic and weaker national identity; Ew_Ns: weaker ethnic and stronger national identity; Es_Nw: stronger ethnic and weaker national identity; Es_Ns: stronger ethnic and stronger national identity. HISEI: International Socio-Economic Index of (highest) Occupational Status.

The first analysis, and 0 model of the following analyses, shows that among the three predictors of gender, HISEI, and cultural capital, only the last one was significant throughout all analyses. Model 0 with only the controlling variables as predictors ($F(3395) = 9.39$) described 5.9% of the variance in emotional engagement. Model 1a with bicultural identity Ew_Nw as the additional predictor ($F(4337) = 5.87$) described 5.4% of the variance. Model 1b with the controlling variables and the condition Ew_Ns as predictor ($F(4337) = 5.69$) described 5.2%. Model 1c ($F(4337) = 6.42$) described 6% of variance, while Model 1d ($F(4337) = 7.82$) described 7.4% of the variance. Only the extreme group with bicultural identity Es_Ns was a significant predictor for emotional engagement. The results indicate that students with a stronger ethnic and national identity had higher emotional engagement than students in the other conditions. Students with a strong cultural capital score also reported higher emotional engagement than those with a lower cultural capital score.

A regression with the same predictors was calculated for the dependent variable cognitive engagement (Table 3). Model 0 with the controlling variables as predictors ($F(3396) = 14.56$) described 9.3% of the variance of school engagement. Model 1a with bicultural identity Ew_Nw as the additional predictor ($F(4338) = 11.30$) described 10.8% of the variance. Model 1b, with the controlling variables and the condition with Ew_Ns identity as predictors ($F(4338) = 10.08$), described 9.6%. Model 1c ($F(4338) = 9.91$) described 9.4% of variance, while Model 1d ($F(4338) = 11.10$) described 10.6% of the variance. Cultural capital and the condition of bicultural identity Ew_Nw, as well as Es_Ns, were significant predictors for cognitive engagement. The results indicate that students with a stronger ethnic and national identity reported a stronger cognitive school engagement in comparison to all other conditions. Students with a high cultural capital score had a higher cognitive engagement than those with a lower cultural capital score.

Table 3. Regression analyses—cognitive school engagement.

	Model 0	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 1c	Model 1d
	β	β	β	β	β
BI_Ew_Nw		−0.115 *			
BI_Ew_Ns			−0.040		
BI_Es_Nw				−0.003	
BI_Es_Ns					0.106 *
gender	0.002	0.003	−0.001	0.001	0.008
HISEI	−0.003	0.024	0.013	0.023	0.015
cult. capital	0.346 **	0.317 **	0.326 **	0.321 **	0.310 **
adjusted R ²	0.093	0.108	0.096	0.094	0.106

* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.001$. DV: cognitive school engagement. Bicultural identity—Ew_Nw: weaker ethnic and weaker national identity; Ew_Ns: weaker ethnic and stronger national identity; Es_Nw: stronger ethnic and weaker national identity; Es_Ns: stronger ethnic and stronger national identity. HISEI: International Socio-Economic Index of (highest) Occupational Status.

The results for behavioral engagement are similar to the results of the previous regression with school engagement as the dependent variable (Table 4). Model 0, with only the controlling variables as predictors ($F(3397) = 14.34$), described 9.1% of the variance of behavioral engagement. Model 1a with bicultural identity Ew_Nw as the additional predictor ($F(4338) = 8.33$) described 7.9% of the variance. Model 1b, with the controlling variables and the condition of Ew_Ns identity as predictors ($F(4338) = 8.85$), described 8.4%. Model 1c ($F(4338) = 8.31$) described 7.9% of variance, while Model 1d ($F(4338) = 9.46$) described 9% of the variance. Only the extreme group with both strong identities could explain the additional variance of behavioral engagement. Cultural capital and the conditions of stronger ethnic and national bicultural identity were significant predictors for behavioral engagement. The results indicate that students with stronger ethnic and national identities had stronger behavioral engagement than students in the other conditions. Students with a high cultural capital score reported a better behavioral engagement than those with a lower cultural capital score. Students with weaker bicultural identities showed weaker behavioral engagement than students in the other conditions.

Table 4. Regression analyses—behavioral school engagement.

	Model 0	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 1c	Model 1d
	β	β	β	β	β
BI_Ew_Nw		−0.041			
BI_Ew_Ns			−0.082		
BI_Es_Nw				−0.039	
BI_Es_Ns					0.113 *
gender	0.068	0.080	0.075	0.082	0.086
HISEI	0.008	−0.006	−0.009	−0.012	−0.008
cult. capital	0.301 **	0.281 **	0.291 **	0.277 **	0.270 **
adjusted R ²	0.091	0.079	0.084	0.079	0.090

* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.001$. DV: behavioral school engagement. Bicultural identity—Ew_Nw: weaker ethnic and weaker national identity; Ew_Ns: weaker ethnic and stronger national identity; Es_Nw: stronger ethnic and weaker national identity; Es_Ns: stronger ethnic and stronger national identity. HISEI: International Socio-Economic Index of (highest) Occupational Status.

4. Discussion

Acculturation research has already shown that a person's or even a group's bicultural identity is a relevant parameter for successful integration into and adjustment to a new society. School adjustment and school success in general can serve as acculturation markers. Despite the overall high educational aspirations of immigrant families, immigrant students tend to perform less well at school than their peers who belong to the majority culture. From

recent research, it is known that students who feel that they belong in school tend to be better adjusted, report more self-esteem, and experience more school success. Although research is not unambiguous regarding school success and acculturation profiles, the majority of the literature suggests that employing a strong national as well as strong ethnic identity could be beneficial for school success [60,94]. The question of whether a stronger ethnic or national cultural identity, or dual strong identity, is beneficial for different dimensions of school engagement has been only marginally addressed in acculturation research.

The results of the present analyses show that for all school engagement dimensions, having a stronger ethnic and national identity seems beneficial. This finding confirms a wide array of acculturation research, which hints at integration (stronger bicultural identity) as being predictive for positive school outcomes [26,51–53].

Although closely interrelated, the three dimensions of school engagement can mean different outcomes for students. In the presented analyses, a stronger ethnic and national bicultural identity was a significant predictor for all three engagement dimensions. In fact, the respective coefficients of the bicultural groups only slightly differ among the three school engagement dimensions. While for students with a weaker bicultural identity, there is a negative association with all dimensions of school engagement, for students with a stronger bicultural identity there is a positive connection. There were no major differences between the three engagement types, which, on the one hand, certainly hints at the close interrelation of the constructs. On the other hand, the three dimensions might need to be assessed differently in order to better understand the patterns of engagement and identity within school. Additionally, it is important to mention that the four groups differed in size, and the respective explained variances in the models were relatively small, hinting at other important factors that need to be explored in future research.

When translating the present findings into practice in schools, one could assume that students who do not feel sufficiently connected to either their heritage culture or their host society might have difficulties when it comes to their active willingness to engage in tasks in school. This could, in turn, lead to lower achievements. It has to be taken into account that the four bicultural identity groups in this paper were created by allocation to four groups based on a theoretical mean split. The overall means of ethnic and national identity scales were relatively high, which means that, at least in the present sample, immigrant students feel strongly connected to their heritage culture, but also to their national culture. Future research that wants to explore the connection of students' bicultural identity to engagement might need to provide a more nuanced picture of acculturation profiles. Furthermore, the proximity of heritage and host culture might be integrated as a relevant predictor for the identification [20,21], and respective cultural groups should be systematically selected in the sampling process. When considering the proximity of the heritage and national identity, a strong identification with both cultures might have differential predictive power in explaining school engagement [20]. An additional qualitative approach to this aspect should be applied in future research to provide a more holistic, in-depth analysis of students' experiences.

In the present analysis, neither gender nor the parents' occupation has an effect on school engagement. Since the parental occupation was reported by the students themselves, the assessment might have been difficult for them, and an objective measure, might not have been obtained. Nevertheless, the strongest predictor was the families' cultural capital, stressing the importance of cultural possessions and practices in the family. Cultural resources have been shown to be a decisive factor within the acculturation process [40]. Schools should cooperate with families and provide them with the necessary resources, such as targeted information about school-related issues, and opportunities to engage parents in their children's learning and school activities to provide more equal learning opportunities for all students.

In conclusion, the findings of this paper advocate for the support of the development of students' integrated bicultural identities when school engagement is at stake. Numerous studies have contributed to our understanding of school engagement by emphasizing the

importance of supportive teachers and inclusive school climates, especially for immigrant children [44,83,84,86]. To foster a strong and integrated bicultural identity in students, teaching, and schools in general, need to be diversity-oriented and inclusive [1,86,104]. Especially in cases where cultural expectations between the child's heritage and the host community/school differ from each other, teachers should support their students and navigate them in finding a harmonious blended bi- or multicultural identity. The support of students' identity development is not limited to ethnic and national identities but can be expanded to other kinds (such as a European identity).

In recent years, school interventions have been implemented predominantly in the United States, but also in Germany, to enhance students' ethnic identity, their academic self-concept, and their belonging [105–107]. Intercultural education has become more present in the discussion of teacher education [1,87], and the empirical evidence is relatively strong in favor of multicultural and diversity-orientated teaching and learning [90,92,108–111]. Teachers and pre-service teachers need to be further provided with practical information and material on how to foster their students' identity and establish an inclusive climate within their class and school.

Author Contributions: Both authors contributed equally to the manuscript. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Ethical review was not carried out for this questionnaire study since the items used within the questionnaire study were based on validated scales, and therefore did not require further ethical investigation. Furthermore, the inclusion of an ethics committee is not common within the department. The study was reviewed by an officer from the protection of data security department at the University of Duisburg-Essen. The officer reviewed the questionnaire and data handling process in terms of the general data protection regulation from 2018 (DGSVO/GDRP).

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: Datasets are not stored online. In case of any inquiry regarding the data, the authors may be contacted.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- Göbel, K.; Buchwald, P. *Interkulturalität und Schule: Migration—Heterogenität—Bildung*; UTB: Stuttgart, Germany, 2017.
- Nguyen, A.-T.D.; Benet-Martínez, V. Biculturalism and Adjustment. *J. Cross-Cult. Psychol.* **2013**, *44*, 122–159. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Bundesamt, S. *Bevölkerung Und Erwerbstätigkeit. Bevölkerung und Migrationshintergrund—Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus 2017*; Statistisches Bundesamt DESTATIS: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2018.
- Chirkov, V. An introduction to the theory of sociocultural models. *Asian J. Soc. Psychol.* **2020**, *23*, 143–162. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Phinney, J.S. Ethnic identity and Acculturation. In *Acculturation: Advances in Theory, Measurement, and Applied Research*; Chun, K.M., Organista, P.B., Marín, G., Eds.; American Psychological Association: Washington, DC, USA, 2003; Volume 18, pp. 63–81.
- Vedder, P.; Phinney, J.S. Identity Formation in Bicultural Youth: A Developmental Perspective. In *The Oxford Handbook of Multicultural Identity*; Benet-Martínez, V., Hong, Y.-Y., Eds.; Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2014; pp. 335–354.
- Vedder, P.; Horenczyk, G. Acculturation and the School. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology*; Sam, D.L., Berry, J.W., Eds.; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 2006; pp. 419–438.
- Gutentag, T.; Horenczyk, G.; Tatar, M. Teachers' Approaches toward Cultural Diversity Predict Diversity-Related Burnout and Self-Efficacy. *J. Teach. Educ.* **2017**, *1*, 1–12. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Berry, J.W.; Phinney, J.S.; Sam, D.L.; Vedder, P. Immigration Youth: Acculturation, Identity, and Adaptation. *Appl. Psychol.* **2006**, *55*, 303–332. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Berry, J.W. Stress Perspectives on Acculturation. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology*; Sam, D.L., Berry, J.W., Eds.; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 2006; pp. 43–57.
- Vertovec, S. Super-diversity and Its Implications. *Ethn. Racial Stud.* **2006**, *30*, 1024–1054. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Brown, C.S.; Chu, H. Discrimination, ethnic identity, and academic outcomes of Mexican immigrant children: The importance of school context. *Child Dev.* **2012**, *83*, 1477–1485. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Makarova, E.; Gilde, J.; Birman, D. Teachers as risk and resource factors in minority students' school adjustment: An integrative review of qualitative research on acculturation. *Intercult. Educ.* **2019**, *30*, 448–477. [[CrossRef](#)]

14. Kao, G.; Tienda, M. Optimism and Achievement: The Educational Performance of Immigrant Youth. *Soc. Sci. Q.* **1995**, *76*, 1–19.
15. OECD. *Pisa 2015 Results—Students’ Well-Being III*; OECD Publishing: Paris, France, 2015.
16. Başkaya, S.; Boos-Nünning, U. *Bildungsbrücken Bauen: Stärkung der Bildungschancen von Kindern mit Migrationshintergrund*; ein Handbuch für die Elternbildung; Waxmann: Münster, Germany, 2016.
17. Cummins, J.D. Linguistic Interdependence and the Educational Development of Bilingual Children. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **1979**, *49*, 222–251. [[CrossRef](#)]
18. Wang, M.-T.; Degol, J.L.; Henry, D.A. An integrative development-in-sociocultural-context model for children’s engagement in learning. *Am. Psychol.* **2019**, *74*, 1086–1102. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
19. Habermas, T. Identitätsentwicklung im Jugendalter. *Psychol. Jugendforsch.* **2008**, *5*, 363–387.
20. Van Oudenhoven, J.P.; Benet-Martínez, V. In search of a cultural home: From acculturation to frame-switching and intercultural competencies. *Int. J. Intercult. Relat.* **2015**, *46*, 47–54. [[CrossRef](#)]
21. Tajfel, H.; Turner, J.C. An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*; Tajfel, H., Ed.; Brooks/Cole: Monterey, CA, USA, 1979; Volume 33, pp. 33–47.
22. Zander, L.; Hannover, B. Die Bedeutung der Identifikation mit der Herkunftskultur und mit der Aufnahmekultur Deutschland für die soziale Integration Jugendlicher mit Migrationshintergrund in ihrer Schulklasse. *Z. Entwickl. Pädagogische Psychol.* **2013**, *45*, 142–160. [[CrossRef](#)]
23. Umaña-Taylor, A.J. Ethnic identity. In *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*; Schwartz, S.J., Luyckx, K., Vignoles, K.J., Eds.; Springer: New York, NY, USA, 2011; pp. 791–809.
24. Liebkind, K.; Jasinskaja-Lahti, I.; Solheim, E. Cultural Identity, Perceived Discrimination, and Parental Support as Determinants of Immigrants’ School Adjustments. *J. Adolesc. Res.* **2014**, *19*, 635–656. [[CrossRef](#)]
25. Phinney, J.S.; Horenczyk, G.; Liebkind, K.; Vedder, P. Ethnic Identity, Immigration, and Well-Being: An Interactional Perspective. *J. Soc. Issues* **2001**, *57*, 493–510. [[CrossRef](#)]
26. Lilla, N.; Thürer, S.; Nieuwenboom, W.; Schüpbach, M. Exploring Academic Self-Concepts Depending on Acculturation Profile. Investigation of a Possible Factor for Immigrant Students’ School Success. *Educ. Sci.* **2021**, *11*, 432. [[CrossRef](#)]
27. Horenczyk, G. Language and Identity in the School Adjustment of Immigrant Students in Israel. *Z. Pädagog.* **2010**, 44–58.
28. Horenczyk, G.; Jasinskaja-Lahti, I.; Sam, D.; Vedder, P. Mutuality in Acculturation Toward an Integration. *Z. Psychol.* **2013**, *4*, 205–213.
29. Triandis, H.; Gelfand, M.A. theory of Individualism and collectivism. In *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*; Van Lange, P.A.M., Kruglanski, A.W., Higgins, E.T., Eds.; Sage Publications Ltd.: London, UK, 2012; pp. 498–520.
30. Phalet, K.; Claeys, W. A comparative study of Turkish and Belgian youth. *J. Cross-Cult. Psychol.* **1993**, *24*, 319–343. [[CrossRef](#)]
31. Phalet, K.; Schönflug, U. Intergenerational transmission in Turkish immigrant families: Parental collectivism, achievement values and gender differences. *J. Comp. Fam. Stud.* **2020**, *32*, 489–504. [[CrossRef](#)]
32. Wiley, S.; Deaux, K. *The Bicultural Identity Performance of Immigrants Identity and Participation in Culturally Diverse Societies: A Multidisciplinary Perspective*; Wiley Online Library: Hoboken, NJ, USA, 2010; pp. 49–68.
33. Jugert, P.; Titzmann, P.F. Trajectories of victimization in ethnic diaspora immigrant and native adolescents: Separating acculturation from development. *Dev. Psychol.* **2017**, *53*, 552–566. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
34. Chirkov, V. Alfred Schutz’s “Stranger,” the Theory of Sociocultural Models, in print. Available online: <https://artsandscience.usask.ca/profile/VChirkov#Research> (accessed on 13 December 2021).
35. Chirkov, V. The sociocultural movement in psychology, the role of theories in sociocultural inquiries, and the theory of sociocultural models. *Asian J. Soc. Psychol.* **2020**, *23*, 119–134. [[CrossRef](#)]
36. Dirim, İ. Umgang mit migrationsbedingter Mehrsprachigkeit in der schulischen Bildung, Schule in der Migrationsgesellschaft. In *Ein Handbuch*; Leiprecht, R., Steinbach, A., Schwalbach, T., Eds.; Debus Pädagogik Verlag: Schwalbach am Taunus, Germany, 2015; pp. 25–48.
37. Berkowitz, R.; Moore, H.; Astor, R.A.; Benbenishty, R.A. Research Synthesis of the Associations Between Socioeconomic Background, Inequality, School Climate, and Academic Achievement. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **2017**, *87*, 425–469. [[CrossRef](#)]
38. Azzi, A.E.; Chrysochoou, X.; Klandermans, B.; Simon, B. *Identity and Participation in Culturally Diverse Societies. A Multidisciplinary Perspective*; John Wiley & Sons: Oxford, UK, 2011.
39. Makarova, E.; Döring, A.K.; Auer, P.; Birman, D. School adjustment of ethnic minority youth: A qualitative and quantitative research synthesis of family-related risk and resource factors. *Educ. Rev.* **2021**, *1*–24. [[CrossRef](#)]
40. Buchwald, P.; Hobfoll, S.E. Die Theorie der Ressourcenerhaltung: Implikationen für Stress und Kultur. In *Handbuch Stress und Kultur*; Ringen, T., Genkova, P., Leong, F.T.L., Eds.; Springer Fachmedien: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2020; pp. 1–13.
41. Benner, A.D.; Wang, Y.; Shen, Y.; Boyle, A.E.; Polk, R.; Cheng, Y.P. Racial/ethnic discrimination and well-being during adolescence: A meta-analytic review. *Am. Psychol.* **2018**, *73*, 855–883. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
42. Jasinskaja-Lahti, I.; Liebkind, K.; Horenczyk, G.; Schmitz, P. The interactive nature of acculturation: Perceived discrimination, acculturation attitudes and stress among young ethnic repatriates in Finland, Israel and Germany. *Int. J. Intercult. Relat.* **2003**, *27*(1), 79–97. [[CrossRef](#)]
43. Kulis, S.; Marsiglia, F.F.; Nieri, T. Perceived ethnic discrimination versus acculturation stress: Influences on substance use among Latino youth in the Southwest. *J. Health Soc. Behav.* **2009**, *50*, 443–459. [[CrossRef](#)]

44. Göbel, K.; Preusche, Z.M. Emotional school engagement among minority youth: The relevance of cultural identity, perceived discrimination, and perceived support. *Intercult. Educ.* **2019**, *30*, 547–563. [[CrossRef](#)]
45. Verkuyten, M. The Integration Paradox: Empiric Evidence From the Netherlands. *Am. Behav. Sci.* **2016**, *60*, 583–596. [[CrossRef](#)]
46. Del Toro, J.; Hughes, D.; Way, N. Inter-Relations Between Ethnic-Racial Discrimination and Ethnic-Racial Identity Among Early Adolescents. *Child Dev.* **2021**, *92*, 106–125. [[CrossRef](#)]
47. Balidemaj, A.; Small, M. Acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants in the United States. *Int. J. Cult. Ment. Health* **2018**, *11*, 712–730. [[CrossRef](#)]
48. Kim, E.; Hogge, I.; Salvisberg, C. Effects of Self-Esteem and Ethnic Identity. *Hisp. J. Behav. Sci.* **2014**, *36*, 144–163. [[CrossRef](#)]
49. Van Vemde, L.; Hornstra, L.; Thijs, J. Classroom Predictors of National Belonging: The Role of Interethnic Contact and Teachers' and Classmates' Diversity Norms. *J. Youth Adolesc.* **2021**, *50*, 1–17. [[CrossRef](#)]
50. Huo, Y.J.; Molina, L.E. Is Pluralism a Viable Model of Diversity? The Benefits and Limits of Subgroup Respect. *Group Process. Intergroup Relat.* **2006**, *9*, 359–376. [[CrossRef](#)]
51. Chen, S.X.; Benet-Martinez, V.; Harris-Bond, M. Bicultural identity, bilingualism, and psychological adjustment in multicultural societies: Immigration-based and globalization-based acculturation. *J. Personal.* **2008**, *76*, 803–838. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
52. Verkuyten, M.; Martinovic, B. Social identity complexity and immigrants' attitude towards the host nation: The intersection of ethnic and religious group identification. *Personal. Soc. Psychol. Bull.* **2012**, *38*, 1165–1177. [[CrossRef](#)]
53. Haenni Hoti, A.; Heinzmann, S.; Müller, M.; Buholzer, A. Psychosocial adaptation and school success of Italian, Portuguese and Albanian students in Switzerland: Disentangling migration background, acculturation and the school context. *J. Int. Migr. Integr.* **2017**, *18*, 85–106. [[CrossRef](#)]
54. Klylioglu, L.; Heinz, W. The Relationship Between Immigration, Acculturation and Psychological Well Being. *Nesne Psikoloji Dergisi* **2015**, *3*, 1–19.
55. Bandorski, S. Ethnische Identität als Ressource für die Bildungsbeteiligung? *Bildungsforschung* **2008**, *5*, 25.
56. Wolfgramm, C.; Morf, C.C.; Hannover, B. Ethnically based rejection sensitivity and academic achievement: The danger of retracting into one's heritage culture. *Eur. J. Soc. Psychol.* **2014**, *44*, 313–326. [[CrossRef](#)]
57. Makarova, E.; Herzog, W. Hidden School Dropout among Immigrant Students: A Cross-Sectional Study. *Intercult. Educ.* **2013**, *24*, 559–572. [[CrossRef](#)]
58. Fuller-Rowell, T.E.; Ong, A.D.; Phinney, J.S. National Identity and Perceived Discrimination Predict Changes in Ethnic Identity Commitment: Evidence from a Longitudinal Study of Latino College Students. *Appl. Psychol.* **2013**, *62*, 406–426. [[CrossRef](#)]
59. Phinney, J.S.; Devich-Navarro, M. Variations in bicultural identification among African American and Mexican American adolescents. *J. Res. Adolesc.* **1997**, *7*, 3–32. [[CrossRef](#)]
60. Edele, A.P.; Stanat, S.; Radmann, M.; Segeritz, M. Kulturelle Identität Und Lesekompetenz Von Jugendlichen Aus Zugewanderten Familien. In *PISA 2009—Impulse für Die Schul- und Unterrichtsforschung*; Jude, N., Klieme, E., Eds.; Beltz: Weinheim, Germany, 2013; pp. 84–110.
61. Berry, J.W. Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation. *Appl. Psychol.* **1997**, *46*, 5–34. [[CrossRef](#)]
62. Molina, L.E.; Phillips, N.L.; Sudanius, J. National and ethnic identity in the face of discrimination: Ethnic minority and majority perspectives. *Cult. Divers. Ethn. Minority Psychol.* **2015**, *21*, 225–236. [[CrossRef](#)]
63. Branscombe, N.R.; Schmitt, M.T.; Harvey, R.D. Perceiving pervasive discrimination among African-Americans: Implications for group identification and well-being. *J. Personal. Soc. Psychol.* **1999**, *77*, 135–149. [[CrossRef](#)]
64. Kunyu, D.K.; Juang, L.P.; Schachner, M.K.; Schwarzenhal, M. Discrimination among youth of immigrant descent in Germany: Do school and cultural belonging weaken links to negative socio-emotional and academic adjustment? *Ger. J. Dev. Educ. Psychol.* **2021**, *52*, 88–102. [[CrossRef](#)]
65. Harris-Britt, A.; Valrie, C.R.; Kurtz-Costes, B.; Rowley, S.J. Perceived Racial Discrimination and Self-Esteem in African American Youth: Racial Socialization as a Protective Factor. *J. Res. Adolesc. Off. J. Soc. Res. Adolesc.* **2007**, *17*, 669–682. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
66. Spiegler, O.; Sonnenberg, K.; Fassbender, I.; Kohl, K.; Leyendecker, B. Ethnic and National Identity Development and School Adjustment: A Longitudinal Study with Turkish Immigrant Origin Children. *J. Cross-Cult. Psychol.* **2018**, *49*, 1–18. [[CrossRef](#)]
67. Baumert, J.; Watermann, R.; Schümer, G. Disparitäten der Bildungsbeteiligung und des Kompetenzerwerbs. *Z. Erzieh.* **2003**, *6*, 46–71. [[CrossRef](#)]
68. Stojanov, K. *Bildungsgerechtigkeit. Rekonstruktionen eines Umkämpften Begriffs*; Springer: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2011.
69. Kunyu, D.K.; Schachner, M.K.; Juang, L.P.; Schwarzenhal, M.; Aral, T. Acculturation hassles and adjustment of adolescents of immigrant descent: Testing mediation with a self-determination theory approach. *New Dir. Child Adolesc. Dev.* **2021**, *177*, 101–121. [[CrossRef](#)]
70. Fleischmann, F.; Phalet, K. Integration and religiosity among the Turkish second generation in Europe: A comparative analysis across four capital cities. *Ethn. Racial Stud.* **2018**, *35*, 320–341. [[CrossRef](#)]
71. Walton, G.M.; Cohen, G.L.; Cwir, D.; Spencer, S.J. Mere belonging: The power of social connections. *J. Personal. Soc. Psychol.* **2012**, *102*, 513–532. [[CrossRef](#)]
72. Steele, C.M.; Aronson, J. Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *J. Personal. Soc. Psychol.* **1995**, *69*, 797–811. [[CrossRef](#)]

73. Martiny, S.E.; Götz, T.; Keller, M. Emotionsregulation im Kontext von Stereotype Threat: Die Reduzierung der Effekte negativer Stereotype bei ethnischen Minderheiten. In *Handbuch Stress und Kultur*; Ringeisen, T., Genkova, P., Leong, F.T.L., Eds.; Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2020; pp. 1–13.
74. Fredericks, J.A.; Blumenfeld, P.; Friedel, J.; Paris, A. School engagement. In *What Do Children Need to Flourish?: Conceptualizing and Measuring Indicators of Positive Development*; Moore, K.A., Lippman, L., Eds.; Springer Science and Business Media: New York, NY, USA, 2005; pp. 305–321.
75. Makarova, E.; Herzog, W. Teachers' Acculturation Attitudes and Their Classroom Management: An Empirical Study among Fifth-Grade Primary School Teachers in Switzerland. *Eur. Educ. Res. J.* **2013**, *12*, 256–269. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
76. Raufelder, D.; Hoferichter, F.; Ringeisen, T.; Regner, N.; Jacke, C. The Perceived Role of Parental Support and Pressure in the Interplay of Test Anxiety and School Engagement Among Adolescents: Evidence for Gender-Specific Relations. *J. Child Fam. Stud.* **2014**, *24*, 3742–3756. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
77. Reschly, A.L.; Christenson, S.L. Jingle, Jangle, and Conceptual Haziness: Evolution and Future Directions of the Engagement Construct. In *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement*; Christenson, S.L., Reschly, A.L., Wylie, Eds.; Springer: New York, NY, USA, 2012; pp. 3–19.
78. Perdue, N.H.; Manzeske, D.P.; Estell, D.B. Early predictors of school engagement: Exploring the role of peer relationships. *Psychol. Schs.* **2009**, *46*, 1084–1097. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
79. Fredericks, J.A.; Blumenfeld, P.C.; Paris, A.H. School Engagement: Potential of the Concept, State of the Evidence. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **2014**, *74*, 59–109. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
80. Chiu, M.M.; Pong, S.L.; Mori, I.; Chow, B.W.Y. Immigrant students' emotional and cognitive engagement at school: A multilevel analysis of students in 41 countries. *J. Youth Adolesc.* **2012**, *41*, 1409–1425. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
81. Garcia-Reid, P.; Peterson, C.H.; Reid, R.J. Parent and Teacher Support Among Latino Immigrant Youth. *Educ. Urban Soc.* **2015**, *47*, 328–343. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
82. Lee, J.S. The effects of the teacher–student relationship and academic press on student engagement and academic performance. *Int. J. Educ. Res.* **2012**, *53*, 330–340. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
83. Benbow, A.E.F.; Aumann, L.; Paizan, M.A.; Titzmann, P.F. Everybody needs somebody: Specificity and commonality in perceived social support trajectories of immigrant and non-immigrant youth. *N. Dir. Child Adolesc. Dev.* **2021**, *176*, 183–204. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
84. Fernández-Zabala, A.; Goñi, E.; Camino, I.; Zulaika, L.M. Family and school context in school engagement. *Eur. J. Educ. Psychol.* **2016**, *9*, 47–55. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
85. Brewster, A.B.; Bowen, G.L. Teacher Support and the School Engagement of Latino Middle and High School Students at Risk of School Failure. *Child Adolesc. Soc. Work. J.* **2004**, *21*, 47–67. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
86. Civitillo, S.; Göbel, K.; Preusche, Z.M.; Jugert, P. Disentangling the effects of perceived personal and group ethnic discrimination among secondary school students: The protective role of teacher-student relationship quality and school climate. *New Dir. Child Adolesc. Dev.* **2021**, *177*, 77–99. [\[CrossRef\]](#) [\[PubMed\]](#)
87. Civitillo, S.; Juang, L. How to best prepare teachers for multicultural schools: Challenges and perspectives. In *Youth in Super Diverse Societies: Growing up with Globalization, Diversity, and Acculturation*; Titzmann, P.F., Jugert, P., Eds.; Routledge: London, UK, 2019; pp. 285–301.
88. Vietze, J.; Juang, L.P.; Schachner, M.K. Peer cultural socialisation: A resource for minority students' cultural identity, life satisfaction, and school values. *Intercult. Educ.* **2019**, *30*, 579–598. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
89. Schachner, M.K.; Juang, L.; Moffitt, U.; van de Vijver, F.J. Schools as acculturative and developmental contexts for youth of immigrant and refugee background. *Eur. Psychol.* **2018**, *23*, 44–56. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
90. Göbel, K.; Frankemölle, B. Interkulturalität und Wohlbefinden im Schulkontext. In *Handbuch Stress und Kultur*; Ringeisen, T., Genkova, P., Leong, F.T.L., Eds.; Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2020; pp. 1–17.
91. Özdemir, S.B.; Özdemir, M. The role of perceived inter-ethnic classroom climate in adolescents' engagement in ethnic victimization: For whom does it work? *J. Youth Adolesc.* **2020**, *49*, 1328–1340. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
92. Abacioglu, C.S.; Zee, M.; Hanna, F.; Soeterik, I.M.; Fischer, A.H.; Volman, M. Practice what you preach: The moderating role of teacher attitudes on the relationship between prejudice reduction and student engagement. *Teach. Teach. Educ.* **2019**, *86*, 102887. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
93. Baysu, G.; Phalet, K. The Up- and Downside of Dual Identity: Stereotype Threat and Minority Performance. *J. Soc. Issues* **2019**, *75*, 568–591. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
94. Hannover, B.; Morf, C.C.; Neuhaus, J.; Rau, M.; Wolfgramm, C.; Zander-Music, L. How immigrant adolescents' self-views in school and family context relate to academic success in Germany. *J. Appl. Soc. Psychol.* **2013**, *43*, 175–189. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
95. Chu, H. Ethnic Identity and Perceived Discrimination as Predictors of Academic Attitudes: The Moderating and Mediating Roles of Psychological Distress and Self-Regulation. Master's Thesis, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, USA, 2011.
96. Shernoff, D.J.; Schmidt, J.A. Further Evidence of an Engagement–Achievement Paradox among U.S. High School Students. *J. Youth Adolesc.* **2008**, *37*, 564–580. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
97. R Core Team. *R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing*; R Foundation for Statistical Computing: Vienna, Austria, 2020. Available online: <https://www.r-project.org/> (accessed on 13 December 2021).
98. Berry, J.W. Acculturation and adaptation: A general framework. In *Mental Health of Immigrants and Refugees*; Holtzman, W.H., Bornemann, T.H., Eds.; Hogg Foundation for Mental Health: Austin, TX, USA, 1990; pp. 90–102.

99. Ganzeboom, H.B.G.; De Graaf, P.M.; Treiman, D.J. A Standard International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status. *Soc. Sci. Res.* **1992**, *21*, 1–56. [[CrossRef](#)]
100. Kunter, M. *PISA 2000. Dokumentation der Erhebungsinstrumente*; Max-Planck-Inst. für Bildungsforschung: Berlin, Germany, 2000.
101. Phinney, J. The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure: A new scale for use with adolescents and young adults from diverse groups. *J. Adolesc. Res.* **1992**, *7*, 156–176. [[CrossRef](#)]
102. Roberts, R.; Phinney, J.S.; Masse, L.; Chen, Y.; Roberts, C.; Romero, A. The Structure of Ethnic Identity of Young Adolescents from Diverse Ethnocultural Groups. *J. Early Adolesc.* **1999**, *19*, 301–322. [[CrossRef](#)]
103. Hu, L.-t.; Bentler, P.M. Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Struct. Equ. Modeling* **1999**, *6*, 1–55. [[CrossRef](#)]
104. Göbel, K.; Lewandowska, Z.M.; Diehr, B. Lernziel Interkulturelle Kompetenz—Lernangebote Im Englischunterricht Der Klassenstufe 9—Eine Reanalyse Der Unterrichtsvideos Der DESI-Studie. *Z. Fremdspr.* **2017**, *22*, 107–121.
105. Juang, L.P.; Schachner, M.K.; Pevec, S.; Moffitt, U. The Identity Project intervention in Germany: Creating a climate for reflection, connection, and adolescent identity development. *New Dir. Child Adolesc. Dev.* **2020**, *173*, 65–82. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
106. Berliner Institut für Empirische Integrations- und Migrationsforschung (BIM). *Wie Lehrkräfte Gute Leistung Fördern können. Forschungsbereich beim Sachverständigenrat Deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration (SVR-Forschungsbereich); Vielfalt im Klassenzimmer*: Berlin, Germany, 2017.
107. Walton, G.M.; Crum, A.J. *Handbook of Wise Interventions*; Guilford Publications: New York, NY, USA, 2020.
108. Schachner, M.K.; Noack, P.; van de Vijver, F.J.R.; Eckstein, K. Cultural Diversity Climate and Psychological Adjustment at School—Equality and Inclusion Versus Cultural Pluralism. *Child Dev.* **2016**, *87*, 1175–1191. [[CrossRef](#)]
109. Schachner, M.K.; Schwarzenhal, M.; van de Vijver, F.J.R.; Noack, P. How all students can belong and achieve: Effects of the cultural diversity climate amongst students of immigrant and nonimmigrant background in Germany. *J. Educ. Psychol.* **2016**, *111*, 703–716. [[CrossRef](#)]
110. Glock, S.; Kneer, J.; Kovacs, C. Preservice teachers' implicit attitudes toward students with and without immigration background: A pilot study. *Stud. Educ. Eval.* **2013**, *39*, 204–210. [[CrossRef](#)]
111. Schwarzenhal, M.; Schachner, M.K.; van de Vijver, F.J.R.; Juang, L.P. Equal but different: Effects of equality/inclusion and cultural pluralism on intergroup outcomes in multiethnic classrooms. *Cult. Divers. Ethn. Minority Psychol.* **2018**, *24*, 260–271. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]

Article

Exploring Academic Self-Concepts Depending on Acculturation Profile. Investigation of a Possible Factor for Immigrant Students' School Success

Nanine Lilla *, Sebastian Thürer, Wim Nieuwenboom and Marianne Schüpbach

Department of Education and Psychology, Freie Universität Berlin, 14195 Berlin, Germany; sebastian.thuerer@uni-bamberg.de (S.T.); wim.nieuwenboom@fnw.ch (W.N.); marianne.schuepbach@fu-berlin.de (M.S.)

* Correspondence: nanine.lilla@fu-berlin.de

Abstract: Academic achievement and academic self-concepts are reciprocally related; hence, investigating academic self-concepts should offer a potential approach for gaining a better understanding of immigrant students' (lack of) school success. Proposing that immigrant students' acculturation orientations need to be taken into account, in this study, we empirically investigate whether immigrant students' general and domain-specific academic self-concept facets differ from those of non-immigrant students depending on their acculturation profile. Based on data from the German National Educational Panel Study (NEPS), we find initial indications that immigrant students' academic self-concept facets are subject to their acculturation profile. The idea that acculturation may influence the known comparisons relevant for self-concept development will be discussed.

Keywords: academic self-concept; acculturation; immigrant students; school success

Citation: Lilla, N.; Thürer, S.; Nieuwenboom, W.; Schüpbach, M. Exploring Academic Self-Concepts Depending on Acculturation Profile. Investigation of a Possible Factor for Immigrant Students' School Success. *Educ. Sci.* **2021**, *11*, 432. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11080432>

Academic Editor: Elena Makarova and Wassilis Kassis

Received: 5 June 2021

Accepted: 19 July 2021

Published: 16 August 2021

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2021 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

Addressing academic self-concepts, i.e., the individuals' self-perception of his or her academic abilities in general and in different domains [1] can help gain insight into educational inequalities as academic self-concepts have been shown to be reciprocally related to a variety of academic outcomes [2,3]. While this has been done with regard to gender and socio-economic differences [4], the study of academic self-concepts has not received much attention in examining immigrant students' academic outcomes [5]. Therefore, this study seeks to improve our understanding of the (lack of) academic success of immigrant students, which has been repeatedly revealed by international school achievement studies, by examining the academic self-concept of immigrant students in Germany.

In one of the first studies to investigate the academic self-concept of immigrant students in Germany over 20 years ago, Roebbers, Mecheril, and Schneider [6] hypothesized that immigrant students would show lower academic self-concepts than non-immigrant students due to the "acculturative stress" they face during adaptation to the new cultural context. This notion referred to Berry [7] and his understanding of migration as a critical life event, which may result in a lack of confidence in one's own skills. Although this reasoning has been taken up by others addressing immigrant students' academic self-concept in relation to their academic achievement [8], studies so far have widely failed to consider that Berry's acculturation model proposes four different patterns of acculturation, which are associated with different degrees of acculturative stress and adaptation outcomes.

To narrow this research gap, in this study, we aim to investigate immigrant students' academic self-concepts depending on their acculturation orientation. To do so, we employ data on ninth grade students in Germany collected within the framework of the German National Educational Panel Study (NEPS). Moreover, for a complex examination of immigrant students' acculturation orientation, acculturation profiles based on Latent Profile

Analysis considering affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects of acculturation will be utilized in exploring different academic self-concept facets as a function of immigrant students' acculturation.

2. Theoretical and Empirical Background

2.1. Acculturation Orientations and Immigrant Students' School Success

2.1.1. Theory of Acculturation

Immigrants have to juggle two different cultures, i.e., the culture of the country of their or their family's origin and the culture of the country of residence. Considering the situation of immigrant students, everyday life entails switching back and forth between the family and the school context with both possibly being connected with different values and beliefs, languages, and cultural practices. Acculturation describes the processes following when different cultures are in enduring contact, resulting in changes on the side of one or both cultures involved [9]. Regarding the individual, these processes of change are also referred to as psychological acculturation [10] and are likely to occur on different levels, e.g., altering attitudes and/or behavioral changes [7,11].

Berry [7,12] postulated four different patterns of cultural orientation in his acculturation model: Integration, where the individual's orientation toward both the culture of the country of origin and the host culture is strong; assimilation, where the individual's orientation toward the culture of origin is weak while it is strong toward the host culture; separation describes the opposite pattern, where the individual's orientation toward the culture of origin is strong while it is weak toward the host culture; and marginalization, where the individual's orientation toward both the culture of origin and the host culture is weak. Following a stress and coping paradigm, Berry proposed that acculturation orientations differentially relate to different levels of acculturative stress and therefore may promote or hamper successful adaptation. In general, integration is considered most adaptive because this pattern is associated with the lowest level of acculturative stress. Marginalization, on the other hand, is considered the least adaptive. The adaptability of assimilation and separation is considered mediocre, since these patterns relate to intermediate levels of acculturative stress.

Based on Berry's fourfold acculturation model, acculturation researchers have developed new conceptualizations and found new approaches to gain a more complex understanding of the acculturation of immigrants. Among the most prominent approaches, there have been models including influences of context or situation, emphasizing more strongly that acculturation is not only a consequence of individual decisions and expresses itself in the same way in all domains of life [13]. Further, Motti-Stefanidi, Berry, Chryssochoou, Sam, and Phinney [14] were the first to address the issue that a broad understanding of immigrant children's and youths' adaptation and adjustment needs to consider developmental processes and developmental tasks that are intertwined with their acculturation (for a detailed review on the evolution of acculturation models please refer to Juang & Syed [15]).

2.1.2. Immigrant Students' Acculturation and Academic Achievement

Employing the notion of different acculturation orientations into studies, empirically investigating immigrant students' school success has shown that the academic achievement of students from ethnic minority backgrounds in fact relates to their acculturation orientation. In an attempt to systematize the findings of empirical research on acculturation in the school context, Makarova and Birman [16] found that a bi-cultural orientation, i.e., integration, was predominantly positively associated with the school adaptation of minority youths. However, some studies also identified assimilative attitudes as beneficial for student performance, and psychological and behavioral adaptation. Since the review included mainly studies conducted in the US (school) context, it is difficult to directly transfer the findings to others (school contexts), as the link between acculturation orientation and adaptation is context-dependent [7].

With regard to Germany, there has been some research in recent years investigating relationships between immigrant students' acculturation orientation and school-related outcomes, showing relationships with competence and grades [17–20], and even envisaged school-leaving certificate [21]. Furthermore, acculturation has been shown to relate to other outcomes than achievement, such as immigrant students' emotional school engagement [22]. The general pattern of findings shown in these studies is that a strong orientation toward the German culture—as is the case for integrated and assimilated immigrant students—is linked to more favorable outcomes on the side of immigrant students' school success.

Generalizations across these studies, however, are problematic, as there is a lack of methodological consensus regarding the operationalization of immigrant students' acculturation pattern. Whereas in the majority of studies, acculturation attitudes and ethnic identity have been in focus [17–19,22], Lilla and colleagues [21] identified patterns of acculturation, taking affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects of acculturation into account [20,21]. Conducting latent profile analysis in a sample of 4400 immigrant students from secondary schools in Germany, four distinct acculturation profiles were identified. Three of the profiles identified resembled assimilation, integration, and separation. The fourth profile, which was characterized by a rather ambiguous tendency of orientation for all of the considered aspects irrespective of the culture behind, was labeled *indifferent*. Latent profile analysis offers the advantage of empirically modeling acculturation without anticipating any patterns in advance, and has already been applied occasionally in acculturation research [23–26]. In the sample of secondary immigrant students in Germany, the indifferent profile was rather prevalent, comprising 46% of immigrant students, while the assimilated profile comprised only 12%, and the integrated profile and the separated profile comprised 20 and 22% of immigrant students, respectively. In line with the general pattern of findings from studies conducted in Germany, Lilla and colleagues found that students with integrated acculturation profiles and students with assimilated acculturation profiles did not differ from non-immigrant students whereas students with separated and indifferent acculturation profiles achieved lower reading competences [20], and were more likely to envisage a low school-leaving certificate instead of an Abitur, i.e., the highest school-leaving certificate than non-immigrant students [21].

2.2. Academic Self-Concept and Immigrant Students' School Success

2.2.1. Academic Self-Concept

Academic self-concept is defined as the individual's self-perception of his or her academic ability in general and in specific domains [1,27]. Based on the notion of a hierarchical and multidimensional self-concept structure [28], the academic self-concept is widely assumed to consist of a general and several domain-specific facets (for a detailed discussion on the structure of the academic self-concept, please refer to Arens, Jansen, Preckel, Schmidt, and Brunner [29]). The Marsh and Shavelson [30] model of academic self-concept, which proposes that academic self-concept is divided into a verbal self-concept and a mathematical self-concept, also specifies how students develop their academic self-concept through both an internal and external frame of reference. The external frame of reference involves comparisons with significant others within the social environment [31]. Especially the context of the classroom is a relevant source for social comparisons of one's performance (e.g., how well do I do compared to my classmates). The performance feedback from teachers and grades function as external signals in social comparison. In addition, parents and further significant others within the family have been discussed as relevant sources for the development of the academic self-concept [32,33]. The internal frame of reference involves intra-individual comparisons such as temporal comparisons, where current performance is compared with previous achievements [34], and dimensional comparisons, where the performance in one domain is set as standards of comparison for the evaluation of the performance in other domains [35]. If there is a discrepancy in performance between

the domains, the self-concept in the domain with the better performance is valued more positively and the self-concept in the weaker discipline is devalued.

2.2.2. Academic Self-Concept and Academic Achievement

Numerous studies give empirical support for the relationship between academic self-concept and academic achievement [27,30,36–38]. Based on the finding that the relationship with academic achievement was especially strong when the link between domain-specific self-concept and domain-specific achievement was regarded [38,39], it has been suggested that verbal self-concept and mathematical self-concept should be considered, rather than focusing on a single general facet of academic self-concept. In consequence, the verbal self-concept and the mathematical self-concept have been extensively researched, showing strong relationships with achievement in L1 subjects and mathematical subjects, respectively. Also, the link showed to be more positive when grades instead of standardized test results were used as indicators for domain-specific achievement [40]. Though the relationships between achievement and general academic self-concept were shown to be less strong, general academic self-concept also proved to be a valid dimension.

Whereas the causal ordering has been in question for some time, today empirical evidence suggests a reciprocal relationship between students' academic self-concepts and academic achievement [3,41]. Further, academic self-concept has been shown to impact interest or intrinsic motivation [42,43], educational aspirations, school attainment, and learning behavior [2,3], as well as education-related decisions such as course choice and subject interest [44,45].

2.2.3. Immigrant Students' Academic Self-Concept and Academic Achievement

Based on the notion of a reciprocal relationship between academic achievement and academic self-concept, for immigrant students it has been typically hypothesized that due to their weak(er) academic performance, they lack confidence in their own abilities [6,8].

However, empirical investigations frequently observed that immigrant students, on average, demonstrate considerable positive academic self-concepts despite their low academic achievement. For example, Seo, Shen, and Benner's [46] investigation of the link between self-concept and academic achievement in minority students in the US found that Black and Latinx students demonstrated lower academic achievement (GPA and standardized test scores) but not lower academic self-concepts (general and domain-specific) than their White peers. Furthermore, the impact of value in schoolwork, which was hypothesized to be lower in Black and Latinx adolescents due to gradual disidentification with school following from repeated negative academic experiences [47], and external attributions, i.e., perceived school fairness, were considered. Neither helped explain the paradox of positive academic self-concept but low academic achievement: Black and Latinx students showed to place greater value in schoolwork, which was positively related to academic self-concept regardless of students' ethnicity. In addition, external attribution did not explain the paradox as a later self-concept showed to be similarly related to previous achievement between Black and White adolescents and even more closely related among Latinx adolescents.

In a recent study in Germany, Siegert and Roth [33] focused on the general academic self-concept of ninth graders with a Turkish immigrant background. Descriptive analyses showed no difference in the levels of academic self-concept between non-immigrant students and immigrant students with Turkish background despite lower competence levels in reading and mathematics and higher proportions in attending the lowest school track [Hauptschule]. Considering family background, gender, average competencies on the individual and class level, and type of school attended, however, their analysis revealed significantly more positive academic self-concepts for Turkish immigrant students than for non-immigrant students. More positive general academic self-concepts were especially true for Turkish immigrant students attending Gymnasium, i.e., the highest school track. As a possible starting point for explaining their results, the authors draw on Billmann-Mahecha

and Tiedemann's [48] assumption that Turkish immigrant students possibly ignore negative feedback to protect self-esteem and rather compare themselves within their social environment to family members who often exhibit low levels of education themselves.

In another German study conducted with secondary students, Schöber, Retelsdorf, and Köller [49] did not find significant differences in verbal self-concept between immigrant and non-immigrant students although immigrant students' achievement was significantly lower. Longitudinal analysis revealed reciprocal effects between achievements in the language domain and verbal self-concept, which were robust regardless of the type of school and migrant background.

Considering both domain-specific facets of academic self-concept, namely verbal self-concept and mathematical self-concept of 15-year-old immigrant students' in German Hauptschulen, Shajek, Lüdtke, and Stanat [8] revealed significantly lower verbal self-concepts but higher mathematical self-concepts for immigrants compared to non-immigrants also when grades in German and in mathematics were considered. Given that immigrant students' grades were comparable to non-immigrants in mathematics but significantly worse in German, this complex pattern of findings was interpreted as evidence for the existence of the internal reference effect.

2.2.4. Immigrant Students' Academic Self-Concept and Acculturation

There is some anecdotal evidence suggesting significant relationships between immigrant students' integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization, and their academic self-concept from the US context.

Investigating the relationship among acculturation, academic self-concept, and academic achievement in a sample of Latino community college students ($N = 148$), Hernandez [50] found that acculturation level, operationalized linearly on a continuum from very Mexican oriented to very Anglo oriented, moderated the association between academic self-concept and GPA, lowering the strength of academic self-concept in predicting GPA.

Further, a study on 200 Caribbean American adolescents lent some support to the hypothesis that immigrant students' acculturation relates to academic self-concept [51]. Correlational findings showed that as heritage and mainstream orientations, which were considered as two separate components of acculturation, increased, academic self-concept also increased. These positive correlations were interpreted as support for the notion that integration, where both heritage and mainstream orientation are strong, is related to more positive academic self-concepts, whereas marginalization, where heritage as well as mainstream orientation are weak, is associated with lower academic self-concept.

The only study we know of which considered integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization as distinct categories of individuals' acculturation orientation, was conducted in a sample of 97 Mexican-American students around the age of 15 years [52]. The analysis identified a significant difference in academic self-concept for integrated students in comparison to assimilated students. No significant difference was observed between integrated students' academic self-concept and students categorized as rejection (i.e., separation) and deculturated (i.e., marginalized). A serious limitation of this study, however, is that acculturation categories were operationalized based on a midpoint scale split technique, which led to disproportional distributions across categories (e.g., 73% were identified as integration and only 9% as assimilation). Also, confounding background characteristics such as gender or generational status were only considered regarding mean differences but not controlled for in the main analysis.

Though generalization and transferability of the findings from minority students in the US to immigrant students in Germany are limited, findings from these studies can be understood to confirm that "acculturation, which is an extremely important process for immigrant youths, plays a significant role in understanding academic self-concept in this population" (p. 120) [51]. Furthermore, the state of research is limited as academic self-concept was assessed on a global level rather than evaluating several facets of academic self-concept.

2.3. Research Questions of the Present Study

Taking up the notion that acculturation relates to immigrant students' academic self-concept [6,8,52], which might be a possible explanation for immigrant students' (lack of) school success, this study examines possible associations between immigrant students' acculturation orientation and their academic self-concepts. For this purpose, a representative sample of ninth graders in Germany is investigated to examine whether immigrant students differ from non-immigrant students regarding their academic self-concepts depending on their acculturation profile. Doing so, general academic self-concept as well as subject-specific academic self-concepts are considered.

More specifically, this article examines the following research questions:

(1) What is the nature of general and domain-specific academic self-concepts of immigrant students depending on their acculturation profile in comparison to non-immigrant students?

(2) What are the relationships between general and domain-specific academic self-concepts and grades in German and in mathematics in immigrant students depending on their acculturation profile?

(3) What are the relationships between immigrant students' acculturation profile and their general and domain-specific academic self-concepts when controlling for grades, students' gender, socio-economic background, and attended school track?

3. Methods

3.1. Sample

The empirical basis of the study is the data from the German National Educational Panels Study (NEPS), a longitudinal study on educational trajectories following a multi-cohort sequence design. A detailed description of the panel study can be found in Blossfeld et al. [53]. The overall sample of ninth graders who took part in Starting Cohort 4 comprises 16,425 students. The data from 1186 students attending special schools were excluded for our analysis. The resulting analyses sample comprises $N = 15,239$ students (47.6% male, 47.3% female, 5.1% did not indicate their gender) who were approximately 15 years old ($M = 14.73$, $SD = 0.72$) at the time of the survey. The sample includes a total of $n = 4070$ students characterized as immigrant students in first, second, or third generation. The major immigrant groups were from Turkey (19.5%), the Former Soviet Union (17.0%), and Poland (10.8%).

3.2. Measures

3.2.1. Acculturation Profiles

Within the NEPS, immigrant students were assessed with scales on feeling of belonging to the host society and the society of origin ("How much do you yourself identify with the people from Germany/this country overall?") and the feeling of connectedness (e.g., "I feel closely connected to the people from Germany/this country") [54], cultural habits, addressing e.g., listening to music, cooking, public holidays, and language use within the family. Based on these affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects of acculturation, patterns of acculturation orientations were empirically identified conducting Latent Profile Analysis revealing four distinct profiles of acculturation. Following Berry's [7] theoretical model, profiles were interpreted as assimilated, integrated, separated, and indifferent (for a detailed description of the method and the resulting profiles please refer to Lilla et al., [21]; Thürer et al. [20]).

3.2.2. Academic Self-Concepts

Different instruments were implemented measuring students' academic self-concepts [55]. Employing three short scales with three items each, the general dimension of academic self-concept along with subject-specific dimensions, i.e., verbal self-concept and mathematical self-concept, were administered (sample item general academic self-concept: "I learn quickly in most school subjects."; sample item domain specific self-concept: "I

get good grades in German [/mathematics].") [56]. For all items, answer options read 1 = 'does not apply at all', 2 = 'does rather not apply', 3 = 'does rather apply', and 4 = 'does completely apply'.

3.2.3. Grades in German and Mathematics

Students' self-reported grades in German and mathematics from the most recent student report card ranging from 1 (*very good*) to 6 (*insufficient*) were administered. For our analysis, grades were recoded so that higher values indicate more favorable school outcomes.

3.2.4. School Track

The German secondary school system provides different school tracks to which students are assigned to on the basis of prior achievement in primary school. Five school tracks distinguished in the NEPS were considered: Vocational school track (*Hauptschule*) offering the lowest school leaving certificate; intermediate school track (*Realschule*); academic track (*Gymnasium*) offering the highest school leaving certificate (Abitur) allowing students to attend university; as well as a comprehensive school track (*Gesamtschule*); and schools offering several tracks (*Schulen mit mehreren Bildungsgängen*).

3.2.5. Control Variables

Students' gender and the highest value of parents' International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status (HISEI, [57]) as an indicator of students' socio-economic background were accounted for as relevant background characteristics.

3.3. Statistical Analysis

Prior to conducting the main analysis, latent profile analyses (LPA) were conducted using Mplus Version 8.2 [58]. All subsequent statistical analysis conducted to assess our research questions were performed using IBM SPSS 25. Following descriptive and correlational analysis, we performed a series of multiple regression analysis using three different scales measuring academic self-concept as dependent variables, i.e., general academic self-concept, verbal self-concept, and mathematical self-concept. Controlling for grades in German and mathematics (first step), immigrant students' acculturation profiles were included in a second step in the form of dummy-coded predictors with non-immigrant students as the reference group. Finally, students' gender, socio-economic background, and attended school track (as dummy-coded variables with the vocational track being the reference group) were included in a third step.

If immigrant students' acculturation profiles relate to their academic self-concepts, this would be indicated by significant coefficients for the corresponding acculturation profile. A positive coefficient would indicate that the self-concepts of immigrant students with the specific acculturation profile are more positive than non-immigrant students' self-concepts. Negative coefficients would indicate that the self-concepts of immigrant students with the specific acculturation profile are less positive than non-immigrant students' self-concepts.

Missing values were imputed multiple times considering all variables contained in the analysis model. Coefficients presented below refer to the pooled dataset.

4. Results

4.1. Characteristics of Non-Immigrant Students and Immigrant Students Depending on Their Acculturation Profile

Table 1 gives an overview of the group characteristics of the non-immigrant students and immigrant students depending on their acculturation profile. ANOVAs conducted on general academic self-concept, verbal self-concept, mathematical self-concept, grades in German, and grades in mathematics yielded substantial differences between groups. To follow up on that, simple contrasts were conducted to obtain comparisons between

non-immigrant students and immigrant students with an assimilated, an integrated, a separated, and an indifferent acculturation profile, respectively.

There were no substantial differences in simple contrasts between assimilated immigrant students and non-immigrant students regarding general academic self-concept ($p = 0.79$), verbal self-concept ($p = 0.91$), and mathematical self-concept ($p = 0.06$). The same applied regarding grade in German ($p = 0.69$) and grade in mathematics ($p = 0.17$).

Contrasting the group of immigrant students with an integrated acculturation profile against non-immigrant students showed significant differences in general academic self-concept and verbal self-concept, which both were substantially lower for integrated students ($ps < 0.001$). Regarding mathematical self-concept, there was no significant difference ($p = 0.87$). Grades in German ($p < 0.001$) and in mathematics ($p = 0.035$) showed to be less favorable for the group of integrated students.

Contrasting the group of separated immigrant students to non-immigrant students revealed no substantial differences regarding general academic self-concept ($p = 0.70$) and verbal self-concept ($p = 0.47$), while mathematical self-concept was substantially lower ($p = 0.015$). At the same time, however, the separated immigrant students' grades in German and mathematics were significantly less favorable ($p = 0.004$ and $p < 0.001$) than for non-immigrant students.

Finally, direct comparisons of the group of indifferent immigrant students to non-immigrant students showed no substantial difference in general academic self-concept ($p = 0.12$), while both verbal and mathematical self-concept showed to be significantly lower ($p = 0.008$ and $p = 0.001$), and grades in German and mathematics were substantially less favorable ($ps < 0.001$).

Regarding control variables, chi-square analysis showed that male and female students were unequally distributed across groups, $\chi^2(4, N = 15,545) = 13.72, p = 0.003$. An ANOVA conducted on students' socio-economic background yielded significant differences and the same simple contrasts showed significantly lower levels of HISEI for immigrant students with integrated, separated, and indifferent acculturation profiles in comparison to non-immigrant students ($ps \leq 0.001$). Between the group of immigrant students with an assimilated acculturation profile and non-immigrant students, no significant difference existed ($p = 0.84$). Regarding school track, chi-square analysis showed unequal distribution across groups, except for the intermediate track (vocational track: $\chi^2(4, N = 16,323) = 545.06, p < 0.001$; intermediate track $\chi^2(4, N = 16,323) = 9.25, p = 0.055$; comprehensive schools: $\chi^2(4, N = 16,323) = 214.93, p < 0.001$; academic track: $\chi^2(4, N = 16,323) = 312.01, p < 0.001$).

Table 2 shows intercorrelations of all continuous variables. This shows a similar pattern for immigrant students and non-immigrant students. To follow up on that, the intercorrelations of self-concept scales and grades in German and mathematics were looked at depending on immigrant students' acculturation profile. Figure 1 shows intercorrelations of self-concept measures depending on immigrant students' acculturation profile without controlling for any background characteristics, possibly affecting the associations between academic self-concept facets and grades.

Table 1. Descriptives for the Variables of Interest for Non-Immigrant Students and Immigrant Students as a Function of Acculturation Profile.

Scale	Non-Immigrant Students (n = 11,923)			Immigrant Students								
	n	M	SD	Assimilated Profile (n = 517)		Integrated Profile (n = 359)		Separated Profile (n = 1559)		Indifferent Profile (n = 1965)		
				n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
General academic self-concept	11,096	2.88	0.57	515	2.88	0.64	356	2.74	0.57	1550	2.87	0.59
Verbal self-concept	11,114	2.95	0.62	515	2.96	0.62	355	2.72	0.67	1549	2.92	0.63
Mathematical self-concept	11,097	2.54	0.92	516	2.42	0.98	356	2.55	0.93	1548	2.44	0.93
Grade in German	10,640	4.19	0.81	495	4.19	0.78	333	3.83	0.83	1463	4.08	0.82
Grade in mathematics	10,581	4.08	1.01	495	4.02	1.05	330	3.94	1.03	1462	3.90	1.04
Gender												
(female)	11,923	49.0%		517	53.8%		359	43.9%		1559	51.9%	
HISEI	7268	53.84	19.82	310	53.55	20.81	170	46.53	21.30	896	51.28	21.40
Vocational track	11,923	19.1%		517	21.7%		359	44.0%		1559	26.4%	
Intermediate track	11,923	20.3%		517	20.3%		359	18.4%		1559	18.7%	
Comprehensive schools	11,923	8.3%		517	14.5%		359	17.0%		1559	17.4%	
Academic track	11,923	35.4%		517	37.3%		359	17.0%		1559	31.2%	

Note. For grades, higher scores represent outcomes that are more favorable.

Table 2. Intercorrelations of the Variables of Interest for Non-Immigrant Students and Immigrant Students.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. General academic self-concept	-	0.41 ***	0.26 ***	0.35 ***	0.29 ***	0.06 **
2. Verbal self-concept	0.41 ***	-	-0.10 ***	0.54 ***	0.01	0.08 ***
3. Mathematical self-concept	0.32 ***	-0.06 ***	-	0.00	0.64 ***	0.02
4. Grade in German	0.42 ***	0.55 ***	0.05 ***	-	0.31 ***	0.21 ***
5. Grade in mathematics	0.37 ***	0.64 ***	0.64 ***	0.39 ***	-	0.11 ***
6. HISEI	0.09 ***	0.08 ***	0.04 ***	0.15 ***	0.11 ***	-

Note. Intercorrelations for immigrant students are presented above the diagonal, and intercorrelations for non-immigrant students are presented below the diagonal. ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

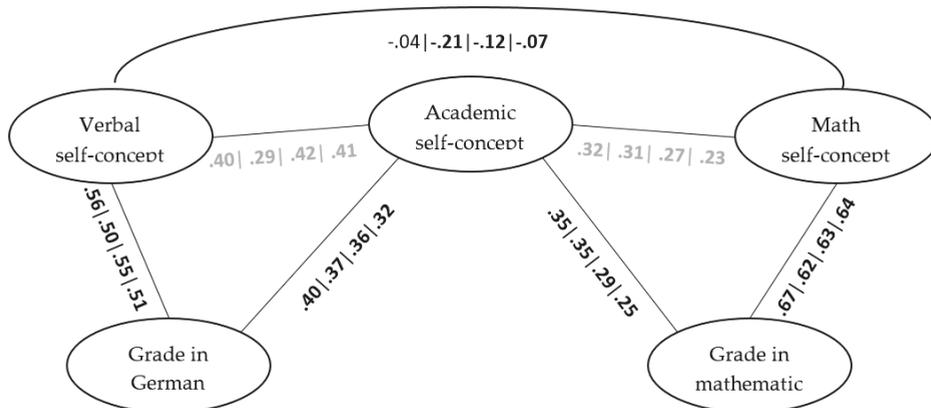


Figure 1. General Intercorrelations of Academic Self-Concept Measures and Grades depending on Immigrant Students' Acculturation Profile. *Note.* Numbers represent general intercorrelations for immigrant students with assimilated profile, integrated profile, separated profile, and indifferent profile; Bold numbers stand for significant intercorrelations ($p < 0.01$).

There is a strong positive correlation between grade in German and verbal self-concept for all acculturation profiles ($r_s \geq 0.50$), i.e., more favorable grades in German are associated with a more positive verbal self-concept and vice versa.

Grades in mathematics show to be even more strongly positively correlated with mathematical self-concept for all acculturation profiles ($r_s \geq 0.62$), i.e., more favorable grades in mathematics are associated with a more positive mathematical self-concept and vice versa.

Verbal self-concept and mathematical self-concept show to be differentially correlated depending on acculturation profile. While for the group of immigrant students' with an assimilated profile, there is no significant correlation, there are significant, however, weak, negative correlations between verbal and mathematical self-concept within the group of integrated, separated, and indifferent immigrants.

General academic self-concept shows to correlate moderately with both grade in German ($r_s \geq 0.32$) and grade in mathematics ($r_s \geq 0.25$), hence the correlations are less strong than the intercorrelations between grades and domain-specific self-concepts. Differences between immigrant students depend on their acculturation profile. Regarding the link between verbal self-concept and grade in German, intercorrelation was comparatively weaker for the group of indifferent immigrant students. Regarding the link between mathematical self-concept and grade in mathematics, intercorrelations were comparatively weaker for the group of separated and indifferent immigrant students.

General academic self-concept also showed to be correlated to both verbal and mathematical self-concept. General academic self-concept and verbal self-concept in general showed to be positive moderately related. Students with an integrated acculturation profile ($r = 0.29$, $p < 0.01$) were lower than for all other profiles ($r \geq 0.40$, $p < 0.01$). Regarding the link between general academic self-concept and mathematical self-concept, intercorrelations were comparatively lower, especially for immigrant students with separated ($r = 0.27$, $p < 0.01$) or indifferent profile ($r = 0.23$, $p < 0.01$).

4.2. Academic Self-Concepts of Immigrant Students as a Function of Their Acculturation Profile

Table 3 shows the results of the multiple regression analysis predicting the different facets of academic self-concept depending on immigrant students' acculturation profile controlling for grades in German and mathematics, and additionally taking gender, HISEI, and school track into account.

Table 3. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Immigrant Students’ Academic Self-Concepts Depending on Acculturation Profile.

	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 1c	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 2c	Model 3a	Model 3b	Model 3c
	(dv: Verbal Self-Concept)			(dv: Mathematical Self-Concept)			(dv: General Academic Self-Concept)		
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Constant	4.16 *** (0.02)	4.15 *** (0.02)	4.12 *** (0.03)	4.26 *** (0.02)	4.26 *** (0.02)	4.52 *** (0.04)	3.92 *** (0.02)	3.92 *** (0.02)	4.01 *** (0.03)
Grade German	0.43 *** (0.01)	0.43 *** (0.01)	0.42 *** (0.01)				0.22 *** (0.01)	0.23 *** (0.01)	0.24 *** (0.01)
Grade mathematics				0.59 *** (0.01)	0.59 *** (0.01)	0.58 *** (0.01)	0.14 *** (0.01)	0.14 *** (0.01)	0.13 *** (0.01)
Non-immigrant (Ref)									
Assimilated Profile		0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)		−0.09 ** (0.03)	−0.07 * (0.03)		0.01 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Integrated Profile		−0.07 * (0.03)	−0.08 ** (0.03)		0.09 * (0.04)	0.06 (0.04)		−0.04 (0.03)	−0.05 (0.03)
Separated Profile		0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)		−0.00 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)		0.04 ** (0.02)	0.05 ** (0.02)
Indifferent Profile		0.05 *** (0.01)	0.04 ** (0.01)		0.09 *** (0.02)	0.07 *** (0.02)		0.11 *** (0.01)	0.11 *** (0.01)
Gender (1 = female)			0.09 *** (0.01)			−0.39 *** (0.01)		0.11 *** (0.01)	−0.08 *** (0.01)
HISEI			0.00 (0.00)			−0.00 * (0.00)		−0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Intermediate track			−0.03 * (0.01)			−0.01 + (0.02)			−0.02 (0.01)
Comprehensive schools			−0.06 *** (0.02)			−0.09 *** (0.02)			−0.07 *** (0.02)
Academic track			−0.04 *** (0.01)			−0.05 *** (0.02)			−0.06 *** (0.01)
Δ R ²	0.31	0.31	0.32	0.43	0.43	0.47	0.23	0.23	0.24

Note. N = 15,239 + p < 0.10, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

For all dependent variables, the first step of the regression models shows strong positive effects of grade on the specific subject on domain-specific self-concept or grade in German and mathematics for the prediction of general academic self-concept.

In Model 1, predicting verbal self-concept, including acculturation profiles in the second step (Model 1b), shows a significant negative coefficient for integrated immigrant students and a significant positive coefficient for immigrant students with indifferent acculturation profiles. For assimilated and separated acculturation profile, no significant coefficient emerged. This pattern of findings remains stable also after including gender, HISEI, and school track in the third step (Model 1c).

In Model 2, predicting mathematical self-concept, including acculturation profile in the second step (Model 2b) shows a significant negative coefficient for the assimilated profile and significant positive profiles for integrated and indifferent profile. For separated acculturation profile, no significant coefficient emerged. Including gender, HISEI, and school track in the third step (Model 2c), the coefficient for the integrated acculturation profile no longer reached statistical significance.

In Model 3, predicting general academic self-concept, including acculturation profile in the second step (Model 3b), showed significant positive coefficients for separated and indifferent acculturation profiles. For assimilated and integrated acculturation profiles, coefficients were not statistically significant. Including gender, HISEI, and school track in the third step (Model 3c), the pattern of findings remained stable.

5. Discussion

Academic self-concept has proven to be a relevant factor for or against academic achievement [30,36]. Given that immigrant students perform more poorly, it is important to understand the factors that influence the academic self-concepts of immigrant students if their academic achievement is to be improved.

The German state of research on immigrant students' academic self-concept, however, is limited. Findings from singular studies revealed either more positive self-concepts for secondary immigrant students in comparison to non-immigrant students, e.g., more positive general academic self-concepts in Turkish immigrant students [33], or no differences in self-concept, e.g., regarding immigrant students' verbal self-concept [49], though immigrant students achieved significantly lower across studies. Only the study from Shajek and colleagues [8] showed more negative verbal self-concepts for students with non-German first languages, while their mathematical self-concepts were more positive in comparison to students speaking German in the family.

With the odds for academic performance not in favor for immigrant students and regarding the fact that academic self-concept is reciprocally related to academic achievement, this study aimed to contribute to this area of research by investigating academic self-aspects of ninth grade immigrant students. Furthermore, this study aimed to enhance the state of existing research as it investigated academic self-concept of immigrant students depending on their acculturation profile. To do so, relationships between both general and domain-specific facets were investigated.

Acculturation profiles were empirically identified in a prior study [20,21] following a latent profile approach in order to capture distinct profiles of acculturation without prior anticipation of acculturation patterns [23].

Descriptive findings revealed differences in grades for immigrant students with an integrated, separated, and indifferent acculturation profile, indicating that in comparison to non-immigrant students, they receive less positive performance feedback. However, for assimilated immigrant students, direct comparisons did not reveal any significant differences in grades. Though this applies to only 12% of students with an immigrant background in the sample, it questions the validity of generalized statements about immigrant students' academic underachievement. Furthermore, this finding is in line with findings from studies conducted in Germany on the relationships between immigrant students' acculturation and their academic achievement operationalized with standardized performance tests [17–20].

Following the notion of a reciprocal relation between academic achievement and academic self-concept, lower self-concepts could be expected for integrated, separated, and indifferent immigrant students. In direct comparison to non-immigrant students, in fact, integrated immigrant students were found to show lower levels of general academic self-concept and verbal self-concept, separated immigrant students showed lower levels in mathematical-self-concept, and indifferent immigrant students were found to exhibit lower levels in both domain-specific self-concept facets. No discrepancies were found for assimilated immigrant students' academic self-concept facets.

Intercorrelations between self-concept scales and grades showed the expected strong positive relationships between grades and self-concept scales with only slight variation in strengths depending on acculturation profile.

Though not in the focus of this study, the intercorrelations between verbal self-concept and mathematical self-concept showed an unexpected finding. For integrated, separated, and indifferent immigrant students, negative relationships emerged, though according to the internal/external frame of reference-model, domain-specific self-concepts are supposed to be uncorrelated [39], which was true for non-immigrant students and immigrant students with an assimilated profile in the sample. Future research on acculturation and self-concept should follow up on that interesting finding.

As it is hard to draw conclusions from studies on the relationships between acculturation and academic self-concept, which have not considered relevant background characteristics [50–52], we further investigated possible associations of academic self-concept with immigrant students' acculturation profile in a multivariate procedure. Doing so, our analysis at first sight showed a rather scattered pattern of findings depending on the predicted facets of academic self-concept. Taking a second look, however, reveals interesting patterns across self-concept facets: For assimilated immigrant students, the analysis conducted finds no significant difference in verbal self-concept in comparison to non-immigrant students, while mathematical self-concept is significantly lower. For integrated immigrant students, the opposite pattern, i.e., lower verbal-self-concept and even slightly more positive mathematical self-concept, can be found. These findings resemble the pattern of results from the study by Shajek and colleagues [8], testing the internal/external frame of reference in a sample of immigrant students, indicating the effect of dimensional comparisons. Interestingly, assimilated students seem to devalue their mathematical self-concept while integrated students devalue their verbal self-concept. Admittedly, though significant, the coefficients were rather small and need to be followed up by future research conducting path analysis to substantiate these findings. Neither assimilated nor integrated immigrant students differed regarding their level of general academic self-concept.

On the contrary, for separated immigrant students, no significant differences emerged regarding the domain-specific self-concept facets, but regarding general academic self-concept, which showed to be more positive. Interestingly, indifferent immigrant students showed more positive verbal, mathematical, and general academic self-concepts than non-immigrant students, also when grades were controlled for and possible confounders considered. Trying to put some meaning into this finding, it is conceivable that these results indicate that indifferent students and maybe to some extent also separated immigrant students use other frames of reference and set comparison standards different from those applied by assimilated and integrated students. Whereas the latter two groups possibly orient more toward native peers for social comparison, the former two groups possibly rather check their academic performance against significant others outside of the school context, maybe from the same ethnic group. All of these interpretations remain only tentative as long as there are no further studies to substantiate the empirical findings.

Discussing the results of our study, it must be borne in mind that the analysis is based on data that was collected in 2010/2011. Since that time, the immigrant situation in Germany has certainly changed, for instance due to immigration of refugees in the last decade. To what extent the acculturation profiles and their associations with different facets of academic self-concept differ today remains an open question at this point.

6. Conclusions

A positive self-concept is widely valued as a desirable outcome [3]. Hence, our findings raise the question whether the more positive academic self-concepts shown for indifferent students are a consequence of their acculturation profile, acting as a protective factor against negative feedback and making these immigrant students more resilient. On the other hand, our findings might as well be understood as a sign of disidentification with school [47].

As already mentioned, findings and their interpretations need to be treated with some respect, as coefficients were only small. Further research would be needed to follow up on the topic, for instance by applying path analytic approaches or structural equation modeling techniques. Incorporating longitudinal analysis would also help to investigate the reciprocal relationship within acculturation patterns more thoroughly. To gain more knowledge on possible comparison partners, future surveys may collect more data on the students' social environment or directly ask students for their social comparison partners, which could be compared between acculturation patterns. If further investigations show support for differential academic self-concepts depending on immigrant students' acculturation profile, teachers and other school personnel need to be informed about possibilities to promote the academic achievement of immigrant students, e.g., by interventions facilitating both the orientation toward the host culture and a positive academic self-concept.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, N.L.; methodology, N.L., W.N. and M.S.; formal analysis, N.L. and S.T.; writing—original draft, N.L.; writing—review & editing, N.L., S.T., W.N. and M.S.; project administration, N.L.; supervision, M.S.; funding acquisition, N.L. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation)—grant number: LI 3067-1/1. The publication of this article was funded by Freie Universität Berlin.

Data Availability Statement: Restrictions apply to the availability of these data. Access to the NEPS data requires the conclusion of a Data Use Agreement with the Leibniz Institute for Educational Trajectories (LifBi).

Acknowledgments: This paper uses data from the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS): Starting Cohort Grade 9, doi:10.5157/NEPS:SC4:11.0.0. From 2008 to 2013, NEPS data was collected as part of the Framework Program for the Promotion of Empirical Educational Research funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). As of 2014, NEPS has been carried out by the Leibniz Institute for Educational Trajectories (LifBi) at the University of Bamberg in cooperation with a nationwide network.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

1. Brunner, M.; Keller, U.; Dierendonck, C.; Reichert, M.; Ugen, S.; Fischbach, A.; Martin, R. The Structure of Academic Self-Concepts Revisited: The Nested Marsh/Shavelson Model. *J. Educ. Psychol.* **2010**, *102*, 964–981. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
2. Marsh, H.W. *Self-Concept Theory, Measurement and Research into Practice: The Role of Self-Concept in Educational Psychology*; British Psychological Society: Leicester, UK, 2007.
3. Marsh, H.W.; Craven, R.G. Reciprocal Effects of Self-Concept and Performance From a Multidimensional Perspective: Beyond Seductive Pleasure and Unidimensional Perspectives. *Perspect. Psychol. Sci.* **2006**, *133*–163. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
4. OECD. *PISA 2012 Results: Ready to Learn (Volume III)*; OECD Publishing: Paris, France, 2013. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
5. Areepattamannil, S.; Freeman, J.G. Academic Achievement, Academic Self-Concept, and Academic Motivation of Immigrant Adolescents in the Greater Toronto Area Secondary Schools. *J. Adv. Acad.* **2008**, *19*, 700–743. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
6. Roebers, C.M.; Mecheril, A.; Schneider, W. Migrantenkinder in deutschen Schulen. Eine Studie zur Persönlichkeitsentwicklung. *Z. Pädagogik* **1998**, *44*, 723–736.
7. Berry, J.W. Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation. *Appl. Psychol.* **1997**, *46*, 5–34. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
8. Shajek, A.; Lüdtke, O.; Stanat, P. Akademische Selbstkonzepte bei Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund. *Unterrichtswissenschaft* **2006**, *34*, 125–145.
9. Redfield, R.; Linton, R.; Herskovits, M.J. Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation. *Am. Anthropol.* **1936**, *38*, 149–152. [\[CrossRef\]](#)

10. Graves, T.D. Psychological Acculturation in a Tri-Ethnic Community. *Southwest. J. Anthropol.* **1967**, *23*, 337–350. [[CrossRef](#)]
11. Schwartz, S.J.; Unger, J.B.; Zamboanga, B.L.; Szapocznik, J. Rethinking the Concept of Acculturation: Implications for Theory and Research. *Am. Psychol.* **2010**, *65*, 237–251. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
12. Berry, J.W. Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures. *Int. J. Intercult. Relat.* **2005**, *29*, 697–712. [[CrossRef](#)]
13. Arends-Tóth, J.; van de Vijver, F.J.R. Issues in the Conceptualization of Acculturation. In *Acculturation and Parent-Child Relationships: Measurement and Development*; Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: Abingdon, UK, 2006; pp. 33–62.
14. Motti-Stefanidi, F.; Berry, J.; Chrysochoou, X.; Lackland Sam, D.; Phinney, J. Positive Immigrant Youth Adaptation in Context: Developmental, Acculturation, and Social-Psychological Perspectives. In *Realizing the Potential of Immigrant Youth*; Masten, A.S., Liebkind, K., Hernandez, D.J., Eds.; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, NY, USA, 2012; pp. 117–158.
15. Juang, L.P.; Syed, M. The Evolution of Acculturation and Development Models for Understanding Immigrant Children and Youth Adjustment. *Child Dev. Perspect.* **2019**, *13*, 241–246. [[CrossRef](#)]
16. Makarova, E.; Birman, D. Cultural Transition and Academic Achievement of Students from Ethnic Minority Backgrounds: A Content Analysis of Empirical Research on Acculturation. *Educ. Res.* **2015**, *57*, 305–330. [[CrossRef](#)]
17. Edele, A.; Stanat, P.; Radmann, S.; Segeritz, M. Kulturelle Identität und Lesekompetenz von Jugendlichen aus zugewanderten Familien. *Z. Pädagogik.* **2013**, *59*, 84–110.
18. Hannover, B.; Morf, C.C.; Neuhaus, J.; Rau, M.; Wolfgramm, C.; Zander-Musić, L. How Immigrant Adolescents' Self-Views in School and Family Context Relate to Academic Success in Germany. *J. Appl. Soc. Psychol.* **2013**, *43*, 175–189. [[CrossRef](#)]
19. Schotte, K.; Stanat, P.; Edele, A. Is Integration Always Most Adaptive? The Role of Cultural Identity in Academic Achievement and in Psychological Adaptation of Immigrant Students in Germany. *J. Youth Adolesc.* **2018**, *47*, 16–37. [[CrossRef](#)]
20. Thürer, S.; Lilla, N.; Nieuwenboom, W.; Schüpbach, M. Individuelle und im Klassenkontext vorherrschende Akkulturationsorientierung und die individuelle Lesekompetenz von Schülerinnen und Schülern der 9. Klasse. *J. Educ. Res. Online* **2021**. accepted.
21. Lilla, N.; Thürer, S.; Nieuwenboom, W.; Schüpbach, M. Assimiliert–Abitur, separiert–Hauptschulabschluss? Zum Zusammenhang zwischen Akkulturation und angestrebtem Schulabschluss. *Z. Für Erzieh.* **2021**, *24*, 571–592. [[CrossRef](#)]
22. Göbel, K.; Preusche, Z.M. Emotional School Engagement among Minority Youth: The Relevance of Cultural Identity, Perceived Discrimination, and Perceived Support. *Intercult. Educ.* **2019**, *30*, 547–563. [[CrossRef](#)]
23. Fox, R.S.; Merz, E.L.; Solórzano, M.T.; Roesch, S.C. Further Examining Berry's Model. *Meas. Eval. Couns. Dev.* **2013**, *46*, 270–288. [[CrossRef](#)]
24. Matsunaga, M.; Hecht, M.L.; Elek, E.; Ndiaye, K. Ethnic Identity Development and Acculturation: A Longitudinal Analysis of Mexican-Heritage Youth in the Southwest United States. *J. Cross-Cult. Psychol.* **2010**, *41*, 410–427. [[CrossRef](#)]
25. Nieri, T.; Lee, C.; Kulis, S.; Marsiglia, F.F. Acculturation among Mexican-Heritage Preadolescents: A Latent Class Analysis. *Soc. Sci. Res.* **2011**, *40*, 1236–1248. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
26. Schwartz, S.J.; Zamboanga, B.L. Testing Berry's Model of Acculturation: A Confirmatory Latent Class Approach. *Cultur. Divers. Ethnic Minor. Psychol.* **2008**, *14*, 275–285. [[CrossRef](#)]
27. Marsh, H.W. The Structure of Academic Self-Concept: The Marsh/Shavelson Model. *J. Educ. Psychol.* **1990**, *82*, 623–636. [[CrossRef](#)]
28. Shavelson, R.J.; Hubner, J.J.; Stanton, G.C. Self-Concept: Validation of Construct Interpretations. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **1976**, *46*, 407–441. [[CrossRef](#)]
29. Arens, A.K.; Jansen, M.; Preckel, F.; Schmidt, I.; Brunner, M. The Structure of Academic Self-Concept: A Methodological Review and Empirical Illustration of Central Models. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **2021**, *91*, 34–72. [[CrossRef](#)]
30. Marsh, H.W.; Shavelson, R. Self-Concept: Its Multifaceted, Hierarchical Structure. *Educ. Psychol.* **1985**, *20*, 107–123. [[CrossRef](#)]
31. Festinger, L. A Theory of Social Comparison Processes. *Hum. Relat.* **1954**, *7*, 117–140. [[CrossRef](#)]
32. Gniewosz, B. Die Konstruktion des akademischen Selbstkonzeptes. *Z. Für Entwickl. Pädagog. Psychol.* **2010**, *42*, 133–142. [[CrossRef](#)]
33. Siegert, M.; Roth, T. Das schulische Selbstkonzept von türkeistämmigen Neuntklässlern und von Neuntklässlern ohne Migrationshintergrund. *KZfSS Köln. Z. Für Soziol. Soz.* **2020**, *72*, 627–650. [[CrossRef](#)]
34. Albert, S. Temporal Comparison Theory. *Psychol. Rev.* **1977**, *84*, 485–503. [[CrossRef](#)]
35. Möller, J.; Marsh, H.W. Dimensional Comparison Theory. *Psychol. Rev.* **2013**, *120*, 544–560. [[CrossRef](#)]
36. Byrne, B.M. The General/Academic Self-Concept Nomological Network: A Review of Construct Validation Research. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **1984**, *54*, 427–456. [[CrossRef](#)]
37. Marsh, H.W. Academic Self-Concept: Theory, Measurement, and Research. In *Psychological Perspectives on the Self; The Self in Social Perspective*; Suls, J.M., Ed.; Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.: New York, NY, USA, 1993; Volume 4, pp. 59–98.
38. Marsh, H.W.; Byrne, B.M.; Shavelson, R.J. A Multifaceted Academic Self-Concept: Its Hierarchical Structure and Its Relation to Academic Achievement. *J. Educ. Psychol.* **1988**, *80*, 366–380. [[CrossRef](#)]
39. Marsh, H.W. Verbal and Math Self-Concepts: An Internal/External Frame of Reference Model. *Am. Educ. Res. J.* **1986**, *23*, 129–149. [[CrossRef](#)]
40. Möller, J.; Pohlmann, B.; Köller, O.; Marsh, H.W. A Meta-Analytic Path Analysis of the Internal/External Frame of Reference Model of Academic Achievement and Academic Self-Concept. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **2009**, *79*, 1129–1167. [[CrossRef](#)]
41. Marsh, H.W.; Martin, A.J. Academic Self-Concept and Academic Achievement: Relations and Causal Ordering. *Br. J. Educ. Psychol.* **2011**, *81*, 59–77. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
42. Köller, O.; Trautwein, U.; Lüdtke, O.; Baumert, J. Zum Zusammenspiel von schulischer Leistung, Selbstkonzept und Interesse in der gymnasialen Oberstufe. *Z. Für Pädagog. Psychol.* **2006**, *20*, 27–39. [[CrossRef](#)]

43. Skaalvik, S.; Skaalvik, E.M. Self-Concept, Motivational Orientation, and Help-Seeking Behavior in Mathematics: A Study of Adults Returning to High School. *Soc. Psychol. Educ.* **2005**, *8*, 285–302. [[CrossRef](#)]
44. Eccles, J.S.; O'Neill, S.A.; Wigfield, A. Ability Self-Perceptions and Subjective Task Values in Adolescents and Children. In *What Do Children Need to Flourish? Conceptualizing and Measuring Indicators of Positive Development*; Moore, K.A., Lippman, L.H., Eds.; The Search Institute Series on Developmentally Attentive Community and Society; Springer: Boston, MA, USA, 2005; pp. 237–249.
45. Trautwein, U.; Möller, J. Self-Concept: Determinants and Consequences of Academic Self-Concept in School Contexts. In *Psychosocial Skills and School Systems in the 21st Century: Theory, Research, and Practice*; Lipnevich, A.A., Preckel, F., Roberts, R.D., Eds.; Springer International Publishing AG: Cham, Switzerland, 2016; pp. 187–214.
46. Seo, E.; Shen, Y.; Benner, A.D. The Paradox of Positive Self-Concept and Low Achievement among Black and Latinx Youth: A Test of Psychological Explanations. *Contemp. Educ. Psychol.* **2019**, *59*. [[CrossRef](#)]
47. Steele, C.M. Race and the Schooling of African-American Americans. *Atl. Mon.* **1992**, *269*, 68–78.
48. Billmann-Mahecha, E.; Tiedemann, J. Übergangsempfehlung als kritisches Lebensereignis: Migration, Übergangsempfehlung und Fähigkeitsselbstkonzept. In *Risikofaktoren Kindlicher Entwicklung*; Schröder-Lenzen, A., Ed.; Springer: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2007.
49. Schöber, C.; Retelsdorf, J.; Köller, O. Verbales schulisches Selbstkonzept und sprachliche Leistungen in Gruppen mit und ohne Migrationshintergrund. *Psychol. Erzieh. Unterr.* **2015**, *62*, 89–105. [[CrossRef](#)]
50. Hernandez, A.A. The Relationship among the Nurturance and Monitoring Dimensions of Parenting, Academic Self-Concept, and Acculturation in the Academic. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA, 2009.
51. Mitchell, N. The Relationship among Acculturation, Wellness, and Academic Self-Concept in Caribbean American Adolescents. Ph.D. Thesis, Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC, USA, 2001.
52. Villegas-Gutierrez, M. Acculturation and Academic Self-Concept among Mexican American Adolescents. Ph.D. Thesis, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA, USA, 2003.
53. Blossfeld, H.-P.; Roßbach, H.-G.; von Maurice, J. Education as a Lifelong Process: The German National Educational Panel Study (NEPS) [Special Issue]. *Z. Für Erzieh. Sonderh.* **2011**, *14*.
54. Phinney, J.S. The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure. *J. Adolesc. Res.* **1992**, *7*, 156–176. [[CrossRef](#)]
55. Wohlkinger, F.; Bayer, M.; Ditton, H. Measuring Self-Concept in the NEPS. In *Methodological Issues of Longitudinal Surveys*; Blossfeld, H.-P., von Maurice, J., Bayer, M., Skopek, J., Eds.; Springer VS: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2016; pp. 181–193.
56. Kunter, M.; Schümer, G.; Artelt, C.; Baumert, J.; Klieme, E.; Neubrand, M.; Prenzel, M.; Schiefele, U.; Schneider, W.; Stanat, P. *PISA 2000: Dokumentation der Erhebungsinstrumente* [OECD, PISA]; Max-Planck-Inst. für Bildungsforschung: Berlin, Germany, 2002.
57. Ganzeboom, H.; De Graaf, P.M.; Treiman, D.J. A Standard International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status. *Soc. Sci. Res.* **1992**, *21*, 1–56. [[CrossRef](#)]
58. Muthén, L.K.; Muthén, B.O. *Mplus User's Guide. Eight Edition*; Muthén & Muthén: Los Angeles, CA, USA, 1998.

Article

Educational Practices for Immigrant Children in Elementary Schools in Russia

Chulpan Gromova ^{1,*}, Rezeda Khairutdinova ¹, Dina Birman ² and Aydar Kalimullin ¹

¹ Institute of Psychology and Education, Kazan Federal University, 420008 Kazan, Russia; rezed_a_raf@mail.ru (R.K.); kalimullin@yandex.ru (A.K.)

² School of Education and Human Development, University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL 33146, USA; d.birman@miami.edu

* Correspondence: gromovajob@rambler.ru

Abstract: Teachers have a pivotal role in the acculturation and adjustment of immigrant children. Practices are an important but an insufficiently explored part of teachers' work in a multicultural classroom. The purpose of the present research was to identify educational practices that elementary school teachers in the Republic of Tatarstan, Russia, use in their work with immigrant children to provide language and academic support and promote a welcoming atmosphere in the classroom that fosters psychological adjustment of the child. Data were collected through interviews with twenty elementary school teachers working with immigrant children. Interviews were analyzed using inductive and deductive content analysis methods. Findings suggest that in the absence of institutionalized structures, teachers take the initiative to adapt their teaching and instruction methods when working with immigrant children. Teachers primarily rely on individual (one-on-one) tutoring methods to provide language and academic support. Approaches to creating a favorable climate in the classroom and the child's psychological adjustment include practices of promoting respect for different ethnic groups and developing cross-cultural communication skills. Inclusion of parents in the educational process is used in conjunction with all practices with immigrant children used by teachers. In addition, teachers often rely on Tatar language as an intermediary between the migrant children's heritage language and Russian when communicating with them. Most children of immigrants are from Central Asian countries where the languages spoken are Turkic in origin and similar to Tatar—the indigenous language spoken in the Republic of Tatarstan.

Citation: Gromova, C.; Khairutdinova, R.; Birman, D.; Kalimullin, A. Educational Practices for Immigrant Children in Elementary Schools in Russia. *Educ. Sci.* **2021**, *11*, 325. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11070325>

Academic Editors: Gerald Griggs, Elena Makarova and Wassilis Kassia

Received: 28 April 2021

Accepted: 23 June 2021

Published: 30 June 2021

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2021 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Keywords: acculturation; adjustment; teachers' educational practices; immigrant children; language support; academic support; inclusion; welcoming school climate

1. Introduction

In the context of increasing globalization, migration, and resultant cultural diversity, the modern school plays an important role in addressing socio-cultural challenges faced by today's societies. The school is an important setting where acculturation and adjustment of immigrant children take place. In Russia, research and practice accounts suggest that schools are often poorly prepared to provide effective education to immigrant children [1,2].

Although migration to Russia is a relatively new phenomenon, Russia has one of the largest numbers of immigrants in the world. In 2017 it was the fourth largest destination country after the United States, Germany, and Saudi Arabia [3]. According to the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs [4] the number of registered immigrants in Russia was 6,993,602 people in June 2018.

The largest migration flows into Russia are from Uzbekistan (3,446,849), Tajikistan (1,745,554), China (1,437,891), Ukraine (1,319,051), Kyrgyzstan (620,417), Kazakhstan (502,420), Azerbaijan (490,265), and Armenia (490,168). However, there are few statistical data regarding immigrant children in Russia. According to Russia's Committee for Education [5], immigrant students are concentrated in smaller schools (not more than

400 students), while they comprise no more than 5% of students in larger schools. In a significant number of Russian schools, there are no immigrant children at all [1] (p. 15).

In accordance with Russian legislation, immigrant children are entitled to receive an education in any school in Russia. Chapter 1, Article 5 of the law on *Education in the Russian Federation* (2013) states:

1. *There is a guaranteed right to education for every person in the Russian Federation.*
2. *The right to education in the Russian Federation is guaranteed regardless of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, property, social and official status, place of residence, religion, beliefs, membership in public groups or any other circumstances [6].*

However, the right to education applies only to legal residents. Foreign children are allowed to attend educational institutions in Russia only if they hold a residence permit [7]. According to the Russian Education Fund, about 80% of immigrant children do not attend kindergarten due to reluctance to register and a shortage of places [5]. Also, according to the same source, in 2014 every third immigrant child did not have access to education, an increase from 2011 when only every tenth child did not have that opportunity [5].

The presence of even a few first-generation immigrant children in school requires the provision of special supports and teaching approaches. Such approaches to developing a favorable environment for integration of immigrant children are referred to as multicultural, intercultural, or polycultural education [8–10]. Some scholars have described important differences between these approaches. In the United States some refer to intercultural education as teaching and learning about different cultures [11], whereas multicultural education is described as a political movement that stems from the U.S. Civil Rights Movement and aims to address inequities in education from a structural perspective [12]. However, Russia (and the USSR before it) has its own extensive history with respect to educating students from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Valeeva and Valeeva (2016) use the term *intercultural* to describe these approaches in Russia and note their focus on intercultural communication, promoting tolerance and respect for different cultures, and teaching different languages, histories, and geographies for the purpose of “the enrichment of representatives of all cultural groups” [13] (p. 1569). While there are important differences, all of these approaches aim to foster mutual respect, understanding, and tolerance toward others [14–16].

Regardless of terminology and conceptual differences in approaches in different countries, teachers play a key role in integration of immigrant children in schools. Studies find that teachers are responsible not only for education but also for acculturation and developmental processes of immigrant children in schools [17–19].

Teaching practice, or pedagogy, has been defined as both an art of being a teacher, and a science of teaching. It generally includes strategies, styles, the context of instruction, and teachers’ actions in the classroom [20]. Specific practices used for teaching immigrant children are closely related to addressing issues of acculturation. Previous studies elaborate on difficulties that immigrant children face in a new culture. These difficulties are related to learning a new language, a new culture, coping with migration trauma, adjusting to different school requirements, and academic standards in schools [21–25].

Educational practices used with immigrant children can be studied on the institutional, personal, and instructional levels [15,26]. Institutional level practices are implemented at the level of the whole school. Personal level practices include teachers’ actions as a culturally responsive person. Instructional level includes teaching strategies and methods. While teachers do not directly influence educational policies, they are proactively involved in the educational process with immigrant children on all of these levels.

Dumcius et al. (2012) describe five models of educational support provided in different European countries: (1) non-systematic support, where the state does not adopt any systematic policies regarding education of immigrant children, leaving schools and teachers to initiate their own approaches; (2) compensatory support, that aims to help students catch up academically through teaching the host country language and providing interpretation services to parents; (3) an integration model where linguistic support stops after a few

years, no mother tongue teaching is provided, and intercultural learning is integrated into the curriculum; (4) a centralized entry support model where assessment and welcoming arrangements are centralized and linguistic and academic support are well developed; and (5) comprehensive support models that provide all four types of support. These support models differ from each other in who is responsible (national educational system or the local school) and in the extent to which they address four aims: linguistic support, academic support, parental and community involvement, and intercultural education, which is defined as ensuring a positive environment at school [27].

In the literature on school support for immigrant students, the first and most important aim is learning a new culture, which primarily involves learning a new language. Christensen and Stanat (2007) describe five types of language support provided to migrant children in different countries: (1) immersion—immigrant students are not provided with any language support and study in regular classes; (2) immersion with systematic support—immigrant students study in a regular class but they are provided with language support for a certain period of time; (3) immersion with a preparatory phase—immigrant students attend preparation courses before joining a regular class; (4) transitional bilingual—immigrant children study in their native language before gradually moving to study in the language of the host country; and (5) maintenance bilingual—immigrant children learn in their native language as well as the language of the host country [28].

The bilingual approach, when students develop native language skills along with host country language skills, is considered to be effective [29–31]. However, as Christensen and Stanat (2007) note, providing bilingual education may be unrealistic in some countries. They suggest that immersion with systematic language support or a preparatory phase may be effective practices [28]. Others have described specific approaches to teaching the language of the host country including speaking, writing, teamwork and discussions [32,33]. Here, teaching a host country language *as a second language* is considered to be the most successful strategy compared to traditional teaching methods used with native speakers [33–36].

The second aim of teachers' work is academic support, which is directed at reducing academic gaps. This is very important for immigrant children as without knowledge of the language of instruction they fall behind at school [37]. Insufficient knowledge of the language may occur not only in the first but also in the second generation of immigrants [28].

Third, research underscores the importance of promoting trusting relationships in the classroom so that immigrant children feel comfortable and included [38]. This means building good communication and collaboration in a class [39,40]. These three foci of teachers' work with immigrant students are explored in the present study.

Purpose of the Study

This research is based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which considers learning and development as a culturally, historically, and socially mediated process [41]. The leading role in the child's education and development belongs to the adult—the teacher. Applying this theory to multicultural education, the teacher should possess the knowledge and practices to implement multicultural programs [42]. Multicultural practices are defined as collaborative actions of teachers and students [43].

The need for this study arose because of the lack of research about teachers' experiences in multicultural classrooms in Russia. Meanwhile, there is also the need for qualitative descriptive studies, which deepen understanding of how schoolteachers solve problems of integration of immigrant children [44,45]. In our previous quantitative study, we also concluded that qualitative research is needed to better understand the methods teachers use to teach immigrant children [37]. The aim of the present study is to identify and describe educational practices elementary school teachers in Tatarstan use with first-generation immigrant children. These children were brought to Tatarstan by their parents and came from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, and other countries. Our study focuses on understanding how educators solve problems of integration of immigrant children

in Russia's schools. The study is intended to contribute to the literature on educational practices used by teachers when working with immigrant students.

2. Materials and Methods

The study used an interpretive research paradigm and an exploratory qualitative design to describe teacher practices [40,46,47].

2.1. Setting and Participants

Participants of the study were teachers from different cities in Tatarstan. Tatarstan is an ethnically and religiously diverse region in Central Russia. According to the 2010 census, over 173 different ethnic groups live in the region. The eight largest groups (more than 10,000 people) are Tatars, ethnic Russians, Chuvash, Udmurts, Monroviants, Mari, Ukrainians, and Bashkir. The majority of the population in Tatarstan are Tatars, who are historically Muslim, and ethnic Russians, who are historically Orthodox Christians. Tatarstan has the sixth largest number of immigrants among Russia's regions. The overall number of registered immigrants in Tatarstan is 126,360 people, with the largest group being migrant laborers (36,631). As there are no statistical data on immigrant children, we asked teachers in the study about the number of immigrant children in their schools and classrooms.

Twenty elementary school teachers with experience of working with immigrant children agreed to take part in the study (see Table 1). We engaged in purposive sampling [46], selecting teachers in Tatarstan of any ethnicity who had experience working with immigrant students. Since no statistical information is available on enrollment of immigrant students in particular schools, we relied on local knowledge. Twelve teachers were recruited from professional development courses, which are mandatory every five years for all teachers in Russia. The courses were held in Kazan, with teachers from different cities in Tatarstan attending. During these courses teachers were invited to participate if they fit our inclusion criteria. Eight teachers were recruited from schools known to the researchers to have a large number of immigrant children. This information came from student teachers who were placed in these schools for their internships.

Table 1. Demographic information about the participants.

Age (Average/Range)	Experience (Average/Range)	Sex (Female/Male)	Place of Residence (Kazan/Other)
46.26/31–56 years	21.71/0.5–34 years	19/1	16/4

As shown in Table 1, participants had worked in elementary schools for an average of 22 years. All but one teacher were female. Ethnically, ten participants were Tatar, eight Russian, and one was Mordovian. In addition, one teacher had personal immigration experience as an immigrant from Kazakhstan. The majority of the teachers lived and worked in Kazan.

2.2. Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews from December 2017 to June 2018. We initially asked whether teachers had any experience working with immigrant children. If they had such experience, we continued with the interview. Participants gave their consent to be interviewed and to have the interview recorded. They were assured that personal information (name, place of work) would be kept confidential.

To avoid leading the interviewees and impose researcher's views, and to reduce social desirability, participants were not fully informed about the specific focus of the research on teacher practices. As teachers often think that the quality of their work is being evaluated, we were concerned that they may report using teaching practices that they do not actually use. Rather, the aim of the interview was described in more general terms to learn about immigrant students in schools. The interview was prefaced with the researcher's statement:

“We highly value your practical experience. It is very important to know the opinion of an experienced teacher about the difficulties you encounter when working with immigrant children. Please tell us about your experience of working with immigrant children”. After teachers described where the children migrated from and what difficulties they faced, the interviewer asked them to describe how they worked with the children and solved problems. During interviews the teachers were encouraged to express themselves freely. However, the interviewer kept in mind the research questions, asking about topics listed in the interview guide. For example, if the teacher did not address a particular topic, the interviewer asked questions about it such as: “how do you help the student with learning the language?” To elicit more specifics, the interviewer asked follow-up questions such as “which problems in school do they face most often?” The teachers willingly talked about the children they work with, how they work with them, and what difficulties they experience.

The interviews lasted from 45 to 90 min and were subsequently transcribed. The transcripts were read several times to get a general sense of the participants’ feelings and perceptions, and discussed by the research team. In every transcript we identified quotations that had certain practice-related phrases or statements and highlighted them with a marker. In all, we identified 180 quotations and sorted them into categories as described below.

The quotes were analyzed deductively and inductively. All codes were reviewed by members of the research team who reached consensus about the final categories. The deductive approach was based on the classification of practices/supports suggested by Dumcius et al. (2012): linguistic support, academic support, parental inclusion, and intercultural education and positive school climate [27]. We decided not to use “parental inclusion” as a separate category because during the coding process we realized that working with parents was done in the service of all other practices, including language support, academic support, and creating a positive school climate. Through an inductive approach we identified specific practices that teachers use in their work in the service of these aims.

3. Results

3.1. Language Support

In 75 quotations, teachers talked about methods for teaching the Russian language and improving children’s language skills. Only one teacher mentioned that their school organizes special Russian courses for immigrant children. All other teachers reported that language support is provided individually as additional help by themselves or by outside tutors. For example, these teachers describe how language support is provided during after-school activities:

Interview 16: “We stayed after the class. I explained what she didn’t understand in words and using gestures. During the after-class activities we repeated everything we learned in class, in every subject. I explained all the topics again. We wrote dictations, keywords, small essays. Sometimes parents hire a tutor for additional classes”.

Interview 14: “The tutor is concerned with the main [Russian] language; they mostly try to identify the knowledge gap and work on it. They read the tasks; try to understand what the student didn’t get”.

One teacher (Interview 16) said that such an approach is effective in this quote: “*And this kind of individual work produced results*”.

Teachers also mentioned that children learn the language faster through daily communication and TV than they do in school:

Interview 6: “I had one who didn’t know the language. He spent a whole year in pre-school, we both struggled; he didn’t know anything at all. His brother sat with him, explained and showed him; he cried. And during the summer, just in three months, he

learned to talk. He spent the whole summer on the street with kids and after that he started talking. He understood what we talked about”.

As for the content of additional lessons, teachers mostly said that they work with immigrant children on study materials orally and in writing. Students read, retell, and learn rhymes by heart. Work on literary texts includes explaining the meaning of unknown words, picking synonyms for words, especially proverbs and sayings so that the child would not just read, but also understand what they are reading:

Interview 12: *“We work on texts during after-class hours, reading. We ask them to retell in order to develop their speech . . . We write dictations because it helps to remember”.*

Interview 15: *“I had to explain some words, mostly when we worked on vocabulary. Sometimes I have to explain Russian proverbs and sayings, of course, this is during individual work”.*

Interview 14: *“Right now we are working only on dialogues, so he could communicate and express his ideas”.*

Among communicative language training techniques, teachers most often singled out communication with peers and teachers. Many teachers pointed out that children learned the language faster through communication and games. Their vocabulary grew because they learned new words and repeated after their peers. Hence, many educators tried to create conditions for children to communicate more during after-school activities, school camps, additional classes, stage plays, and social clubs as described by this teacher in Interview 14: *“I organized group work so that they could talk more and help each other. Then, a preschool camp . . . to communicate with children and teachers”.*

Teachers also asked other immigrant children to help those who struggle with the language. This teacher explained (Interview 8): *“The kids who more or less understand Russian try to translate. They explain through gestures, pictures, put it in simpler words”.*

Meanwhile, Tatar language knowledge helped teachers communicate with and explain to immigrant children whose knowledge of Russian is poor. Tatar language belongs to the Turkic language group, so it is similar to the native languages of children from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan. These teachers explained:

Interview 19: *“They can communicate through the Tatar language. Through Tatar language teachers communicate easier with them, they also translate what we don’t understand. The Turkic languages are similar”.*

Interview 5: *“Tatars and other pupils compare similar words in the classroom, it’s interesting. There are similar words in the Kazakh and Uzbek languages”.*

Interview 17: *“No, they’re the same Russian language teachers but they’re ethnic Tatars and know Tatar well. And it’s simpler for them to communicate with these students because they speak mostly Turkic languages. So, they are teaching Russian through Tatar”.*

Only one teacher stated that their school provides immigrant children with special Russian language courses. Many other teachers believed such courses should exist, but they did not specify what should be taught or which teaching methods should be used. One teacher commented (Interview 15): *“More focus on the Russian language [is needed]. They won’t learn the material without knowing Russian. Of course, we have the after-school [Russian language] class but it’s for everyone. We need a special one for these children”.* Only one teacher mentioned that a particular teaching method would be the most appropriate—teaching Russian as a foreign language.

Teachers attributed children’s poor language skills mostly to low language skills of their parents. As a result, we focused some analyses on identifying language teaching practices that involve parents. Teachers talked about the need to work with parents, to explain to parents that they needed to convince their children of the necessity to learn the Russian language even if that meant placing the child in a lower grade. For example, in

response to the question “what should be done to teach children the Russian language?” these teachers said:

Interview 12: *“I don’t even know. Knowing the [Russian] language so parents can explain to the child. Talking to parents that it’s necessary to study, that they also should put in some effort”.*

Interview 4: *“And I think that if an immigrant comes to school, we shouldn’t put them in a grade according to their age, maybe to a lower grade, but you have to explain this to parents”.*

In one interview the teacher said that a parent came to class herself to learn the language (Interview 5): *“The child’s mom brought a translator with her and studied in the back of the class”.* In other cases, teachers recommended Russian language courses to parents, as in Interview 12: *“Maybe [it’s necessary to] teach parents, maybe after-class courses for parents, so parents can attend them with kids”.*

3.2. Academic Support

Academic support refers to teaching practices designed to improve or support children’s academic performance (36 quotes). As with language support, teachers worked with children individually or suggested that parents hire tutors. Teachers provided additional explanations and lessons after school or during vacations.

Interview 3: *“We explain it to someone individually. I can’t do it when the whole class is present”.*

Interview 4: *“Yes, [I provide] additional explanation after classes, but sometimes they stay in the after-school clubs. They study there”.*

Interview 19: *“We do homework with them during the after-school hours, I help them. Next day it’s like starting from a scratch. As our psychologist said, “don’t be lazy”. And it goes on and on day after day”.*

Interview 18: *“When I don’t have a preschool camp, I invite them during summer and winter holidays for 2–3 hours”.*

However, two teachers said that additional classes and tasks are not necessary in Interview 2: *“There is no need to give them additional tasks”* and Interview 6: *“It is pointless to keep them after classes”.* Some students had outside tutors who helped them with schoolwork, as explained in Interview 12: *“But some girls now have tutors, twice a week, they do homework with them”.*

During class teachers explained the material in a simplified way, through visual aids, examples, actions or repeated the same material if needed. For example:

Interview 9: *“While explaining the topic I used graphics because children remember things better visually. They won’t understand everything orally. If, let’s say, it’s related to math. One time a child didn’t know the multiplication table. We did operations with numbers . . . All children understand numbers; they’re the same in all languages. So, I used graphics”.*

Interview 11: *“I pulled out my wallet and the coins, we added like that. They understood with coins, but on the blackboard—no way”.*

Interview 8: *“I have to explain it on fingers and with pictures”.*

In some cases, teachers were able to explain only with the help of another child who acted as a mediator. A peer mediator could be an immigrant or a non-immigrant child, who could explain the academic material using simpler language. For example:

Interview 9: *“I asked other children to explain, to try to explain it. Children understand each other better. They talk differently, not using smart phrases like us. I asked classmates to explain it to them on their own”.*

Interview 6: *“I try to put well-performing and poorly performing students in pairs, because children can explain to each other better”.*

Interview 19: *“When children got older, in third - fourth grades I started using the help of assistants. Assistants are well-performing classmates. And well-performing immigrant children also became assistants, they helped too”.*

Teachers also engaged parents to improve students' academic performance. Teachers explained to parents that it is important for their children to study; and explained teaching materials so parents can explain them to their children.

Interview 10: *“If I call him [parent], he comes, and I explain. The dad would often make a brief visit after the work”.*

Interview 16: *“And then I gave advice to the parents on how to work with children at home. I called them every day and explained everything. What we do in class, what we do after class and what should be improved at home”.*

Interview 9: *“I talked about the importance of education at the teacher-parent meeting”.*

Children worked on their homework with parents. At the same time some parents were not able to help their children with homework because of poor Russian language skills or low educational level.

Teachers also tried to use an individualized approach with children, adapting tasks according to the child's abilities. For example:

Interview 18: *“I almost never give them tricky tasks as homework, except maybe the simplest ones. It would be better at least if they could cope with the basic part of the curriculum. Simplified homework . . . For example, if Russians have to retell the whole text, I give them only a part of it”.*

Interview 2: *“If I'm asking to recite a poem, I do not ask them on that day. I know it will be difficult for them”.*

Teachers also adjusted their grading with immigrant students and gave them better grades if they saw a benefit in doing so. Usually, teachers did this to encourage and motivate the children. For example:

Interview 18: *“But I also tried to give better marks to motivate the child. I used to give 4's for a dictation [equivalent of a B letter grade], even if there were 40 mistakes. I invented my own mark, pointed out typical mistakes and grouped them”.*

Interview 3: *“But we make some excuses for them, of course. It's a must. If we give someone else a 3 [equivalent of a C letter grade] for that number of mistakes, we can give a 4 here. It's an encouragement”.*

One teacher just gave students a 3 [equivalent to a C] regardless of children's effort and improvement (Interview 4): *“Yeah, I'm just giving them 3's. In Math, Tatar, and English they deserve it but in Russian-no”.*

3.3. Promoting a Positive School Climate to Foster the Child's Psychological Adjustment in the Classroom

To create a positive and welcoming climate at school, teachers described teaching respect toward different ethnicities and developing cross-cultural communication skills (69 quotations). These practices sometimes coincided. For example, one teacher reported that she initiated a special club where children of different ethnicities can communicate. The teacher invited children of different nationalities, including immigrants, to join a club to create a positive intercultural climate:

Interview 5: *“Our school has a social club called “Friendly Family”. It's my personal initiative. A community organization [outside the school] provides additional money. Children of different nationalities join the club. We get together once a month or once*

a week. We discuss world news, or we have kids who come up with something in their language and tell us. We try to attract kids who don't speak [Russian] well, too".

In addition, teachers employed practices for promoting a generally positive social-psychological climate in the classroom, not specific to issues of cultural diversity. For example:

Interview 14: *"I put children in contact with each other so they could talk more and help each other".*

Interview 19: *"And we give them tasks. For example, we ask them to give out notebooks, collect notebooks. It may be a small task but it's still communication. I do everything to get them involved".*

To teach respect toward different ethnicities and create a culture of international communication, schools organized national celebrations. These festivals give immigrant children opportunities to recite poems, dance their national dances, sing national songs, and serve national dishes. For example:

Interview 19: *"Four times a year we organize a festival of different peoples where immigrant children represent their countries. Such events improve attitudes toward them. They wear their national costumes, read and sing in their languages, perform national dances".*

Interview 5: *"I held an annual festival called 'Me, you, he and she are a friendly family'. We prepared for it for a year. I invited a Tajik boy who recited a poem, and a Tajik girl who danced in a long dress. There were an Uzbek girl and a boy. They performed an Azerbaijani dance. There were national dishes of all sorts. A Georgian girl performed a Georgian dance, it was very melodic. We served the food and let everyone try".*

Parents were also involved in the process of intercultural dialogue. For example, one teacher mentioned that native and immigrant parents taught children different cuisines, traditions, and customs. One teacher said:

Interview 5: *"We visited a Russian family during Easter, painted eggs and recorded it in on a camera. They told us about the origins of that holiday. Once an Azerbaijani mom came and taught children how to make cookies. She brought the dough and explained how it's served".*

In two interviews, teachers talked about the help that ethnic Diasporas in Kazan provide in teaching children about different cultures. They also helped resolve conflicts.

Interview 5: *"They have Sunday schools [in the Center of Ethnic Friendship]. They gather there, many attend it. We have relationships with them, and they always invite me with the children. I can take any class and go there. Uzbeks, Ukrainians, Azerbaijanis. They perform at festivals, organize workshops and open classes. Sometimes they visit us, too".*

Interview 17: *"Our school works together with the Center of Ethnic Friendship. We know each other and work with leaders of all Diasporas. Together we solve conflicts that could arise with some children's parents".*

Teachers held discussions with entire classes as well as with the immigrant children as another practice in the service of developing a positive climate. Discussions with the entire class were done to prevent discrimination against immigrant children.

Interview 3: *"I never allow children to bully kids of different ethnicities".*

Interview 20: *"A boy [name], he's slightly darker than other kids . . . He was insulted".*

Interviewer: *"What did you do with this?"*

Teacher: *"I discussed it during the class meetings. I had very few kids. It is convenient. It was in Tatar language class".*

Teachers explained to all children that they should help and support each other.

Interview 8: *"Of course, we tell children to support each other, so other children could help him, make friends, communicate so he could help you, so you can collaborate. And children are trying to support them. I let them know that they should support him"*.

Teachers explain the principles of mutual respect and intercultural communication.

Interview 19: *"It's all different for everyone. From the very first grade I explain to children and their parents that we all should live in friendship and agreement regardless of what nationality you are. I support tolerance and encourage our kids. I explain how hard it can be for migrant children"*.

Teachers held individual talks with immigrant children to address their aggressive behavior, explaining to them that they should be friendlier. For example, in Interview 19 the teacher said: *"I explain to them that they shouldn't get upset. Of course, it's difficult"*. Conflicts were also a reason to have discussions. In one interview the teacher said that she talked not only to students but also to parents to solve a conflict between children.

Interview 13: *"Well, we talked, solved these conflicts. I called the parents, talked to the dads and the boys. We talked so they could feel comfortable in the classroom, to change their opinions somehow. The dads sat across from each other, Azerbaijanian and Tatar. I told them that if we can't find common ground between them, it would be impossible for their kids to study together"*.

Only in one interview (Interview 16) a teacher mentioned the help provided by a school psychologist when a child experienced problems communicating with other children: *"Well, we have a psychologist. She came up in the first class when one girl had problems with other children . . . She worked with her individually"*. Teachers lamented a lack of such specialists who could help them in schools, as in Interview 6: *"There should be a school psychologist. There should be specialists in a school"*.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

Our study findings are that teachers in Russia had to use additional individual lessons with immigrant children to teach them Russian and help them improve their academic performance. On the one hand, this is similar to what happens in other countries without centralized models of transitional practices for immigrants [27,48]. On the other hand, giving immigrant students one-on-one attention is considered a very effective practice to help newcomer children adapt to a new school [31,38]. During additional lessons, teachers in our study explained academic material one more time or worked with texts, though without using special methods for teaching Russian as a foreign language. This is despite the fact that special instructional methods for teaching Russian as a second language have been developed by Russian educators [34,35,49–51]. Similar to Gorpas (2011), teachers in our study believed in the necessity of teaching Russian language to students, but only one of them was even aware of methods for teaching Russian as a foreign language [48]. Some teachers admitted that they need to learn about teaching methods, special books, and guidelines for teaching immigrant students. These findings underscore the need for teacher education programs to include training on teaching culturally diverse and multilingual students in today's increasingly diverse classrooms.

One individualized approach with immigrant children is when teachers give them easier assignments and use different grading criteria. Teachers in our study tried to support children's tiniest achievements by giving them more accessible tasks, tailored to their abilities. Previous studies have also suggested the importance of initial assessment and monitoring of the child's progress [31,37]. On one hand, some researchers consider such practices to reflect low expectations, which lead to low performance [52,53]. On the other, immigrant children cannot cope with difficult assignments when their knowledge of the language of instruction is poor. Our research also suggests the necessity of developing and implementing initial assessments to determine the level of students' knowledge and skills

when they enter the school. This would assist teachers in developing appropriate practices for incoming students. Monitoring students' achievements and academic progress at the state level can avoid grade inflation and manage teachers' low expectations. This presents an additional challenge for schoolteachers.

The role of the mediator between newly arrived immigrant children and their parents and the school was played by children and teachers who knew the Tatar language. This finding supports results of previous studies that found teaching a new language with the support of the native language to be one of most effective strategies. While the Tatar language is not native to immigrant children, it is closely related to the native language of many Turkic peoples who move to Russia and Tatarstan. As in prior research, without formal language support, teachers in our study relied on assistants [37], mentors [14,54], or translators who are usually other immigrant children [37,55]. This teaching practice aids communication between peers and teachers and can help prevent segregation from a Russian-speaking environment [14,37,45]. In our study, teachers reported asking peers to speak Russian to the students not only to help them learn the language but also to explain lesson material in plain language. This method is an important part of cooperative learning and translanguaging [30,56]. However, it was hard to discern from our interviews whether teachers used this measure intentionally or were forced to do so without institutional support, as all support provided to migrant children stemmed from the teachers' personal initiative.

With respect to ways of promoting positive climate in the classroom to foster psychological comfort for children, our study findings resonate with two approaches recommended in schools with immigrant students. The first is creating an environment that encourages communication among children and the second is promoting respect for cultural diversity [55,57,58]. Although learning about different cultures in school has been criticized as "touristic" [59] (p. 57), nonetheless, all children benefit from learning more about their own and other cultures [15,60–62]. As described in prior research, teachers in our study described holding discussions with immigrant children and other students to reduce tensions, solve conflicts and encourage collaboration with parents [63]. In addition to previous studies, we found that relying on ethnic diasporas may be good practice to aid in acculturation of immigrant children and solving conflicts with their parents.

The main finding in our study was that without systematic, centralized support [64] or specialized training, teachers had to take the initiative and create personalized approaches when working with immigrant children. Although the data were initially analyzed deductively based on the literature, using an inductive approach we discovered a variety of practices that teachers implemented to support immigrant students. In addition, inductive analyses led us to conclude that parental inclusion can be used as a component of the three categories of practices examined: academic support, language support, and promotion of a positive climate in the classroom. Finally, because the Tatar language is closely related to languages of other Turkic peoples, our study points to advantages of using it in Tatarstan to support teaching Russian as a foreign language.

5. Limitations

While use of qualitative methodology allowed us to discover teaching practices with immigrant children in Tatarstan, a limitation of the study is that it relied on the authors' interpretation of teachers' subjective reports regarding their teaching and issues that immigrant children face in the classroom. Although the interviews were valuable in understanding the teachers' experience, thoughts, and feelings from their perspective, this line of research can be complemented by observational studies of teachers' practice. Further, only quantitative research can document how frequently the teachers use the kinds of supporting strategies and teaching practices when working with immigrant children in Russia and Tatarstan. In addition, most teachers who took part in the study were female. This is due to the fact that the teaching profession is still predominantly female in Russia. Finally, teacher practices reflect beliefs and ideologies about educating diverse

students. The question of how multicultural education is conceptualized in Russia, and whether foreign concepts of multiculturalism, interculturalism, or polyculturalism apply was beyond the scope of the present study but is important to investigate in future research.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, C.G.; Investigation, R.K.; Methodology, D.B.; Project administration, A.K. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted accordance with guidelines of Helsinki declaration and regulations of Kazan Federal University for minimal risk research.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Acknowledgments: This paper has been supported by the Kazan Federal Strategic Academic Leadership program.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Disclosure Statement: No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

References

1. Alexandrov, D.A.; Ivanyushina, V.A.; Kostenko, V.V.; Savelieva, S.S.; Tenisheva, K.A. *The State of Immigrant Children in St. Petersburg*; UNICEF: Moscow, Russia, 2012; pp. 24–30.
2. Zborovsky, G.E.; Shuklina, E.A. Обучение детей мигрантов как проблема их социальной адаптации [Training of migrant children as problem of their social adaptation]. *Sociol. Res.* **2013**, *2*, 80–91.
3. United Nations. International Migration Report 2017. 2017. Available online: https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017_Highlights.pdf (accessed on 9 January 2017).
4. Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russian Federation. Statistical information on migration situation. 2018. Available online: <https://xn--b1aew.xn--1ai/Deljatelnost/statistics/migracionnaya/item/14852910> (accessed on 19 October 2018).
5. Dudko, S.A. К вопросу об обучении детей мигрантов в России. [On the issue of teaching the immigrant children in Russia]. *Values Mean.* **2014**, *3*, 56–61.
6. The Federal Law on Education № 273. 2013. Available online: <http://zakon-ob-obrazovanii.ru> (accessed on 29 October 2013).
7. Zhukova, I.A. Официальный статус детей мигрантов в Российской Федерации [The legal status of immigrant children in Russian Federation]. *Russia. XXI Century* **2015**, *2*, 38–40.
8. Gukalenko, O.V. *Теоретико-методологические основы педагогической поддержки детей мигрантов в поликультурной образовательной среде. [Theoretic-Methodological Basics of Pedagogical Support and Defense of Immigrant Students in Policultural Educational Environment]*; Rosmen: Rostov-on-Don, Russia, 2000.
9. Polat, S.; Barka, T.O. Multiculturalism and Intercultural Education: A Comparative Study with a Sample of Swiss and Turkish Candidate Teachers. *World Appl. Sci. J.* **2012**, *18*, 1180–1189. [CrossRef]
10. Portera, A. Intercultural and Multicultural Education: Epistemological and Semantic Aspects. In *Intercultural and Multicultural Education: Enhancing Global Interconnectedness*; Grant, C.A., Portera, A., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2010; pp. 12–30.
11. Holm, G.; Zilliacus, H. Multicultural education and intercultural education: Is there a difference? In *Dialogs on Diversity and Global Education*; Talib, M., Loima, J., Paavola, H., Patrikainen, S., Eds.; Peter Lang: Berlin, Germany, 2009; pp. 11–28.
12. Gorski, P. Complicity with conservatism: The de-politicizing of multicultural and intercultural education. *Intercult. Educ.* **2006**, *17*, 163–177. [CrossRef]
13. Valeeva, R.; Valeeva, A. Intercultural education from Russian researches perspective. *Procedia Soc. Behav. Sci.* **2017**, *237*, 1564–1571. [CrossRef]
14. Janta, B.; Harte, E. Education of Migrant Children: Education Policy Responses for the Inclusion of Migrant Children in Europe. Research Report. RAND Europe. 2016. Available online: https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1600/RR1655/RAND_RR1655.pdf (accessed on 12 October 2017).
15. Richards, H.V.; Brown, A.F.; Forde, T.B. Addressing diversity in schools: Culturally responsive pedagogy. *Teach. Except. Child.* **2007**, *39*, 64–68. [CrossRef]
16. Scalfani, C. Strategies for Educators of Bilingual Students: A Critical Review of Literature. *Int. J. Educ. Lit. Stud.* **2017**, *5*, 1–8. [CrossRef]
17. Khairutdinova, R.; Birman, D.; Kalimullin, A.; Gromova, C.; Semenova, E.; Troska, Z. Attitudes towards Cultural Diversity: A Study of Russian Teachers. *J. Study Relig. Ideol.* **2019**, *18*, 80–95.
18. Schachner, M.; van de Vijver, F.; Noack, P. Contextual conditions for acculturation and school-related outcomes of adolescent immigrants—Integrating y and findings. *Online Read. Psychol. Cult.* **2017**, *8*. [CrossRef]

19. Vedder, P.H.; Horenczyk, G. Acculturation and the school. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology*; Sam, D.L., Berry, J.W., Eds.; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 2006; pp. 419–438. [CrossRef]
20. Herrera, J.C. Teacher Beliefs and Practices: Their Effects on Student Achievement in the Urban School Setting. Doctoral Dissertation, Kansas State University, Kansas, MO, USA, 2010. Available online: <http://krex.k-tate.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2097/3889/JohnHerrera2010.pdf?sequence=7> (accessed on 23 May 2011).
21. Birman, D. Refugee Mental Health in the Classroom: A Guide for the ESL Teacher. Denver: Institute for Intercultural Learning. Available online: <http://www.spring-institute.org> (accessed on 28 February 2013).
22. Gromova, C.; Khairutdinova, R.; Birman, D.; Kalimullin, A. Teaching technologies for immigrant children: An exploratory study of elementary school teachers in Russia. In *Acculturation and School Adjustment of Minority Students: School and Family-Related Factors*; Makarova, E., Ed.; Routledge: London, UK; Taylor & Francis Group: London, UK, 2020; pp. 51–65.
23. Makarova, E.; Gilde, J.; Birman, D. Teachers as risk and resource factors of minority students' school adjustment: An integrative review of qualitative research on acculturation. *Intercult. Educ.* **2019**, *30*, 448–477. [CrossRef]
24. Raviv, A.; Keinan, G.; Abazon, Y.; Raviv, A. Moving as a stressful life event for adolescents. *J. Community Psychol.* **1990**, *18*, 130–140. [CrossRef]
25. Vedder, P.; Boekaerts, M.; Seegers, G. Perceived social support and wellbeing in school: The role of students' ethnicity. *J. Youth Adolesc.* **2005**, *34*, 269–278. [CrossRef]
26. Biasutti, M.; Concina, E.; Frate, S. Working in the classroom with migrant and refugee students: The practices and needs of Italian primary and middle school teachers. *Pedagog. Cult. Soc.* **2020**, *28*, 113–129. [CrossRef]
27. Dumcius, R.; Nicaise, I.; Balcaite, I.; Huttova, J.; Siarova, H. *Study on Educational Support for Newly Arrived Migrant Children*; European Commission: Brussels, Belgium, 2012. Available online: https://limo.libis.be/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=LIRIAS1897394andcontext=Landvid=Liriasandsearch_scope=Liriasandtab=default_tabandlang=en_US (accessed on 10 April 2015).
28. Christensen, G.; Stanat, P. Language policies and practices for helping immigrants and second-generation students succeed. In *The Transatlantic Taskforce on Immigration and Integration*; Migration Policy Institute (MPI) and Bertelsmann Stiftung: Gütersloh, Germany, 2007; pp. 1–15. Available online: <https://www.naldic.org.uk/Resources/NALDIC/Research%20and%20Information/Documents/ChristensenEducation091907.pdf> (accessed on 21 September 2007).
29. Canagarajah, A. *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*; Dworin, M., Milto, S., Eds.; Park, Routledge: Abingdon, UK, 2013; p. 445.
30. García, O.; Woodley, H.H.; Flores, N.; Chu, H. Latino Emergent Bilingual Youth in High Schools: Transcaring Strategies for Academic Success. *Urban Educ.* **2016**, *48*, 798–827. [CrossRef]
31. Ferlis, E.; Xu, Y. Prereferral process with Latino English language learners with specific learning disabilities: Perceptions of English-as-a-second-language teachers. *Int. J. Multicult. Educ.* **2016**, *18*, 22–39. [CrossRef]
32. Gibbons, P. Scaffolding language, scaffolding learning. In *Teaching English Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom*, 2nd ed.; Heinemann Portsmouth: Portsmouth, NH, USA, 2015. Available online: https://assets.pearsonschool.com/asset_mgr/current/201511/gibbonschapter.pdf (accessed on 13 March 2017).
33. Levine, L.N.; Smallwood, B.A.; Haynes, E.F. *Listening and Speaking: Oral Language and Vocabulary Development for English Language Learners. Hot Topics in ELL Education*; Center for Applied Linguistics: Washington, DC, USA, 2012.
34. Herrell, A.L.; Jordan, M. *50 Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners*, 5th ed.; Pearson: Boston, MA, USA, 2016.
35. Kudryavtseva, E.L.; Volkova, T.V.; Yakimovich, E.A. Обучение русскому языку в билингвальной среде. Рекомендации [Teaching Russian in the bilingual environment. Recommendations]; CSOT: Moscow, Russia, 2013.
36. Zheleznyakova, E.A. Дети мигрантов в современной российской школе: Пути языковой адаптации [Children of migrants at modern Russian school: Ways of language adaptation]. *News Penza State Pedagog. Univ.* **2012**, *28*, 774–778.
37. Moskal, M. Language and cultural capital in school experience of Polish children in Scotland. *Race Ethn. Educ.* **2016**, *19*, 141–160. [CrossRef]
38. Birman, D.; Tran, N. *The Academic Engagement of Newly Arriving Somali Bantu Students in a US Elementary School*; Migration Policy Institute: Washington, DC, USA, 2015. Available online: <https://sites.education.miami.edu/refugeecollab/publications/> (accessed on 19 January 2015).
39. Gay, G. Culturally responsive teaching in special education for ethnically diverse students: Setting the stage. *Int. J. Qual. Stud. Educ.* **2002**, *15*, 613–629. [CrossRef]
40. Graneheim, U.H.; Lundman, B. Qualitative content analysis in nursing research: Concepts, procedures and measures to achieve trustworthiness. *Nurse Educ. Today* **2004**, *24*, 105–112. [CrossRef]
41. Vygotsky, L.S. *Main Psychological Proceedings: Thinking and Speech: The Problem of Child's Psychological Development*; APN RSFSR: Moscow, Russia, 1956.
42. Gorski, P.C. What we're teaching teachers: An analysis of multicultural teacher education coursework syllabi. *Teach. Teach. Educ.* **2009**, *25*, 309–318. [CrossRef]
43. Civitillo, S.; Schachner, M.; Juang, L.; van de Vijver, F.J.; Handrick, A.; Noack, P. Towards a better understanding of cultural diversity approaches at school: A multi-informant and mixed-methods study. *Learn. Cult. Soc. Interact.* **2017**, *12*, 1–14. [CrossRef]
44. Alismail, H.A. Multicultural Education: Teachers' Perceptions and Preparation. *J. Educ. Pract.* **2016**, *11*, 139–146.

45. Sinkkonen, H.M.; Kyttälä, M. Experiences of Finnish teachers working with immigrant students. *Eur. J. Spec. Needs Educ.* **2014**, *29*, 167–183. [[CrossRef](#)]
46. Creswell, J.W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*; Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2013.
47. Hsieh, H.F.; Shannon, S.E. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qual. Health Res.* **2005**, *15*, 1277–1288. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
48. Gorpas, R.; Triandafylliou, A. Greek education policy and the challenge of migration: An ‘intercultural’ view of assimilation. *Race Ethn. Educ.* **2011**, *14*, 399–419. [[CrossRef](#)]
49. Kalenkova, O.N. *УрокиРусскойРечи[Russian Language Lessons]*; Etnosfera: Moscow, Russia, 2007.
50. Levine, L.N.; Lukens, L.; Smallwood, B.A. The GO TO strategies: Scaffolding options for teachers of English language. 2013. Available online: <https://www.cal.org/excell> (accessed on 10 July 2017).
51. Sineva, O.V.; Sineva, V.S.; Kakorina, E.V. *Русский язык вразноруровневом поликультурном классе: технологии языковойадаптации. Книга дляучителя[Russian language in multilevel policultural class: Technologies of Linguistic Adaptation. Book for Teacher]*; Gaou Vo Mioo: Moscow, Russia, 2016.
52. Brown, K.E.; Medway, F.J. School climate and teacher beliefs in a school effectively serving poor South Carolina (USA) African American students: A case study. *Teach. Teach. Educ.* **2007**, *23*, 529–540. [[CrossRef](#)]
53. Diamond, J.B.; Randolph, A.; Spillane, J.P. Teachers’ expectations and sense of responsibility for student learning: The importance of race, class, and organizational habitus. *Anthropol. Educ. Q.* **2004**, *35*, 75–98. [[CrossRef](#)]
54. Heckman, F. Education and Migration: Strategies for Integrating Migrant Children in European schools and Societies. Available online: <http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/activities/reports> (accessed on 12 April 2008).
55. Banks, J.A. Multicultural Education: Historical Development, Dimensions, and Practice. In *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*; Banks, J.A., Banks, C.A.M., Eds.; Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA, USA, 2004; pp. 3–29.
56. Kagan, S.; Kagan, S. *Cooperative Learning*; Narayana Press: Odder, Denmark, 2008; Volume 2.
57. Karuppiyah, N.; Berthelsen, D. Multicultural education: The understandings of preschool teachers in Singapore. *Australas. J. Early Child.* **2011**, *36*, 38–42. [[CrossRef](#)]
58. Robles de Melendez, W.; Ostertag, V. *Critical Multiculturalism: Rethinking Multicultural and Antiracist Education*; Delmar Publishers: Boston, MA, USA, 1997.
59. Derman-Sparks, L.; Force, A.B. *Anti-Bias Curriculum Tools for Empowering Young Children*; 1834 Connecticut Avenue; National Association for the Education of Young Children: Washington, DC, USA, 1989.
60. Belyankova, N.M. Некоторые формьорганизации внеурочных мероприятий в классах смешанного этнического состава. [Some organization forms of the events done in addition to class hours in classes of the mixed ethnic structure]. *Elem. Sch.* **2014**, *6*, 94–95.
61. Пыинская, I.P. Воспитание в поликультурнойсреде средствами народных сказок. [Education of elementary school pupils in the polycultural environment]. *Elem. Sch.* **2008**, *5*, 14–15.
62. Lebedeva, N.M.; Tatarko, A.N. *Стратегии межкультурного взаимодействия мигрантов и населенияРоссии[Strategies for Intercultural Interaction of Migrants and the Population of Russia]*; RUDN: Moscow, Russia, 2009.
63. Makarova, E.; Döring, A.K.; Auer, P.; t’Gilde, J.; Birman, D. School adjustment of ethnic minority youth: A qualitative and quantitative research synthesis of family-related risk and resource factors. *Educ. Rev.* **2021**. [[CrossRef](#)]
64. Grant, C.A.; Gillette, M. A candid talk to teacher educators about effectively preparing teachers who can teach everyone’s children. *J. Teach. Educ.* **2006**, *57*, 292–299. [[CrossRef](#)]

Article

Recognitive Justice and Educational Inequalities: An Intersectional Approach Involving Secondary Grade School Students in Greece

Christos Govaris ^{1,*}, Wassilis Kassis ², Dimitris Sakatzis ¹, Jasmin-Olga Sarafidou ¹ and Raia Chouvati ¹

¹ Department of Primary Education, University of Thessaly, 38221 Volos, Greece; sakatzhs@gmail.com (D.S.); sarafidou@uth.gr (J.-O.S.); raiachouvati@uth.gr (R.C.)

² School of Education, University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland, 5210 Windisch, Switzerland; wassilis.kassis@fhnw.ch

* Correspondence: govaris@uth.gr

Abstract: Adopting the theoretical approach of recognitive justice and the degree of students' recognitive experiences regarding empathy, respect, and social esteem, the present study focused on educational inequalities in the multicultural school and the factors that affect their appearance and reproduction. We examined the existence of social relations' differences in a sample of 1303 students from 69 secondary schools in Greece, using a questionnaire constructed to investigate students' recognitive experience of their relationships with teachers. By applying an intersectional approach, mainly through multiple regression analysis and multivariate interaction tests with MANOVA, we were able to identify that migrant students and students from families with a low educational level experienced a significantly lower degree of recognition, mainly with the forms of respect and social esteem, both in their relationships with teachers and with peers. Additionally, levels of recognition among teachers explained the large amount of variability in academic achievement and self-esteem, while higher levels of recognition among peers were a significant predictor of the respective students' higher self-esteem. These deficits in recognition concern pedagogical practices that deprive these groups of students of opportunities and possibilities for equal participation in teaching and school life.

Keywords: recognitive justice; inequality at school; intersectionality; recognition by teacher; recognition by peers; academic achievement; self-esteem

Citation: Govaris, C.; Kassis, W.; Sakatzis, D.; Sarafidou, J.-O.; Chouvati, R. Recognitive Justice and Educational Inequalities: An Intersectional Approach Involving Secondary Grade School Students in Greece. *Educ. Sci.* **2021**, *11*, 461. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11090461>

Academic Editor: Eleanor Dommett

Received: 12 June 2021

Accepted: 19 August 2021

Published: 25 August 2021

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2021 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

Much research points out the fact that the quality of the relationships which are developed during educational processes between the members of a school community has a huge impact on the outcomes of school adaptation, learning, and achievement. More specifically, the quality of positive relationships between teachers and students [1–6], as well as between classmates [3,7–9] fosters school climate [10]. Positive relationships at school are strong predictors of students' emotional, cognitive, and social development, as well as their school performance [1,11–13].

The quality of social relationships at school do not affect all students to the same extent. Students with an immigrant background [14,15] and/or from families with disadvantaged socio-economic status [16,17] are more affected by the quality of social relationships at school than their classmates from privileged social environments. It has been found that teachers maintain stereotypes towards the different levels of socio-economic background of students as well as their learning abilities [18–20]. Additionally, the stereotypical treatment of students with an immigrant background or from a disadvantaged socio-economic environment is significantly associated with low school performance [21] and the students in these groups are benefiting to a greater extent than their classmates by high quality relationships at school.

Despite the fact that the systemic exploration of school inequalities are not the main goals of aforementioned research, they provide us with valuable information about the role that pedagogical relationships may play in the emergence and reproduction of these inequalities.

The investigation of factors which provoke school inequalities also demands a relational approach which explicitly interprets the presumptions of achievement of social or educational equality. In other words, the request is to identify and apply empirically an approach, which could inform us about the criteria that social or pedagogical relationships should fulfil to prevent the emergence of social or school inequalities. We believe that the theory of recognition, which was formulated by Honneth [22–24] and in particular its specialization as the theory of recognitive justice in the field of education by Stojanov [25–27], is more helpful in investigating and understanding the role that social relations play in schools regarding the production of educational inequalities. The recognition theory, as a theory of educational justice, defines clearly, as we will see below, specific qualitative criteria that must be met by schools to ensure that all students—without exception—are supported in the acquisition of experiences of recognition in the context of daily school life. These experiences of recognition are defined theoretically as the fundamental requirements for moral, cognitive, and social development of all students. Therefore, they are also basic conditions for school adaptation and school success.

1.1. Recognition: A Fundamental Condition of Justice

The theory of recognition is a theory of social justice. Honneth [21,24] supports the claim that individual self-realization and autonomy constitute the main goals of the equal treatment of all individuals in society. A society is just and fair when it ensures the quality of intersubjective recognitive relations, which is a necessary condition for the formation of an intact personal identity. The core of social justice comprises the following three and equal forms of recognition: love, respect, and social esteem. The attainment of personal self-realization and autonomy presuppose the social experience of these three forms. Stojanov [25,26,28] took into account Honneth's theory of recognitive justice and formulated a special approach to educational justice that differed significantly from other relevant approaches, (e.g., distributive justice). According to Stojanov, the concept of subjective development comprises two dimensions [25,26]: (a) the development of relationships with oneself (self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem); and (b) the development of relations with the world (e.g., deals, propositions, and subjective theories). Honneth does not refer to the second dimension, though, according to Stojanov, it is at the core of education. He also acknowledges that the forms of recognition Honneth proposes (i.e., empathy, respect, and social esteem) are key components in the quality of pedagogical relationships in school. From a philosophico-pedagogical point of view, he negotiates and expands the contents of these three forms of recognition to include the second dimension of individual development, that of the development of individual relations with the world (which means the broadening of the student's horizons). Honneth points out that a pedagogical theory of educational justice refers to school-age individuals who are not yet able, on account of their limited development of a range of skills, to make decisions and behave as mature and autonomous subjects.

1.2. Empathy, Respect and Social Esteem According to Stojanov's Approach of Recognitive Justice

Empathy is not defined simply as a fundamental condition for the developing person to experience their needs and desires as basic features of their personality per Honneth; it is a fundamental condition for experiencing their ideals and their life plans as important elements of their relations with the world [25]. Helsper and Lingkost [29] point out that empathy is an important factor in generating feelings and relationships of trust on the part of students. If experiences of this form of recognition are incomplete, feelings of fear, insecurity, neglect, and devaluation can result. These feelings can interfere with the students' identification with their school environment and lead them gradually to

emotional isolation from other school community members and to failure at school. With this in mind, the insufficient experiences of empathy are evidence of unequal treatment in the school environment.

Honneth refers to respect as a form of recognition [22,24], namely, the recognition of the individual as a subject with a capacity for moral judgment (i.e., as a subject capable of recognizing the effects of their actions and taking responsibility for them). According to Stojanov [26], this form of recognition presupposes a subject who is cognitively fully mature and morally responsible, which does not apply in the case of those who are in the process of acquiring these exact abilities through education (i.e., students). For this reason, it is necessary to redefine the content and respect for the case of pedagogical relationships at school and take into account Peters' [30] definition of respect as a person's ability to form and hold their own perspective, have intentions, choose values, formulate assumptions, and make decisions. Because these abilities are expressions of the subjectivity of the individual they must be recognized, even if one disagrees with them or characterizes them as "immature" or "irrational" [26]. Based on this definition, pedagogical relationships function and are experienced as relationships of respect, wherein teachers encourage students to participate in lessons by allowing them to present their own interpretive standards and express their particular perspectives. When the school is interested in and takes care to ensure the active participation of all students, then it meets the norm of respect because it accepts them (without exception) as subjects who are able to discuss the lessons and issues of school life, describe their experiences, and offer their judgments [31]. On the other hand, insufficient experiences of respect on behalf of students refer to a school reality which does not provide opportunities for equal participation of all students in teaching and school life.

Stojanov emphasizes the importance of respecting the individuality of students not only in its abstract-formal but also in its specific personal dimension and expression. According to Honneth, social esteem (the third form of recognition) refers to the particular traits that characterize individual difference. It correlates the recognition of these traits with their capacity to contribute to the achievement of more general social goals, values, and objectives that accord with the cultural self-perception of a society [22]. Stojanov [26,27], on the other hand, argues that social esteem should be related not only or even primarily to job benefits but also to the individual's ability to display personal skills (as they relate to their autobiography/life experience). Experiences of social esteem constitute for the individual an important condition for the realization of potential, through which they will be able to contribute to society and thus become a full member of it [26]. Students can only develop their abilities and build positive self-esteem when their potential is recognized [26,31]. According to Helsper and Lingkost [29], experiences of social esteem constitute the condition of one student being recognized as separate from all others. In other words, the insufficient experiences of social esteem refer to the lack of pedagogical perceptions and respective practices of recognizing the diversity that characterizes the student population in the contemporary school environment.

The distinction between the three forms of recognition is drawn mainly for analytical purposes because at the level of everyday school life, all three are closely related to each other. For example, a lack of experience of respect and social esteem can result in the student losing—at an emotional level—their trust in the teacher [32].

1.3. What Do the Insufficient Experiences of Recognition Cause at School? Some Empirical Data

To date, little research has been conducted on the role and importance of recognition experiences in the school environment for the procedure of students' school adaptation. This research is based on Honneth's theory of recognition, using qualitative research methods and focusing on the study of students' school failure from the point of view of their own needs. From the findings, it is evident that students who experience a lack of emotional support from teachers are prevented from developing trusting relationships with them, and as a result, they cannot identify with them [33]. This leads to the creation

of learning barriers; students are then unable to relate the complex cognitive content of teaching to their personal experience, so it has no personal meaning. This means, as Wiezorek underlines [34] that students who do not have emotional support feel that their own worldview and their learning interests are devalued. The important role of empathy experiences in creating strong bonds between students and school, motivating them to actively participate in teaching, have been underlined by the meta-analyses of Cornelius-White [35] and Roorda et al. [4]. Furthermore, teachers' empathy creates positive conditions for inclusive teaching and communication in the classroom, as well as contributing to the weakening of prejudices against students from minority groups. This is particularly important for the recognition of cultural differences in school [36].

A lack of emotional support and respect is associated with learning disabilities as well as low learning outcomes. Vieluf and Sauerwein [37] show that students with an immigrant background experience less respect than their native classmates due to low learning expectations from their teachers and reduced opportunities for participation in dialogue and cognitive processing of learning content. These lack of respect experiences are associated with low learning outcomes. Several other studies have revealed that immigrant students, as well as students from disadvantaged social backgrounds, are often faced with reduced teacher expectations regarding their learning abilities [38–41]. By contrast, a learning environment characterized by respectful relationships motivates students to participate in lessons, collaborate with their teachers and classmates, and become involved in society [42–45]. Therefore, students' incomplete respect experiences seem to be connected with the existence of unequal opportunities for participation in class and generally, in school life.

A lack of social esteem in students' relationships with their teachers has significant negative effects. Wiezorek [34] reports that students with a low school performance state that they regard poor social esteem as an underestimation of their personality. From the scope of recognition theory, special significance is given to the evaluation process of personal achievements, according to Prenzel [46] because this theory produces and maintains stereotypes for "weak" students, and these are accompanied by discrimination and learning barriers, thus contributing to the consolidation of educational inequalities.

The students' recognition experiences with their teachers also affect their relationships with the other class members [46]. When the teacher places great emphasis on individual performance, for example, thus cultivating a climate of competition among students, they define as the basic criterion of recognition the norm of high individual performance. In conditions of fierce school competition, low-achieving students are systematically deprived of experiences of support and acceptance from their classmates, which leads to the creation of conditions for their marginalization [33].

To conclude, the evidence that derives from the limited research shows that the lack of recognition that is experienced by some students in their relationships with their teachers (educators) and their classmates, has a negative effect in the process of their school adaptation and performance. According to recognition theory the causes that result to experiences of lack of recognition are related to the institutional organization of the educational process both at a macro-level (such as students' evaluation regulations) and at a micro-level (such as the culture of an educational community).

1.4. An Intersectional View of Recognition Experiences

Researchers studying the quality of pedagogical relationships in school and the groups of students who are most affected by them, either positively or negatively, usually consider the categories of ethnicity, the socio-economic or educational level of the students' families, and gender. In quantitative research, these categories are usually examined separately from each other [47,48]. This approach, however, presents significant limitations in understanding such a complex phenomenon as educational inequality. The groups of students are constructed and presented on the axis of each category as internally homogeneous,

without considering cases of difference. This is a consequence of the complex relationships and interactions between the categories [49,50].

The intersectional approach offers the possibility of overcoming the above-mentioned limitations, as it focuses on the study of the emergence of social and educational inequalities as phenomena related to the multiplicity of overlaps, intersections, and interdependencies between categories of ethnicity, socio-economic background, and gender. The concept of intersectionality originates from feminist, gender, and race studies [51] and is currently used in (mainly qualitative) educational research to understand the educational inequalities grid [52]. The central idea of this is that students from minority groups belong to more than one social group at the same time and experience interrelated discrimination both at an individual and institutional level [53]. Therefore, the intersectional approach offers opportunities to analyze qualitative differences and similarities within groups and multiple, cross-sectional inequalities between those groups [54]. The interdisciplinarity lens is particularly useful in the case of immigrant students because it prevents monothematic analysis based on ethnicity [55] and focuses on the dynamics developed by the interaction of students' different social situations, such as gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and immigration background [48,50].

Empirically, we applied McCall's complex intersectionality theory [54], which combines the categories of migration, gender, and complex insights on how recognition experiences by teachers and classmates are distributed within the students' population. This approach will allow us to detect by our analytic strategy social intersections and address a more complex reality [56]. In doing so, we did not introduce intersectionality simply as an analytical toolkit for a more concise prediction of the respective models that are being estimated, but as a means of addressing power relations within those intersections [57]. Following this line of reasoning, through our analyses we are expecting to identify migrant adolescent students as not a homogenous group but rather one in which nuances of gender and socio-economic status pertain [58]. Combining migration, gender, and socio-economic status opens a more appropriate gateway to understanding students' development in school [59] when it comes to recognition experiences and their effects on academic achievement. Understanding the power relations created by the synthesis of the intersecting aspects of a student's identity in the context of their immigrant background facilitates their integration and development within the educational process [60]. Therefore, the main research issue that arises in relation to educational inequalities is the degree to which the students feel recognized by the school.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study and Sample

The present study investigated recognition experiences of adolescent students in Greece. The study population consisted of students attending upper secondary school (Lykeio) in Greece. Students typically enter either a general (GEL) or a vocational (EPAL) Lykeio at 15 and graduate when they are 18. The sample included 1,303 students from 46 GELs (876 students) and 23 EPALs (427 students). The number of schools selected from each educational district was proportional to the population size of the district. Within each district, schools were selected by convenience sampling, keeping the same ratio of general to vocational students in the district. Participating schools were asked to engage students in one or two of their classes [20–30 students in total]. Students in the first grade comprised 37% of the sample, 39% in the second grade, and 22% in the third grade; 20 students were older than 18. The proportion of females in the final sample was 53% (462 female and 414 male students) among participants attending GELs; it was 36% (156 female and 271 male students) among those attending EPALs. This reflected the different gender distribution among students within the corresponding type of school. Most of the participating students (67%) were living in urban areas.

2.2. Analytic Strategy/Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed by our analytic strategy:

- Do students differ in the degree they perceive themselves as being recognized by their teachers and their peers in different domains (moral respect, empathy, and social esteem)?
- Do students differ in the degree they perceive themselves as being recognized by their teachers and peers, according to their gender, ethnicity (i.e., Greek or non-Greek), and family education level?
- Does combining migration, gender, and socio-economic status open a more appropriate gateway in understanding the development of students?
- Is recognition by peers associated with recognition by teachers?
- Is recognition by teachers and peers associated with academic achievement and self-esteem?
- Which of the previously mentioned socio-demographic variables and recognition experiences are predictive of students' academic achievement and self-esteem?

2.3. Measures

Experiences of Recognition

Student experiences of recognition by their teachers and peers were measured using two scales, one on recognition by teachers and one on recognition by peers, with three subscales each, constructed by the authors for the present study. The items included in each scale were informed by theoretical considerations concerning the construct of "recognition" [61] and enhanced by items elicited from semi-structured interviews with 20 students attending GELs or EPALs in the Larissa prefecture. The items in each scale referred to three subscales concerning (a) moral respect; (b) empathy; and (c) social esteem.

Respect items referred to the freedom of students to express judgments that were respected and recognized by teachers and classmates; for instance, "Because I am not a hard-working student, teachers underestimate me" or "My classmates believe in me and my abilities." We applied eight teacher and nine peer respect items.

Empathy items, four items on empathy from teachers and three on empathy from peers, referred to the emotional support and encouragement that students received from teachers and classmates as well as the degree of trust they developed with them; for instance, "Teachers are not interested in my feelings" or "My classmates are interested in my emotional state".

Social esteem items, four items on empathy from teachers and six on empathy from peers, referred to the recognition of students' special abilities, characteristics, and achievements by their teachers and classmates that made them feel worthy of contributing to the goals and objectives of the school community; for instance, "My teachers' behavior shows they consider my presence important for the class" or "My classmates treat me as inferior".

Items in all six subscales were measured on a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all to 6 = absolutely true). Scores for the total scales and subscales were calculated by averaging the relevant items, after reversing coding in case of negatively phrased statements. All scales and subscales showed high levels of reliability (Table 1).

Table 1. Reliability of the applied six recognition subscales.

	Scales and Subscales	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Recognition by Teachers	Respect	0.88	8
	Empathy	0.75	4
	Social Esteem	0.73	4
	Total	0.90	16
Recognition by Peers	Respect	0.87	9
	Empathy	0.78	3
	Social Esteem	0.79	6
	Total	0.89	18

Self-esteem was measured by combining the 10 items of the Rosenberg scale (1965) and four items, concerning general self-esteem, from the 58 items of the Coopersmith scale (1981). This combined scale uses a variety of questions to assess emotions (positive and negative) and qualities of the individual, for instance, “I take a positive attitude towards myself” (Rosenberg) or “It is difficult to accept myself I am” (Coopersmith). Each item was answered on a 4-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree) and the total score for each student was calculated by averaging their answers after reversing the codes for negatively stated items. The reliability of the scale was high (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.879). Academic achievement was recorded based on the students’ statements about their previous year’s final grade [10].

A student was considered as having non-Greek ethnicity if they or at least one of their parents had been born in a country other than Greece. Family educational level was categorized as basic (up to 9 years of schooling), secondary (10–12 years), or higher (at least university level), with reference to the most educated parent.

3. Results

3.1. Recognition by Teachers

3.1.1. Subscales of Recognition by Teachers

The mean score of the total scale was 4.01 (SD = 0.96), reflecting “rather positive” experiences. The mean scores of all three teachers’ recognition sub-scales were around the scale’s midpoint, with moral respect being higher (Figure 1 and Table 2).

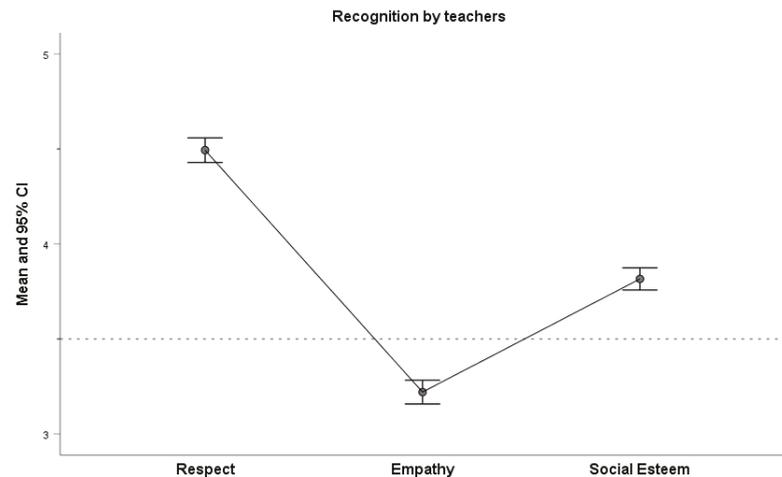


Figure 1. Mean scores of teachers’ recognition sub-scales.

Table 2. Means, SDs, and Intercorrelations between the three teachers’ recognition sub-scales.

Recognition by Teacher	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Intercorrelations ¹	
				Respect	Empathy
Respect	1248	4.49	1.15		
Empathy	1279	3.22	1.12	0.513	
Social esteem	1278	3.82	1.04	0.623	0.648

¹ All correlations were significant at the 0.001 level.

Intercorrelations between the three teachers’ recognition sub-scales were high (Table 2), indicating an elevated but still distinctive relationship between the three sub-scales.

3.1.2. Effects of Gender, Ethnicity, and Family Education on Teacher Recognition

For all subscales, *t*-tests comparing males with females produced significant results (Table 3). Females had higher scores than the males regarding moral respect by teachers ($t[1245,98] = -3.79, p < 0.001, d = 0.21$), empathy ($t[1277] = -3.18, p = 0.001, d = 0.18$) and social esteem ($t[1276] = -2.99, p = 0.003, d = 0.17$). Moreover, total scores of recognition by teachers were higher for females ($t[1276] = -3.86, p < 0.001, d = 0.22$).

Table 3. Comparison of recognition by teachers with respect to gender.

Recognition by Teachers	Gender				Sig. <i>p</i>
	Male		Female		
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Respect	4.37	1.19	4.62	1.08	<0.001
Empathy	3.12	1.09	3.32	1.14	0.001
Social esteem	3.73	1.03	3.91	1.03	0.003
Total	3.90	0.96	4.12	0.95	<0.001

Regarding ethnicity, *t*-tests comparing Greek with non-Greek students gave significant results for the total scores as well as for moral respect and social esteem (Table 4). Students with an immigration background had lower scores compared with natives regarding moral respect by teachers ($t[548.193] = 4.05, p < 0.001, d = 0.35$), and social esteem ($t[578.797] = 4.08, p < 0.001, d = 0.34$) but the difference was not significant for empathy ($t[1275] = 1.31, p = 0.190, d = 0.07$). Native students also had higher total scores of recognition by teachers ($t[542.793] = 3.96, p < 0.001, d = 0.34$).

Table 4. Comparison of recognition by teachers with respect to ethnicity.

Recognition by Teachers	Ethnicity				Sig. <i>p</i>
	Greek		Non-Greek		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Respect	4.58	1.09	4.27	1.24	<0.001
Empathy	3.25	1.10	3.15	1.14	0.190
Social esteem	3.90	1.00	3.62	1.09	<0.001
Total	4.08	0.92	3.82	1.03	<0.001

Recognition by teachers (total score) was significantly differentiated according to family education level ($F[2,1089] = 3.69, p = 0.025, \eta^2 = 0.007$). The lower the family education the less the recognition experienced by the students, as shown by the statistically significant linear trend ($p = 0.009$). Similar results were obtained for the subscale for respect ($F[2,1120] = 5.44, p = 0.004, \eta^2 = 0.010$) and social esteem ($F[2,1143] = 8.20, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.014$). However, the result was not significant for the empathy subscale ($F[2,1147] = 0.86, p = 0.422$; see Table 5).

Table 5. Recognition by teachers with respect to family education level.

Recognition by Teachers	Family Educational Level							
	Basic		Secondary		University		Sig. <i>p</i>	η^2
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Respect	4.20	1.23	4.46	1.17	4.59	1.09	0.004	0.010
Empathy	3.24	1.12	3.27	1.10	3.18	1.13	0.422	0.002
Social esteem	3.48	1.11	3.78	1.08	3.92	1.00	<0.001	0.014
Total	3.79	1.05	3.99	0.98	4.07	0.93	0.025	0.007

3.1.3. Intersectionality of Recognition by Teachers

Total scores for recognition by teachers were analyzed using 3-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Significant effects were found for gender and ethnicity; family education did not have a significant effect (Table 6).

Table 6. ANOVA of Recognition by teachers total score.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. <i>p</i>	η^2
Gender [G]	19.704	1	19.704	22.497	<0.001	0.020
Ethnicity [E]	13.462	1	13.462	15.371	<0.001	0.014
Family Education [FE _d]	3.930	2	1.965	2.244	0.107	0.004
G × E	0.278	1	0.278	0.317	0.573	0.000
G × FE _d	5.204	2	2.602	2.971	0.052	0.005
E × FE _d	2.624	2	1.312	1.498	0.224	0.003
G × E × FE _d	0.887	2	0.444	0.507	0.603	0.001
Error	944.134	1078	0.876			

R Squared = 0.045 [Adjusted R Squared = 0.035]

Three-way multivariate ANOVA (MANOVA) for the three subscales for recognition by teachers revealed a significant effect of all three socio-demographic variables, as well as a significant interaction between family education and gender, which was not shown in total scores (Table 7).

Table 7. MANOVA of Recognition by teachers subscales.

Main Effects and Interactions	Roy's Largest Root	F	Hyp. df	Error df	Sig. <i>p</i>	η^2
Gender [G]	0.025	8.936	3	1076	<0.001	0.024
Ethnicity [E]	0.016	5.885	3	1076	0.001	0.016
Fam. Education [FE _d]	0.019	6.818	3	1077	<0.001	0.019
E × FE _d	0.005	1.925	3	1077	0.124	0.005
G × FE _d	0.009	3.088	3	1077	0.026	0.009
G × E	0.002	0.655	3	1076	0.580	0.002
G × E × FE _d	0.005	1.705	3	1077	0.164	0.005

As can be seen in Table 7, the MANOVA results revealed a significant interaction between family education and gender. Univariate tests showed that this was true for the subscale of respect only ($F[2,1078] = 4.305, p = 0.014, \eta^2 = 0.008$), while no interaction effect was found in the other two subscales. The interaction effect is illustrated in Figure 2.

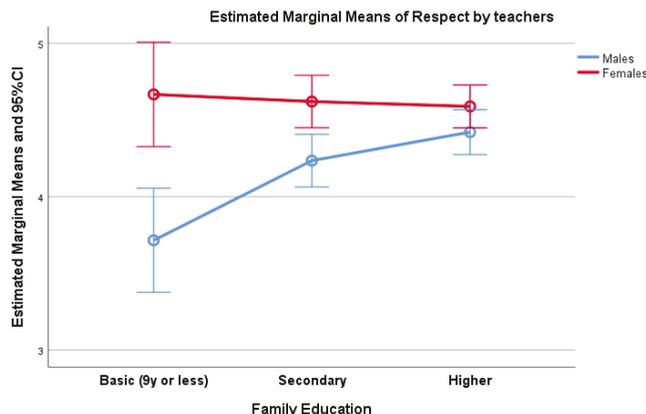


Figure 2. Interaction of Gender by Family Education regarding the Respect by teacher subscale scores.

For females, respect from teachers was not related to family education level ($F[2,1078] = 4.30, p = 0.014, \eta^2 = 0.008$); for males, respect from teachers was significantly lower among students from families with just an elementary education ($F[2,1078] = 4.305, p = 0.014, \eta^2 = 0.008$). Tukey’s b post hoc test was used. Both male and female students experienced less social esteem from their teachers if they came from poorly educated families. However, empathy was not found to be related to family education level.

The main effects of gender were significant for all three subscales, that is, males experienced recognition by teachers to a lower degree in all domains (moral, emotional, and social). Non-Greeks also experienced less moral respect and social esteem, but they did not differ from natives in empathy.

3.2. Recognition by Peers

3.2.1. Subscales of Recognition by Peers

The mean scores for social esteem were just above the scale’s midpoint (Figure 3 and Table 8).

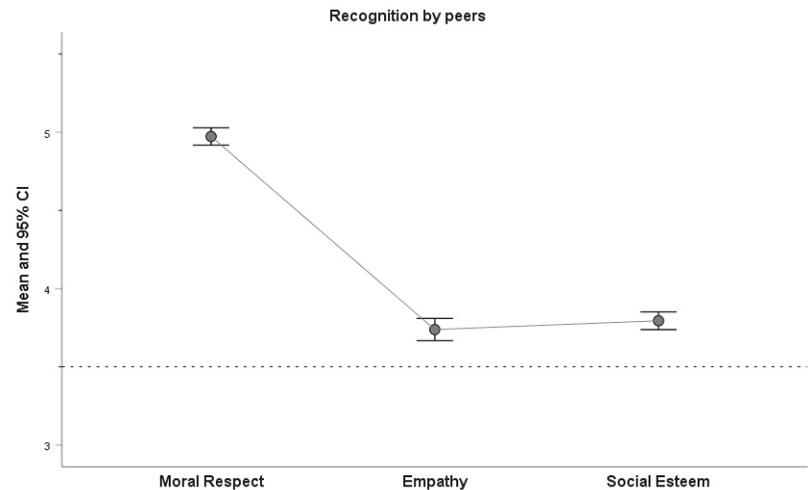


Figure 3. Mean scores of peers’ recognition sub-scales.

Table 8. Means, SDs, and Intercorrelations between the three peers’ recognition sub-scales.

Recognition by Teacher	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Intercorrelations ¹	
				Respect	Empathy
Respect	1234	4.97	0.97		
Empathy	1265	3.74	1.24	0.394	
Social esteem	1262	3.81	0.99	0.489	0.614

¹ All correlations were significant at the 0.001 level.

Intercorrelations between the three peers’ recognition sub-scales are shown in Table 8. They indicate a rather high correlation of empathy with social esteem but medium or low correlations with respect.

3.2.2. Effects of Gender, Ethnicity, and Family Education on Peers’ Recognition

For the total scale and all subscales, *t*-tests comparing males with females returned non-significant results (Table 9).

Table 9. Comparison of recognition by peers with respect to gender.

Recognition by Peers	Gender				Sig. <i>p</i>
	Male		Female		
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Respect	4.93	0.98	5.01	0.95	0.142
Empathy	3.73	1.21	3.75	1.28	0.770
Social esteem	3.78	0.99	3.84	0.99	0.278
Total	4.35	0.82	4.40	0.87	0.271

Regarding ethnicity, *t*-tests comparing Greek with non-Greek students returned significant results for the total scores as well as for moral respect (Table 10). Students with an immigrant background had lower scores compared with natives in terms of respect by peers ($t[554.41] = 2.41, p = 0.016, d = 0.20$) and the total score for recognition by peers ($t[1172] = 2.23, p = 0.026, d = 0.13$), but the difference was not significant for empathy ($t[1260] = 1.56, p = 0.119$) or social esteem ($t[1257] = 1.46, p = 0.143$).

Table 10. Comparison of recognition by peers with respect to ethnicity.

Recognition by Peers	Ethnicity				Sig. <i>p</i>
	Greek		Non-Greek		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Respect	5.01	0.93	4.86	1.01	0.016
Empathy	3.77	1.25	3.65	1.23	0.119
Social esteem	3.84	0.97	3.74	1.01	0.143
Total	4.41	0.83	4.29	0.83	0.026

Recognition by peers (total score) was significantly differentiated according to family education level ($F[2,1058] = 8.59, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.016$). The lower the family education, the less the peer recognition experienced by the students, as the statistically significant linear trend showed ($p < 0.001$). Similar results were obtained for the subscales for respect ($F[2,1104] = 4.28, p = 0.014, \eta^2 = 0.008$), empathy ($F[2,1136] = 4.74, p = 0.009, \eta^2 = 0.008$), and social esteem ($F[2,1135] = 9.14, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.016$; Table 11).

Table 11. Recognition by peers with respect to family education level.

Recognition by Peers	Family Educational Level							
	Basic		Secondary		University		Sig. <i>p</i>	η^2
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Respect	4.80	1.02	4.94	0.99	5.06	0.88	0.014	0.008
Empathy	3.40	1.28	3.72	1.25	3.82	1.21	0.009	0.008
Social esteem	3.44	1.01	3.80	1.01	3.90	0.95	<0.001	0.016
Total	4.08	0.88	4.36	0.86	4.46	0.79	<0.001	0.016

3.2.3. Intersectionality of Recognition by Peers

Total scores of recognition by peers were analyzed using a 3-way ANOVA. Significant effects were found regarding family education only. Ethnicity was no longer significant after the effect of family education was taken into account (Table 12).

Table 12. ANOVA of Peers' Recognition total score.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. <i>p</i>	η^2
Gender [G]	2.196	1	2.196	3.315	0.069	0.003
Ethnicity [E]	1.074	1	1.074	1.622	0.203	0.002
Family Education [FE _d]	6.081	2	3.040	4.591	0.010	0.009
G × E	0.005	1	0.005	0.008	0.931	0.000
G × FE _d	2.055	2	1.027	1.551	0.212	0.003
E × FE _d	0.122	2	0.061	0.092	0.912	0.000
G × E × FE _d	0.264	2	0.132	0.199	0.819	0.000
Error	692.663	1046	0.662			

R Squared = 0.022 [Adjusted R Squared = 0.012]

Similarly, multivariate tests of a 3-way MANOVA for the three subscales of recognition by teachers revealed a significant effect of family education only (Table 13).

Table 13. MANOVA of Peers' Recognition subscales.

Main Effects and Interactions	Roy's Largest Root	F	Hyp. df	Error df	Sig. <i>p</i>	η^2
Gender [G]	0.005	1.765	3	1044	0.152	0.005
Ethnicity [E]	0.002	0.680	3	1044	0.564	0.002
Fam. Education [FE _d]	0.012	4.192	3	1045	0.006	0.012
E × FE _d	0.002	0.617	3	1045	0.604	0.002
G × FE _d	0.007	2.428	3	1045	0.064	0.007
G × E	0.006	2.039	3	1044	0.107	0.006
G × E × FE _d	0.004	1.331	3	1045	0.263	0.004

In all three subscales, there was a significant linear trend with respect to family education (Figure 4). The lower the level of family education, the less the recognition by peers.

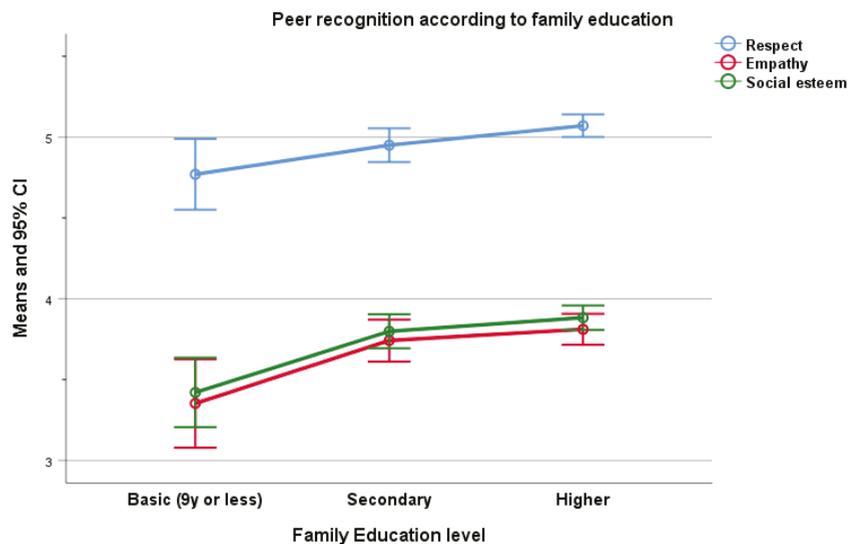


Figure 4. Estimated marginal means of peers' recognition subscales by family education level.

3.3. Recognition and Student Outcome Correlations

Students' recognition by teachers was associated with those by peers ($r = 0.427$); 18% of peer recognition was attributed to recognition by teachers. In particular, correlations between recognition by teachers and peers concerning respect and social esteem were of medium size, while those regarding empathy were low (Table 14).

Table 14. Correlation coefficients between Teachers' and Peers' Recognition subscales.

Recognition by Teachers	Recognition by Peers		
	Respect	Empathy	Social Esteem
Respect	0.488	0.092	0.255
Empathy	0.174	0.237	0.335
Social esteem	0.278	0.206	0.431

All correlations were significant at the 0.001 level.

Table 15 shows that the recognition by teachers subscales for respect and social esteem were correlated to a medium extent with academic achievement; all the other correlations were rather low. Recognition by peers regarding respect and social esteem was correlated to an almost medium extent with self-esteem. All the other correlations were low.

Table 15. Correlation coefficients of Students' Recognition experiences with their outcomes.

Recognition		Academic Achievement	Self Esteem
by Teachers	Respect	0.527	0.273
	Empathy	0.284	0.165
	Social esteem	0.474	0.263
	Total	0.534	0.289
by Peers	Respect	0.284	0.387
	Empathy	0.108	0.179
	Social esteem	0.273	0.337
	Total	0.209	0.312

All correlations were significant at the 0.001 level.

3.4. Predicting Student Outcomes

Multiple regression of academic achievement on socio-demographic variables and students' recognition experiences showed that recognition by teachers was the most predictive factor. The contribution of peer recognition was not significant. Greek ethnicity, female gender, and an educated family were additional predictive factors for high grades. Thirty-seven percent of the variability in academic achievement can be explained by these factors. A similar analysis regarding self-esteem showed that students' recognition by peers was by far the most influential positive factor, followed by male gender and recognition by teachers (Table 16).

Table 16. Prediction of students' outcomes: regression coefficients and statistical significance.

Predictors	Academic Achievement			Self Esteem		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error	Beta
constant	11.668	0.343		1.818	0.106	
Ethnicity [Greek]	0.591	0.116	0.130 **	−0.001	0.036	−0.001
Gender [Female]	0.532	0.102	0.133 **	−0.193	0.032	−0.182 **
Family educ. [Higher]	1.179	0.197	0.290 **	−0.024	0.061	−0.022
Family educ. [Secondary]	0.488	0.204	0.115 *	−0.021	0.063	−0.019
Recognition by Teachers	1.007	0.059	0.481 **	0.090	0.018	0.161 **
Recognition by Peers	0.079	0.068	0.032	0.205	0.021	0.315 **
	Adj. R ² = 0.369			Adj. R ² = 0.186		

* significant at the 0.05 level. ** significant at the 0.01 level

4. Discussion

Assessing, from a theoretical point of view, the deficient experiences of recognition in the form of respect and social esteem, it is important to point out that they are related and caused by two central structural elements of the educational process, which are intertwined in school everyday life: the first element concerns the opportunities and the possibilities of participation of all students at the level of teaching, as well as at the level of school life, in general, and the second element concerns the applied practices of evaluation of individual performance by the class teacher. The importance of participation in school life for building experiences of respect is confirmed by Sirlopu and Renger's research [62], which is based on Honneth's theory of recognition [22–24]. Researchers emphasize the role of participation in school life in developing experiences of recognition, in the form of respect, especially for immigrant students. Although student participation is recognized for its fundamental importance in cognitive and emotional development, it appears that in school everyday life student participation is shaped by terms that work preferentially only for those who have a high school performance and are distinguished by their communication skills. Taking this into account, Sauerwein [63] evaluates the absence of opportunities for the participation of specific groups of students, such as those with an immigrant background, as experiences of rejection by the school, which has a negative effect on their development.

From the point of view of recognition justice, the main research issue that arises in relation to educational inequalities is the degree to which the students feel recognized by the school. This was the main focus of our research in our examination of the recognition experiences of secondary school students in Greece.

We found that there were differences in the degree of students' recognition experiences. These concerned all three forms of recognition, and they appeared on the axes of intersectionality as gender, ethnicity, and the educational level of the family. In particular, girls, native students, and students from families with a high level of education experienced the highest degree of recognition by teachers. The girls experienced greater recognition from teachers in all areas. However, differences in the experiences of recognition in terms of ethnic origin and the educational level of the family were evident in the experiences of respect and social esteem but not of empathy. Students from immigrant and low-income families experienced the lowest levels of respect and social esteem from their teachers. Vieluf and Sauerwein [37] found a low degree of recognition, but only in terms of respect among students from immigrant families.

Of particular interest is the finding regarding the interaction of gender and the educational level of the family. In particular, it was found that boys from families of a low educational level experience a significantly lower degree of recognition (mainly in the form of respect) than girls from the same group; this difference between the two genders did not occur in the group of students from families of a high educational level. Therefore, boys from low-income families (and not just migrants) experienced comparatively the largest deficits of recognition in their relationships with teachers. This has often been stated to be the case but without any empirical validation. This group seems to be in a very vulnerable situation in school [64].

Furthermore, the immigrant students, as well as the students from low-income families, experienced deficits in the forms of recognition of respect and social esteem, which, according to Helsper et al. [29,65], constitute the most basic conditions for developing socio-cognitive skills and, therefore, have the greatest impact on school performance and school adaptation. Once again, we emphasize the specific intersectional insights our study offers. Neither the boys nor the students with an immigrant background were, generally under pressure; the intersections of these socio-demographic categorizations made the difference. The importance of teachers' recognition in school performance was reflected in the findings of the present study because it was the strongest predictor of performance. Other factors such as gender (girls), ethnicity (natives), and family education (high) were less influential. This finding is in keeping with research that has highlighted the effect of the quality of relationships with teachers (in terms of acceptance and support for students) on

school performance [66–68]. According to Prengel [69], factors that determine the quality of pedagogical relations in learning outcomes should be given more emphasis, especially in the context of large-scale international research (e.g., PISA). Recently, of course, there has been a growing interest in the study of how students experience their social relationships at school [70], although such experiences are not directly related to educational inequalities.

According to Filippatou and Ventista [71], teachers adapt their teaching practice mainly to the needs and abilities of the “average” student because they consider that their teaching in the formal classroom cannot benefit poor-learning students. While the research data on the conditions for participation by students is limited, it seems that teachers’ commitment to the academic performance of their students means that they do not show sufficient interest in creating quality relationships with their students [72]. It is clear that such teaching practices exclude from participation those students who have a special need for learning support, or are treated by teachers stereotypically due to their social and/or ethnic origin [73,74].

Regarding Greek schools, the experience of insufficient support for secondary school students, and a consequent lack of participation in the teaching process, confirm recent OECD research results [75], in which 44% of students stated that teachers were not interested in the learning of every student; 33% stated that teachers did not give extra help to students who needed it; and 38% stated that teachers insisted on not teaching until the students understood. Helsper et al. [65] and Wysujack [76] emphasize that differences in the degree of recognition in experiences of social esteem are related to the fact that the dominant way of evaluating students leads to the ranking of students as “strong” and “weak” based on a specific understanding of individual learning ability and a corresponding norm that assesses, in exclusively quantitative terms, the degree of response to the goal of acquiring an institutionally defined body of school knowledge and adapting to the school habitus in general. However, this works to the detriment of the real educational work of qualifying and socializing all students [46] and in particular to the detriment of disadvantaged students, such as those with a migrant background, who have the greatest need for recognition in the school environment [1,65,77]. Furthermore, experiences of insufficient social esteem among immigrant students may also be related to the way teachers evaluate their particular cultural and linguistic capital in the classroom. If this is seen more as an obstacle than as an ability and/or a learning resource, in any case as non-capital unrelated to the norm of cognitive and value habitus promoted by the school, then it is rather difficult to believe that teaching will enable immigrant to build unhindered experiences of social esteem.

In the present study, the existence or otherwise of differences in the degree of recognition experiences was also explored in respect of peer relationships, with the expectation of creating an overall picture of the existence or otherwise of groups of students who were negatively affected, so far as their school adjustment and progress were concerned, by the formation of social relationships within the school. It is acknowledged that these have a significant influence on students’ development, especially during adolescence [78]. In particular, they have been found to affect students’ self-esteem [79,80] and school performance [9,81]. As relationships between students are influenced not only by their own rules but also the nature of the quality of their relationships with teachers [82], we were particularly interested in both whether the two were interrelated and whether socio-demographic factors played a role.

We concluded that the experiences of recognition in the group of classmates were to some extent correlated with their experiences of recognition by teachers. The greater the degree of recognition of students by teachers, mainly in the form of respect but also social esteem, the greater the degree of recognition by classmates. Kiuru et al. [5] cite several theoretical reasons why positive relationships with teachers can lead to acceptance and recognition by peers. For example, students may use positive relationships with teachers as resources to approach their classmates with positive expectations. Teachers can also act as a model for how to deal with classmates. It is vital in each case to find

connections and continuity in the experiences of recognition in both respects. Certainly, the influence of teachers, especially with regard to the recognition potential that characterizes their pedagogical practices, is vital in shaping the quality of overall social relationships of students at school. Of course, from the point of view of recognitive justice, there is a great need to explore further how recognition experiences with teachers affect students' relationships and recognition experiences with classmates by addressing the issue through an intersectional lens.

Although experiences of recognition in relationships with classmates were not found to play a role in performance, their importance was reflected in the effect they had on students' self-esteem. This effect was even stronger than that exerted by the experiences of recognition by teachers. Moreover, gender played a positive role. By contrast, neither the ethnic origin nor the educational level of the family was found to affect self-esteem. Other studies on the effect of peer relationships on self-esteem reached similar conclusions [80,83,84]. Motti-Stefanidi et al [85] noted that acceptance by classmates in Greek schools functioned as a predictor of a high sense of self-esteem for both native and immigrant students.

Regarding the relationship of socio-demographic factors to the experiences of recognition by classmates, only the educational level of the family played a role. Students from families with a high level of education enjoyed a higher degree of recognition by their classmates. Asendorpf and Motti-Stefanidi [86] and Motti-Stefanidi et al. [85] have demonstrated the effect of social status on the degree of acceptance by classmates. Focusing on the different forms of recognition by classmates and the role of each of these factors, it was found that the educational level of the family was related to all forms of recognition by classmates and ethnicity was related to experiences of respect by classmates. In particular, native students experienced a higher degree of respect than their classmates. As this form of recognition expressed experiences of equal treatment and participation in the peer group, we are led to conclude that it is not only immigrant students who tend to receive unequal treatment from their peers. Immigrant students, however, are likely to be treated by their classmates as people who do not meet their regulatory expectations. According to Wiezorek [34], the degree of response to the expectations of classmates is a criterion for the degree of their recognition. Our finding is consistent with research that has shown a lower degree of sympathy with and acceptance of immigrant students and not only by their classmates [87,88]. It answers the question concerning the existence of a possible continuum of differences in the degree of recognition experiences between teacher–student and peer-to-peer relationships.

Based on these results, which reflect theoretical interpretations of how teacher–student relationships affect peer-to-peer relationships [5], we can conclude that the origins of feelings of unequal treatment among various less privileged students lay in their institutionalized relations with teachers. This view is reinforced by McGrath and Van Bergen [89], who concluded that a low-quality relationship between teachers and students at risk of school and social marginalization complicates students' relationships with their classmates. The low level of acceptance and unequal recognition by classmates may lead to negative consequences because adolescents have a special need for peer acceptance. This is an important factor in their school and social integration [90].

5. Conclusions

Relationships between teachers and students, as well as between classmates, have a significant impact on the results of school performance and school adaptation of students. From the point of view of recognitive justice, differences in these outcomes are interpreted as being unfair in the case of differences that relate to the degree to which the quality of these relationships satisfy students' need for empathy, respect, and social esteem. The expected encounters of social injustice in the classroom and by that the structural vulnerability production [91] will affect the psychological stability of the adolescents and their academic performance. These insights are considered fundamentally important for their emotional, cognitive, and social development. The results of the present study are in

keeping with other studies, especially those concerning the unfavorable school situation that socially disadvantaged students find themselves in internationally. The recognition justice approach allows us to go beyond the general findings; it allows us to interpret specifically the unfavorable situation immigrant students find themselves in and the educational inequalities they face as a result of the deficient functioning of their schools as a function of social injustice. This applies to other socially disadvantaged student groups as well. In particular, the insufficient recognition experiences of the respective students, both in their relations with teachers and their classmates, refer to (a) pedagogical practices within the classroom, which, from the point of view of inclusion, present significant deficits; and (b) deficits in the organization of school culture in terms of students' equal participation. A common denominator seems to be the fact that Greek schools (and perhaps not only Greek schools) have not yet adopted and implemented, to the required degree, pedagogical development policies and practices from a socially inclusive perspective.

6. Methodological Limitations

One limitation of the present study was its single information source, that is, the adolescents who completed our survey. Personality traits may have influenced their perceptions and reporting of recognition at school and their assessment of their interactions with peers and teachers. However, we know that students' self-reports are generally valid, so we can safely assume that problems arising from the absence of other data sources would be minor. Our model should be replicated in other countries to test its validity and the scales' reliability. We also need to understand whether the identified recognition processes at school apply similarly to different school grades and whether they are related to the respective adolescents' developmental stages. The cross-sectional character of the present study means that we cannot make claims about causalities and that our results speak only to specific factors. Longitudinal international studies might underline the connections between school recognition in adolescence and school outcomes. The modelling of the students' socio-economic level was based on just one item (their parents' level of education); a more sophisticated indicator was required. The extent to which recognition by teachers was connected to teaching practice, the respective didactic, and interactions between teachers and students were not analyzed. We therefore need a deeper understanding of these everyday communications and their connection to processes of recognition.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, C.G., D.S., W.K., J.-O.S.; methodology, W.K., J.-O.S.; formal analysis, J.-O.S.; investigation, D.S.; writing—original draft preparation, C.G., D.S., W.K., J.-O.S.; writing—review and editing, C.G., D.S., W.K., J.-O.S., R.C.; funding acquisition, C.G., W.K. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was supported by The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) through the NCCR—on the move, Grant number 51NF40-182897, awarded to Prof. Dr. Wassilis Kassis (University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland).

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was approved by the ethics committee of the Department of Primary Education of the University of Thessaly, Greece.

Informed Consent Statement: Written informed consent was obtained from all students and their legal guardian involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The datasets for this study are still not available to the public.

Acknowledgments: We acknowledge the support given by the headmasters, teachers, and adolescents for completing this study.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

1. Hamre, B.K.; Pianta, R.C. Early Teacher-Child Relationships and the Trajectory of Children's School Outcomes through Eighth Grade. *Child Dev.* **2001**, *72*, 625–638. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
2. Pianta, R.C.; Stuhlman, M.W. Teacher-Child Relationships and Children's Success in the First Years of School. *Sch. Psychol. Rev.* **2004**, *33*, 444–458. [[CrossRef](#)]
3. Mc Laughlin, C.; Clarke, B. Relational matters: A review of the impact of school experience on mental health in early adolescence. *Educ. Child Psychol.* **2010**, *27*, 91–103.
4. Roorda, D.L.; Koomen, H.M.Y.; Spilt, J.L.; Oort, F.J. The Influence of Affective Teacher-Student Relationships on Students' School Engagement and Achievement: A Meta-Analytic Approach. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **2011**, *81*, 493–529. [[CrossRef](#)]
5. Kiuru, N.; Aunola, K.; Lerkkanen, M.-K.; Pakarinen, E.; Poskiparta, E.; Ahonen, T.; Poikkeus, A.-M.; Nurmi, J.-E. Positive teacher and peer relations combine to predict primary school students' academic skill development. *Dev. Psychol.* **2015**, *51*, 434–446. [[CrossRef](#)]
6. Ansari, A.; Hofkens, T.L.; Pianta, R.C. Teacher-student relationships across the first seven years of education and adolescent outcomes. *J. Appl. Dev. Psychol.* **2020**, *71*, 101200. [[CrossRef](#)]
7. Valàs, H. Students with Learning Disabilities and Low-Achieving Students: Peer Acceptance, Loneliness, Self-Esteem, and Depression. *Soc. Psychol. Educ.* **1999**, *3*, 173–192. [[CrossRef](#)]
8. Guerra, R.; Rodrigues, R.B.; Aguiar, C.; Carmona, M.; Alexandre, J.; Costa-Lopes, R. School achievement and well-being of immigrant children: The role of acculturation orientations and perceived discrimination. *J. Sch. Psychol.* **2019**, *75*, 104–118. [[CrossRef](#)]
9. Wentzel, K.R.; Jablansky, S.; Scalise, N.R. Peer social acceptance and academic achievement: A meta-analytic study. *J. Educ. Psychol.* **2021**, *113*, 157–180. [[CrossRef](#)]
10. Brand, S.; Felner, R.D.; Seitsinger, A.; Burns, A.; Bolton, N. A large scale study of the assessment of the social environment of middle and secondary schools: The validity and utility of teachers' ratings of school climate, cultural pluralism, and safety problems for understanding school effects and school improvement. *J. Sch. Psychol.* **2008**, *46*, 507–535. [[CrossRef](#)]
11. Monahan, K.C.; Oesterle, S.; Hawkins, J.D. Predictors and Consequences of School Connectedness: The Case for Prevention. *Prev. Res.* **2010**. [[CrossRef](#)]
12. Dulay, S.; Karadağ, E. The Effect of School Climate on Student Achievement. In *The Factors Effecting Student Achievement*; Springer: Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany, 2017; Volume 52, pp. 199–213.
13. Maxwell, S.; Reynolds, K.; Lee, E.; Subasic, E.; Bromhead, D. The Impact of School Climate and School Identification on Academic Achievement: Multilevel Modeling with Student and Teacher Data. *Front. Psychol.* **2017**, *8*, 2069. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
14. Dimitrova, R.; Chasiotis, A.; Van de Vijver, F. Adjustment Outcomes of Immigrant Children and Youth in Europe A Meta-Analysis. *Eur. Psychol.* **2016**, *21*, 150–162. [[CrossRef](#)]
15. Schachner, M.K.; van de Vijver, F.J.; Noack, P. Contextual Conditions for Acculturation and Adjustment of Adolescent Immigrants—Integrating Theory and Findings. *Online Read. Psychol. Cult.* **2017**, *8*, 122. [[CrossRef](#)]
16. Hopson, L.M.; Lee, E. Mitigating the effect of family poverty on academic and behavioral outcomes: The role of school climate in middle and high school. *Child Youth Serv. Rev.* **2011**, *33*, 2221–2229. [[CrossRef](#)]
17. Murray, C.; Zvoch, K. Teacher-Student Relationships among Behaviorally At-Risk African American Youth From Low-Income Backgrounds: Student Perceptions, Teacher Perceptions, and Socioemotional Adjustment Correlates. *J. Emot. Behav. Disord.* **2010**, *19*, 41–54. [[CrossRef](#)]
18. Kleen, H.; Glock, S. A further look into ethnicity: The impact of stereotypical expectations on teachers' judgments of female ethnic minority students. *Soc. Psychol. Educ.* **2018**, *21*, 759–773. [[CrossRef](#)]
19. Makarova, E.; Gilde, J.; Birman, D. Teachers as risk and resource factors in minority students' school adjustment: An integrative review of qualitative research on acculturation. *Intercult. Educ.* **2020**, *30*, 4–33. [[CrossRef](#)]
20. Nusche, D. *What Works in Migrant Education? A Review of Evidence and Policy Options*; OECD Publishing: Paris, France, 2009.
21. Van den Bergh, L.; Denessen, E.; Hornstra, L.; Voeten, M.; Holland, R.W. The Implicit Prejudiced Attitudes of Teachers: Relations to Teacher Expectations and the Ethnic Achievement Gap. *Am. Educ. Res. J.* **2010**, *47*, 497–527. [[CrossRef](#)]
22. Honneth, A. The Social Dynamics of Disrespect: On the Location of Critical Theory Today. *Constellations* **1994**, *1*, 255–269.
23. Honneth, A. *Anerkennung: Eine Europäische Ideengeschichte*; Suhrkamp Verlag: Frankfurt, Germany, 2018.
24. Frazer, N.; Honneth, A. *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange*; Verso Books: London, UK, 2003.
25. Stojanov, K. *Bildung und Anerkennung: Soziale Voraussetzungen von Selbst-Entwicklung und Welt-Erschließung*; Springer: Berlin, Germany, 2006.
26. Stojanov, K. *Bildungsgerechtigkeit: Rekonstruktionen Eines Umkämpften Begriffs*; Springer: Berlin, Germany, 2011.
27. Stojanov, K. Bildungsgerechtigkeit als Anerkennungsgerechtigkeit. In *Bildungsgerechtigkeit jenseits von Chancengleichheit*; Dietrich, F., Heinrich, M., Thieme, N., Eds.; Springer VS: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2013; pp. 57–69.
28. Stojanov, K. *Education, Self-Consciousness and Social Action: Bildung as a neo-Hegelian Concept*; Routledge: London, UK, 2017.
29. Helsper, W.; Lingkost, A. *Schuelerpartizipation in den Antinomien von Autonomie und Zwang sowie Organisation und Interaktion—Exemplarische Rekonstruktionen im Horizont einer Theorie Schulischer Anerkennung*; Hafenecker, B., Henkenborg, P., Scherr, A., Eds.; Wochenschau Verlag: Schwalbach/Ts, Germany, 2002; pp. 132–156.
30. Peters, R. *Ethics and Education*; Allen & Unwin: London, UK, 1966.

31. Stojanov, K. Leistung—Ein irreführender Begriff im Diskurs über Bildungsgerechtigkeit. In *Leistung*; Schäfer, A., Thompson, C., Eds.; Ferdinand Schöningh: Paderborn, Germany, 2015; pp. 135–150.
32. Sandring, S. *Schulversagen und Anerkennung: Scheiternde Schulkarrieren im Spiegel der Anerkennungsbedürfnisse Jugendlicher*; Springer VS: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2013.
33. Kammler, T. *Anerkennung und Gewalt an Schulen*; Springer VS: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2013.
34. Wiezorek, C. *Schule, Biografie und Anerkennung: Eine fallbezogene Diskussion der Schule als Sozialisationsinstanz*; Springer VS: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2005.
35. Cornelius-White, J. Learner-Centered Teacher-Student Relationships Are Effective: A Meta-Analysis. *Rev. Educ. Res.* **2007**, *77*, 113–143. [[CrossRef](#)]
36. Whitford, D.K.; Emerson, A.M. Empathy Intervention to Reduce Implicit Bias in Pre-Service Teachers. *Psychol. Rep.* **2018**, *122*, 670–688. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
37. Vieluf, S.; Sauerwein, M.N. Does a lack of teachers' recognition of students with migration background contribute to achievement gaps? *Eur. Educ. Res. J.* **2018**. [[CrossRef](#)]
38. Lorenz, G.; Gentrup, S.; Kristen, C.; Stanat, P.; Kogan, I. Stereotype bei Lehrkräften? Eine Untersuchung systematisch verzerrter Lehrererwartungen. *KZfSS Kölner Z. Soziologie Soz.* **2016**, *68*, 89–111. [[CrossRef](#)]
39. McKown, C.; Weinstein, R.S. Teacher expectations, classroom context, and the achievement gap. *J. Sch. Psychol.* **2008**, *46*, 235–261. [[CrossRef](#)]
40. Ready, D.D.; Chu, E.M. Sociodemographic Inequality in Early Literacy Development: The Role of Teacher Perceptual Accuracy. *Early Educ. Dev.* **2015**, *26*, 970–987. [[CrossRef](#)]
41. Tenenbaum, H.R.; Ruck, M.D. Are teachers' expectations different for racial minority than for European American students? A meta-analysis. *J. Educ. Psychol.* **2007**, *99*, 253–273. [[CrossRef](#)]
42. Pianta, R.C.; Hamre, B.K.; Allen, J.P. Teacher-Student Relationships and Engagement: Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Improving the Capacity of Classroom Interactions. In *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement*; Springer: Boston, MA, USA, 2012; pp. 365–386.
43. Ryan, A.M.; Patrick, H. The Classroom Social Environment and Changes in Adolescents' Motivation and Engagement During Middle School. *Am. Educ. Res. J.* **2001**, *38*, 437–460. [[CrossRef](#)]
44. Keating, A.; Janmaat, J.G. Education Through Citizenship at School: Do School Activities Have a Lasting Impact on Youth Political Engagement? *Parliam. Aff.* **2015**, *69*, 409–429. [[CrossRef](#)]
45. Wanders, F.H.K.; Dijkstra, A.B.; Maslowski, R.; Van Der Veen, I. The effect of teacher-student and student-student relationships on the societal involvement of students. *Res. Pap. Educ.* **2019**, *35*, 266–286. [[CrossRef](#)]
46. Prengel, A. *Pädagogische Beziehungen zwischen Anerkennung, Verletzung und Ambivalenz*; Verlag Barbara Budrich: Leverkusen, Germany, 2013.
47. Gottburgsen, A.; Gros, C. Welchen Beitrag leistet Intersektionalität“ zur Klärung von Kompetenzunterschieden bei Jugendlichen? In *Soziologische Bildungsforschung*; Becker, R., Solga, S., Eds.; Springer VS: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2012; pp. 86–110.
48. McMaster, N.C.; Cook, R. The contribution of intersectionality to quantitative research into educational inequalities. *Rev. Educ.* **2018**, *7*, 271–292. [[CrossRef](#)]
49. Klinger, C.; Knapp, G.-A.; Sauer, B. *Achsen der Ungleichheit. Zum Verhältnis von Klasse, Geschlecht und Ethnizität*; Campus Verlag: Frankfurt, Germany, 2007.
50. Kassis, W.; Kronig, W.; Stalder, U.; Weber, M. Bildungsprozesse und Intersektionalitätsstrukturen. In *Kulturen der Bildung. Opladen & Farmington Hills*; Melzer, W., Tippelt, R., Eds.; Verlag Barbara Budrich: Leverkusen, Germany, 2009; pp. 339–348.
51. Crenshaw, K. Demarginalising the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *Univ. Chic. Crit. Leg. Forum* **1989**, *139*, 139–167.
52. Jang, S.T. The Implications of Intersectionality on Southeast Asian Female Students' Educational Outcomes in the United States: A Critical Quantitative Intersectionality Analysis. *Am. Educ. Res. J.* **2018**, *55*, 1268–1306. [[CrossRef](#)]
53. Bešić, E. Intersectionality: A pathway towards inclusive education? *Prospects* **2020**, *49*, 111–122. [[CrossRef](#)]
54. McCall, L. The complexity of intersectionality. *Signs J. Women Cult. Soc.* **2005**, *30*, 1771–1800. [[CrossRef](#)]
55. Bilecen, B. Personal network analysis from an intersectional perspective: How to overcome ethnicity bias in migration research. *Glob. Netw.* **2021**, *21*, 470–486. [[CrossRef](#)]
56. Gregoriou, Z. Traversing New Theoretical Frames for Intercultural Education: Gender, Intersectionality, Performativity. *Int. Educ. Stud.* **2013**, *6*, 179. [[CrossRef](#)]
57. Westbrook, L.; Saperstein, A. New Categories Are Not Enough. *Gend. Soc.* **2015**, *29*, 534–560. [[CrossRef](#)]
58. Bastia, T. Intersectionality, migration and development. *Prog. Dev. Stud.* **2014**, *14*, 237–248. [[CrossRef](#)]
59. Nelson, J.D.; Stahl, G.; Wallace, D. Race, class and gender in boy's education: Repositioning intersectionality theory. *Cult. Soc. Masc.* **2015**, *7*, 171–187. [[CrossRef](#)]
60. Tefera, A.A.; Powers, J.M.; Fischman, G. Intersectionality in Education: A Conceptual Aspiration and Research Imperative. *Rev. Res. Educ.* **2018**, *42*. [[CrossRef](#)]
61. Honneth, A. *Verdinglichung: Eine Anerkennungstheoretische Studie*; Suhrkamp Verlag: Frankfurt, Germany, 2015.
62. Sirlopú, D.; Renger, D. Social recognition matters: Consequences for school participation and life satisfaction among immigrant students. *J. Community Appl. Soc. Psychol.* **2020**, *30*, 561–575. [[CrossRef](#)]

63. Sauerwein, M. Partizipation in der Ganztagschule—Vertiefende Analysen. *Z. Erzieh.* **2019**, *22*, 435–459. [CrossRef]
64. Becker, R.; Walter, M. Bildungsungleichheiten nach Geschlecht und Herkunft im Wandel. In *Geschlechtsspezifische Bildungsungleichheiten*; Hadjar, A., Ed.; VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2011; pp. 55–75.
65. Helsper, W.; Sandring, S.; Wiezorek, C. Anerkennung in pädagogischen Beziehungen Ein Problemaufriss. In *Integrationspotenziale Einer Modernen Gesellschaft*; VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2005; pp. 179–206.
66. Lee, J.-S. The effects of the teacher–student relationship and academic press on student engagement and academic performance. *Int. J. Educ. Res.* **2012**, *53*, 330–340. [CrossRef]
67. Hattie, J.A.C. *Lernen Sichtbar Machen*; Beywl, W., Zierer, K., Eds.; Schneider Verlag Hohengehren: Baltmannsweiler, Germany, 2015.
68. Pianta, R.C. Children cannot be successful in the classroom unless they are successful in relationships—Analysen und Interventionen zur Verbesserung von Lehrer-Schueler-Beziehungen. In *Kinderrechte in Paedagogischen Beziehungen*; Prengel, A., Winklhofer, U., Eds.; Verlag Barbara Budrich: Leverkusen, Germany, 2014; pp. 127–142.
69. Prengel, A. Paedagogische Beziehungen im Lichte der Kinderrechte. In *Paedagogische Beziehungen Grundlagen—Praxisformen—Wirkungen*; Herrmann, U., Ed.; Beltz Juventa: Weinheim, Germany, 2019; pp. 73–82.
70. Schleicher, A.; Belfali, Y. *The Resilience of Students with an Immigrant Background*; OECD Publishing: Paris, France, 2018.
71. Filippatou, D.; Vedista, O.M. Αντιλήψεις των εκπαιδευτικών δευτεροβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης για τη διαφοροποίηση της διδασκαλίας (Upper secondary school teachers' attitudes towards differentiation in didactics). *Βήμα των Κοινωνικών Επιστημών* **2017**, *17*. Available online: <http://ojs.lib.uth.gr/index.php/tovima/article/view/294> (accessed on 1 April 2021).
72. Krane, V.; Karlsson, B.; Ness, O.; Binder, P.-E. They need to be recognized as a person in everyday life: Teachers' and helpers' experiences of teacher–student relationships in upper secondary school. *Int. J. Qual. Stud. Health Well-Being* **2016**, *11*, 31634. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
73. Glock, S.; Klapproth, F. Bad boys, good girls? Implicit and explicit attitudes toward ethnic minority students among elementary and secondary school teachers. *Stud. Educ. Eval.* **2017**, *53*, 77–86. [CrossRef]
74. Glock, S.; Krolak-Schwerdt, S.; Klapproth, F.; Böhmer, M. Beyond judgment bias: How students' ethnicity and academic profile consistency influence teachers' tracking judgments. *Soc. Psychol. Educ.* **2013**, *16*, 555–573. [CrossRef]
75. OECD. *Teachers' Support and Teaching Practices [Volume III] in Results PISA 2018: What School Life Means for Students' Lives*; OECD: Paris, France, 2019.
76. Wysujack, V. *Interaktive Handlungsweisen von Lehrpersonen unter Anerkennungstheoretischer Perspektive*; Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2021.
77. Liew, J.; McTigue, E.M. Educating the whole child: The role of social and emotional development in achievement and school success. In *Handbook of Curriculum Development*; Kattington, L.E., Ed.; Nova Sciences Publishers, Inc.: Hauppauge, NY, USA, 2010; pp. 465–478. Available online: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267952676> (accessed on 23 March 2021).
78. Brown, B.B.; Larson, J. Peer Relationships in Adolescence. In *Handbook of Adolescent Psychology: Contextual Influences on Adolescent Development*; John Wiley & Sons, Inc.: Hoboken, NJ, USA, 2009.
79. Birkeland, M.S.; Breivik, K.; Wold, B. Peer Acceptance Protects Global Self-esteem from Negative Effects of Low Closeness to Parents During Adolescence and Early Adulthood. *J. Youth Adolesc.* **2013**, *43*, 70–80. [CrossRef]
80. Tetzner, J.; Becker, M.; Maaz, K. Development in multiple areas of life in adolescence: Interrelations between academic achievement, perceived peer acceptance, and self-esteem. *Int. J. Behav. Dev.* **2016**, *41*, 704–713. [CrossRef]
81. Juvonen, J.; Knifsend, C.A. School based peer relationships and achievement motivation. In *Handbook of Motivation at School*; Wentzel, K.R., Miele, D.B., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2016.
82. Farmer, T.W.; Lines, M.M.; Hamm, J.V. Revealing the invisible hand: The role of teachers in children's peer experiences. *J. Appl. Dev. Psychol.* **2011**, *32*, 247–256. [CrossRef]
83. Flook, L.; Repetti, R.L.; Ullman, J.B. Classroom Social Experiences as Predictors of Academic Performance. *Dev. Psychol.* **2005**, *41*, 319–327. [CrossRef]
84. Reitz, A.K.; Motti-Stefanidi, F.; Asendorpf, J.B. Me, us, and them: Testing sociometer theory in a socially diverse real-life context. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.* **2016**, *110*, 908–920. [CrossRef]
85. Motti-Stefanidi, F.; Pavlopoulos, V.; Mastrotheodoros, S.; Asendorpf, J.B. Longitudinal interplay between peer likeability and youth's adaptation and psychological well-being: A study of immigrant and nonimmigrant adolescents in the school context. *Int. J. Behav. Dev.* **2020**, *44*, 393–403. [CrossRef]
86. Asendorpf, J.B.; Motti-Stefanidi, F. A longitudinal study of immigrants' peer acceptance and rejection: Immigrant status, immigrant composition of the classroom, and acculturation. *Cult. Divers. Ethn. Minor. Psychol.* **2017**, *23*, 486–498. [CrossRef]
87. Bianchi, D.; Cavicchiolo, E.; Lucidi, F.; Manganelli, S.; Girelli, L.; Chirico, A.; Alivernini, F. School Dropout Intention and Self-esteem in Immigrant and Native Students Living in Poverty: The Protective Role of Peer Acceptance at School. *Sch. Ment. Health* **2021**, *13*, 266–278. [CrossRef]
88. Motti-Stefanidi, F.; Pavlopoulos, V.; Obradović, J.; Dalla, M.; Takis, N.; Papanthassiou, A.; Masten, A.S. Immigration as a risk factor for adolescent adaptation in Greek urban schools. *Eur. J. Dev. Psychol.* **2008**, *5*, 235–261. [CrossRef]
89. McGrath, K.F.; Van Bergen, P. Who, when, why and to what end? Students at risk of negative student–teacher relationships and their outcomes. *Educ. Res. Rev.* **2015**, *14*, 1–17. [CrossRef]

90. Suárez-Orozco, C.; Motti-Stefanidi, F.; Marks, A.; Katsiaficas, D. An integrative risk and resilience model for understanding the adaptation of immigrant-origin children and youth. *Am. Psychol.* **2018**, *73*, 781–796. [[CrossRef](#)]
91. Eriksen, C.; Simon, G. The Affluence–Vulnerability Interface: Intersecting scales of risk, privilege and disaster. *Environ. Plan A Econ. Space* **2016**, *49*, 293–313. [[CrossRef](#)]

Article

Navigation and Negotiation towards School Success at Upper Secondary School: The Interplay of Structural and Procedural Risk and Protective Factors for Resilience Pathways

Albert Dueggeli ^{1,*}, Maria Kassis ¹ and Wassilis Kassis ²¹ School of Education, FHNW, 4132 Muttenz, Switzerland; alma.kassis@fhnw.ch² School of Education, FHNW, 5210 Windisch, Switzerland; wassilis.kassis@fhnw.ch

* Correspondence: albert.dueggeli@fhnw.ch; Tel.: +41-61-228-5989

Abstract: Young male migrants, in particular, are at higher risk of not completing upper secondary education and do not have the same opportunities to put their educational resources to use in existing educational contexts. This work examines how socially and structurally disadvantaged male adolescents (migration biography and low SES) can be supported in attaining educational success at the upper secondary level by applying the resilience concept of navigation and negotiation. Within the framework of grounded theory and by a qualitative coding paradigm, we applied an exploratory heuristical approach in order to understand school success under a micro-sociological passage. Data were collected in German-speaking Switzerland as part of the programme's evaluation, which show, firstly, that inter-individual processes of navigation and negotiation differ depending on the specific people involved and their objectives. Secondly, different forms of development of navigation and negotiation are seen within a single individual, and thirdly, the importance of institutional flexibility becomes apparent when adolescents experience successful processes of navigation or negotiation. The findings are discussed in the context of questions of justice and to their classification within the context of educational and psychological aspects for promoting resilience and on the basis of their overall significance for education policy.

Citation: Dueggeli, A.; Kassis, M.; Kassis, W. Navigation and Negotiation towards School Success at Upper Secondary School: The Interplay of Structural and Procedural Risk and Protective Factors for Resilience Pathways. *Educ. Sci.* **2021**, *11*, 395. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11080395>

Keywords: upper secondary education; migration; intersectionality; success at school; resilience; youth; VET education

Academic Editor: Fred Dervin

Received: 14 June 2021

Accepted: 27 July 2021

Published: 2 August 2021

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2021 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

It has been known for several years that failure to complete upper secondary education is highly problematic for social prosperity in the long run [1]. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that qualifications achieved at this educational level are closely monitored internationally in terms of quality and quantity [2]. Currently, an average of around 84% of 20–24-year-olds in Europe have completed upper secondary education [3]. This leaves an average of about 16% of young people who have not completed any upper secondary education by this age, with significant and astonishing variations between countries. While in Germany, for example, around 20% of students are without an upper secondary qualification, the respective percentage in Spain is up to 25%, and it is around 12% in Switzerland [3,4]. Without qualifications at this level, there is a significantly higher risk of having fewer contextual skills, being unemployed, and generating lower income [2].

In the EU area in 2019, the share of 25–54-year-olds with a lower upper secondary qualification is more than twice as high among non-EU-born people than among those born in the Member States (nationals or native born) [5]. It is, therefore, not surprising that the risk of poverty or social exclusion is twice as high for people (20–64 years old) with a migration history than for so-called nationals.

NEETs, i.e., young people who are neither in education nor in employment (NEET) at the corresponding age for upper secondary education [2], in a certain way carry a

high risk of social exclusion, and additionally, the development of their professional identity [6] is profoundly negatively influenced by their confrontation of exclusion and disintegration [7]. Furthermore, all over Europe, migrants are significantly more often in the NEETs statistics of their respective countries than native students, and it is suggested that they are one of the most vulnerable social groups when it comes to attaining an upper secondary school education [8]. Young male migrants, in particular, are at a higher risk of not completing upper secondary education and do not have the same opportunities to put their educational resources to use in existing educational contexts [9]. This holds for all OECD countries, with women having higher completion rates than men in upper secondary education. Even if this gender gap decreases with time, as men take longer to complete their educational programmes, the question of the extent to which young male migrants are in a specific situation that allows them to make the transition from school, through vocational training, to the world of work cannot be ignored. Stahl [10] points out that young men with experience of migration, in particular, attain important biographical experiences with regard to their integration through transitioning into vocational training. Additionally, in Switzerland, not only are migrant students underrepresented in upper secondary education, but they also bear a significantly higher risk of dropping out [11]. What has been observed in the Swiss context since 2018—namely, that there is a need for action in connection with the issue of migration and certification levels—thus, seems to hold true [12].

An intersectional view on migrant students' success at school at upper secondary level

It is increasingly being recognised that treating migrant adolescents as a homogeneous group when it comes to the topic of success at school inadequately describes their situation and does not do justice to the various challenges they face, all of which may affect their success pathways [6,13]. In our reading of the literature, recognising this heterogeneity is central to formulating and applying effective prevention or intervention and might show a far more differential picture of young people's resilience patterns and pathways [14,15]. While some research does distinguish among resilience pathways in terms of gender, migration/ethnicity, and SES, a separate development in this body of research has been the recognition of intersectionality [16], which shows that being in more than one disadvantaged position can lead to additional disadvantages not captured by simply summing the separate disadvantages, even if the discussion or problem is not new in itself [17]. Intersectional analysis is commonly done for interactions between gender and migration/ethnicity; however, increasingly, other divisions, such as SES, are being incorporated into these kinds of analysis.

As a single factor, SES has a significant but not an overarching effect on levels of success at school [18]. Male gender [19], low SES [20], and migration [21,22] are known risk patterns that are connected with lower rates of success at school [15]. Thus, in the context of migration at school, we are able to identify enormous variety in terms of those who attain enough success at school to complete upper secondary education [8,14]. One difficulty when analysing success at school is the task of identifying students as migrants or natives and clarifying this, because ethnicity, nationality, and a migration background are constructed terms that implicitly constitute the groups they seem to describe [23]. We, therefore, understand the notion of a migration background as referring to the combination of three variables: country of birth, nationality at birth, and country of birth of both parents [4].

Research has provided vast evidence that risks for failure at school and dropping out of school [8,9] for migrant students—and, here, especially for male students [24]—often co-occur, and that an accumulation of individual and social risks is strongly related to rising risks for poor school outcomes [13] at the upper secondary level. Thus, our research topic is characteristic for intersectionality perspectives. However, it is obvious that the characteristics considered in our explorative qualitative study only represent some of the possible influencing factors.

However, one limitation of the existing research on migrant students' failure at school at the upper secondary level is that, while the cited studies demonstrate clearly established associations between adolescent students' SES, migration, and success at school, far fewer studies have examined resilience pathways out of the school failure cycle [25]. A second limitation is that, while studies state the especially high risk for not completing upper-secondary-level education that male migrant students have, the role of the schools or school systems in question that are connected to this educational failure is very seldom problematized. This is especially true because, as Ungar, Connelly, Liebenberg, and Theron [18] state, schools should influence the resilience of their students. Therefore, future research with schools is needed that also gathers data on both individual and ecological factors within the same study. We need to ask, "Which factors nurture and sustain resilience? For which children, and in which contexts? When are they exposed to what threats to their psychosocial development?" (p. 9). Therefore, resilience outcomes do not apply generally [18], as there is no such thing as an indiscriminate resilience process, no guaranteed safe-way. In our case, we aim on understanding school success at secondary school under particular intersectional conditions: intertwined gender, SES, and migration of the respective students.

Studies on school resilience have overturned the almost unavoidable negative assumptions and deficit-focused models about migrant students growing up under the multi-layered threats of adversity, but, so far, we do not have evidence-based knowledge about school resilience in upper secondary education. Following in the line of Masten's ordinary magic [26], we would propose that not only resilience in general, but also school resilience, consists of ordinary rather than extraordinary processes and school practices. In terms of migrant students' development during upper secondary education, we needed specific insights into school adaptation systems that would not just be focused on fostering positive individual or social practices, but also on reducing the still existing threats that compromise migrant students' positive development. Nevertheless, no single agreed definition of resilience exists as of yet [26–28]. Masten's [28] insights, starting from the notion that resilience refers first of all to "... positive adaptation in the context of risk or adversity" (p. 9) in upper secondary education, clearly lead the way and relate in a subtle way to Eccles' established expectancy-value models [29] or Seidel's [30] insights into effective teaching, by indicating the necessity of adapting students' individual obligations to institutional, multifaceted responsibilities for success at school. An intersectional approach helps us focus on learning and teaching conditions under specific but not unique individual and institutional risks and challenges.

One of the main insights, which is a research "pillar" for our analysis, is Masten's evidence-based understanding [28] that, in most cases, resilience appears as a result of the operation of adaptational systems during upper secondary education. This means that, in the context of our study, it is not simply an individual's "just do it mentality", despite the existing odds.

Navigation and negotiation towards resilience

Resilience has been described as the process of achieving positive adjustment despite adversity [31], but it has also been noted that determining the presence of resilience requires clear, agreed criteria to be set that describe what positive adjustment and good outcomes look like, for example, success at school, in the face of a specific risk [28].

In order to apply these insights, we would like to introduce the topic of school resilience in upper secondary education, adapting studies on resilience originally relating to child and youth services to gain an understanding into turning points for achieving resilience in high-risk adolescents. Ungar [32] developed the question of how children and adolescents "travel" towards resilience for social service delivery systems. In particular, very much like Masten [28], he enquired into the processes within a dynamic system for promoting resilience pathways and, thereby, allowing developmental turning points for children and adolescents to unfold.

Ungar [32–34] defines the qualities needed for successful resilience patterns as an interplay between navigation—that is, the individual’s capacity to navigate their way to resources—and negotiation, which is seen as the interaction—in a child-focused way, so as to sustain positive outcomes—between the specific environment that provides services and the concrete individual. Applying Ungar’s insights from social services [32] to school resilience, the resilience turning points in schools would consist in resilience pathways, fostered by proactive actions on the part of the students in question, in combination with child-focused interactions with the specific school that are non-institutional and not focused on the provision of interventions. While following Ungar’s suggestions, we got the opportunity to learn from social services studies by not forgetting the children, and the chance to translate this fruitful knowledge into school settings. Masten’s [28] suggestion, which we endorse and which leads our paper, defines resilience as follows: “The capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten system function, viability, or development” (p. 10).

2. The Intervention for Sustaining Learners’ Resilience

The intervention took place in an upper secondary school in German-speaking Switzerland and started in 2016 (mid-way through the school year). This type of school leads learners to a vocational qualification and also gives them the opportunity to complete the Swiss Federal Vocational Baccalaureate (FVB). It is, thus, a higher-qualification form of school-based vocational training [24] in which, in recent years, an average of around 25% of young women and around 75% of young men have been enrolled [35]. Seventy-one percent of the intervention participants were not born in Switzerland. Interventions can, therefore, be used in a special way in this type of training to ensure that learners with migration biographies do not fail higher-qualification forms of training programmes at the upper secondary level. This is compatible with the school’s overall goal of reducing the high dropout rate in the years to come.

Structural- and content-specific framing

The present support and stabilisation programme was built on this global objective and implemented as a two-year support programme. In terms of content, an attempt was made to react to more recent findings in learning-related migration research, which show that the opportunities to learn OTL are particularly important for learning success, especially for learners from a weaker socio-economic background (SES of families of origin) [36]. Attendance of this programme was, therefore, compulsory for those learners who were interested. They also had to attend it regularly upon being admitted. This move helped increase the amount of time learners spent engaged with content. This deliberately led to a requirement for negotiation between the young people, and the project was intended to promote interaction and connect both needs and demand with the possibilities of an adaptive project. However, this increase in learning time that was implemented was not organised as usual classroom teaching, that is, steered and regulated by the teachers; for instance, rather, the learners had to structure the time themselves. Teachers were available to them on site as support persons in every session, but they did not actively determine the learning process. The participants in the programme had to take on this task themselves. In this respect, the programme was deliberately set apart from the usual teaching and learning formats and, in a certain way, was even set in opposition to them. The OTL options were formally increased due to the request for participation to be mandatory. They had to be used proactively by learners. Use of this learning opportunity was based on the learners’ self-governed dedication and, thus, on navigation processes. The focus of the intervention was on learners identifying their problems and bringing them into the classroom. They had to use the formal structure offered to them—on the one hand, the time and, on the other hand, the personal resources of the teachers that were available to them—while organising themselves, and with a view to working on their problems.

Target areas

Overall, the intervention addresses three target areas: firstly, performance (grades), secondly, organisation of oneself as a navigation process with regard to learning content and learning processes (preparation and organisation during the support units), and thirdly, the design of social learning relationships as negotiation towards mutual adaptation of participants and project offerings [37]. As a result, the content of the intervention was steered from within, and so, the direction of the subject matter could change over a certain period of time depending on the demands of the learners. At the beginning of the funding programme, for example, the learners asked intensively about the subject German. History and French were taken up somewhat less extensively during this phase. Over time, and based on the demands of the learners, other subjects such as mathematics and economics and law were gradually offered. The question focused on here is how young men fill out this learning offering as a creative task, that is, how they navigate through it. Negotiation is, therefore, to be reflected upon against this background.

3. Methodology and Materials

On the basis of the intervention model outlined above, we used a qualitative exploratory design to longitudinally examine resilience pathways out of the school failure cycle for male migrant students with a low socio-economic status [38] at upper secondary school in order to identify specific school-resilience processes called navigation and negotiation [32]. The focus is on the following questions specifically: What kind of navigation and negotiation can be found in the school context being investigated? By which means do young men try to encounter them? What strategies are developed by which different actors? And with what consequences?

So far, we still do not know if the dynamics of navigation and negotiation can be translated into educational sciences. We also have still to explore if the terms navigation and negotiation, developed for social work, are just to be addressed generally or needed specifications related to peers, teachers, and parents.

The programme was evaluated based on the aforementioned target dimensions of performance, self-organisation, and social reference system in a longitudinal design. This was, on the one hand, done quantitatively using questionnaires and, on the other, qualitatively using topic-focused interviews [39] and on the basis of classroom observations (1 to 2 times a month for 2–3 h a time). The latter included in vivo conversations with the adolescents and their teachers. The field notes were sorted by theme and drawn up as reports with a view to a systematic analysis. The reporting and analyses were methodically based on an ethnographic fieldwork approach, beginning with the translation of the observations into language, followed by a detailed presentation of events with specifics and contextual information, as well as concrete statements. The observers' concrete impressions were also included [40,41].

It is the first two measurement times that the analysis of the questions focuses on here. The first of these was four months after the start of the programme (2016), and the second, then a year later, i.e., at the end of June 2017. These data show how the young people organise themselves in the intervention directly after its start, or to what extent they change how they are organised over the course of a year and develop against the background of the objectives of the intervention. In addition, the breadth of material enabled acts of navigation or negotiation that were used for regulating the young people's actions and interactions to be represented in a nuanced and differentiated way.

Sampling and Cases

Eighteen adolescents were supported throughout the entire duration of the intervention (March 2016 to June 2018, about one year before the COVID-19 outbreak). Work was carried out with three cohorts (starting in January 2016, October 2016, and September 2017) made up of young people from the first and second years of middle school. The intervention took place once a week and lasted for between two and three hours each time. Eleven young people were on board (first cohort). After six months, in June 2016, two

young people left the school and four more dropped out of the programme, despite the fact that participation was mandatory. Three of the remaining five young people successfully passed both VET qualification levels—first of all, the qualification at an intermediate level, and, secondly, the one at a higher level (i.e., ISCED 2011, level 3 category 35; subcategories 353 and 354, respectively) [38]. However, two of them had to retake the final exam a year later (June 2018). The two cases examined here were part of this first group. The focus on two cases and not on the whole sample [18] aimed at offering more detailed information. Although a standardization was aimed at for the implementation of the project, namely, to reach the most vulnerable young people of this school (those with low SES and migration as risk patterns that are connected with lower rates of success at school). Nevertheless, the data analyses showed that further internal differentiations of the target group could be relevant. For example, we identified that within our sample there were young people who had lived in Switzerland since birth and had attended Swiss school (including kindergarten) from the beginning. Still others were lateral entrants into the Swiss education system, i.e., they came to Switzerland after having attended primary or early high-school level in their home country. The linguistic and socio-cultural orientation of the pupils also showed differences. For example, there were first languages that were national languages in the multilingual context of Switzerland (e.g., French) and others with a more distant background (e.g., Romanian). We, therefore, focussed on two young people who, despite a structural–theoretical predefinition, were able to reveal further representational aspects over the research process.

Case descriptions: Histories of migration within the field of tension between curriculum vitae and school biographies

The data were examined by two young men who do not speak German as their home language and whose families of origin are of a lower socio-economic status. They are outlined as examples and are, therefore, not to be understood as extreme cases. In addition, the analyses are not primarily designed to be used for comparing cases, but rather for reconstructing individual cases. Additionally, although procedural differences in their school socialization so far are visible between the two cases, these appear to be insufficiently selective to enable a contrastive view. In the discussion part, however, an attempt is nevertheless then made to deal with the differences that became evident on the basis of the data analysis, and not through structural differences between cases that are set a priori. As singular phenomena, they enable a more nuanced understanding of how, during critical educational phases of upper secondary school, young men who do not speak German as their first language or home language, and who are of a low socio-economic status, both use resources that are open to them as part of an offer of support, but then also successfully handle risks—risks that find their way into the educational process of these people by virtue of who they are, their family experiences, and their previous socialisation at school. This focus entails an empirical limitation that must be taken into account in the further course of the discussion. The analyses take as their starting point two exemplary cases that attended the first run of the programme. They are described below, tracing their migration history and against the background of the course their lives took at school.

Case 1 (Eron)

Eron, 19 years old, was born in Switzerland as the youngest son of an immigrant family from south-eastern Europe and is passing through the local education system in full. His school career is not always linear. He reports rather little of positive events. Upon starting kindergarten, the Swiss dialect is used more intensively, such as the standard German language, which he does not speak. He tries to learn the languages well and reports of situations in which he understands the teachers' questions but answers in his first language. After transferring to middle school (grade 5–7), he is placed at the lowest level in all subjects except English. In secondary school (grade 7–9), he is then placed in the higher level (E) because he tries hard and because he has also managed to obtain a sufficient grade in French. Overall, however, his academic achievements are not

outstanding; he describes himself as an “average student”, which is why he repeatedly visits the school’s support centre, especially for German. His first goal is to start with a commercial apprenticeship, and, focusing on this, he starts a preparatory course. However, he does not obtain an apprenticeship position, not even after sending off 30 applications. In spite of good enough grades, he is unable to start the vocational training he wants to embark on. On the recommendation of his father, and so that he does not remain disconnected from school for a year, he enrolls at this upper secondary school that has a commercial focus, but which he did not choose himself. Given that his grades were sufficient at the time (he is starting without any provisional arrangement), he is currently aiming for a Federal Vocational Baccalaureate (FVB), the higher of the two final diploma of school. However, then, he has to repeat a class because of bad grades at the end of the first semester of the second year. The new class seems to be a positive turning point for him. All in all, he finds everyday school life very stressful and reports very long days at school, which trigger headaches and visual disorders for him. Eron also reports several times of financial difficulties in his family. He has two older brothers, one of whom is doing an apprenticeship (paver), while the other is a graduate of the commercial middle school. Both still live at home. He remembers how his mother being insulted used to put him in fits of rage. Over the course of time, he had to learn to deal with this constructively, and he seems, in his stories, to not be spared feelings of shortcomings that go hand in hand with a difficult migration biography. The death of his beloved uncle, which occurred at the time of his unsuccessful applications, puts him in a personal crisis, and so he has to visit a school psychologist. During this time, he undergoes psychological treatment outside of the school.

Case 2 (Ricardo)

After Ricardo’s parents had lived and worked in Switzerland for twenty years, they re-emigrated to southern Europe to attempt a new start in their home country. Ricardo was born in his homeland as the fourth and last child in the family. When he turned 15—at the time, he was attending a high school for sciences, with a focus on mathematics—his father’s business was in crisis. His brother, who worked as an independent craftsman in Switzerland, again offers him the opportunity to return to Switzerland and work for him. Having arrived in Switzerland, without any knowledge of German, Ricardo joins a languages high school (called “Gymnasium” in Switzerland) with a focus on Italian and is able to hold out for two whole years. German causes him great difficulties. He receives insufficient grades and, ultimately, has to leave this school after two years. Ricardo signs up for a commercial secondary upper school and is provisionally accepted. He soon feels very comfortable in his new school environment, including in his year group. He also gets along better with the young people at this school. Back then, in the secondary school that he left, he noticed the socio-economic difference between himself and a large part of the learners. Here, he feels more of a social connection; most learners come from a migrant background, like himself. His goal is to have a good command of German. A good command of the language is particularly relevant to him when it comes to future applications as part of an internship. Ricardo thinks he sees that not all teachers understand that people like him do not understand the language so well, and they then say that the reason for their poor grades is not paying attention. Mathematics and French are strong subjects for him, and he receives good to very good grades. Additionally, subject “Economics and Law”—a main subject at that school—really appeals to him. At the beginning of the interview already, he proudly emphasises that he was the “*only one*” of his four schoolmates with provisional status who did not have to repeat the year. In this context, Ricardo seems to experience self-efficacy, which is able to compensate for his experience of moving down from high-school to this upper secondary school to a vocational qualification. At the end of Year Two, having just turned 19, Ricardo seems to be convinced that only the good and motivated students have made it into the third and final year of school, and he is one of them.

The family's financial situation is tight, which is one reason why he rejects his parents' suggestion to pay for extra tuition for certain subjects. Ricardo works on the weekends for his pocket money and learns a lot in the process—most of all, how to assert himself as a responsible person in critical situations. At the same time, he wants a certain level of financial independence and does not want to be an additional burden for his family. He sees his multicultural biography as an advantage. Thanks to this, he has an advantage compared to others his age and is a little further along than others. His migration background is in no way perceived as a negative stamp or burden. Italian, an official language of his country, also seems to be an important skill for him.

4. Results

The research questions are analysed on the basis of the two individual cases. In order to gain and map visible and intra-individual changes and developments, the two cases are introduced separately based on the time of the respective data collection.

Case 1: Eron, 2016 (four months after starting to take part in the support project)

Eron gets to know the support project through a teacher at school. He sees it as an opportunity at school to improve his performance in particular subjects. By participating, he navigates towards the possibility of encountering weaknesses in specific subjects. *"And because I know that I have weaknesses in German and French (...). But still I try to get a handle on that, so to speak, here during the programme"* (Eron June 2016 #00:06:05–6#). He describes working through shortcomings in particular subjects as his central goal, thus citing a significant reason for his navigation towards this option of resource use. Initially, his statements show that he finds the open way of structuring the learning time and the different types of supporting offers from the teachers to be particularly important. *"Here...here, you just have time to yourself, so (...) I can too (...) now if there's something I haven't understood in class (...) and the lesson is over, (...) then I can't really do anything (...). Here, I can sit down and say, 'OK, I didn't understand that,' and then someone will explain it to me"* (Eron June 2016 #00:34:51–6#). Eron experiences the direct availability of the teachers and the lived responsibility they bear for him to succeed as something new. Problems and approaches to solutions are identified largely synchronously during the programme and not diachronically (as otherwise experienced in class).

When first attending the programme, the request from a German teacher for him to prepare more of his own topics and questions and then bring them with him to the support programme puts him under a fair bit of pressure. *"... My opinion, therefore, is simply that (.) it is far too stressful for me and (.) I still don't know what I can't yet do and what I can do. (.) And (.) That's just the problem that I..."* (Eron, June 2016 #00:58:21–6#). He is unable to integrate this reference to a possible extension of the negotiations on the part of the German teacher into his learning activities at this point in time. He prefers to discuss the current course content directly on site, that is, as ad hoc work. Practising in the presence of a teacher who intervenes directly to make corrections and explains the content in detail seems to give Eron the security he needs at the moment.

As observational reports show, Eron was often seen in learning interactions with his two colleagues Ricardo and Daniel during this time. This situational problem-solving culture determines how the learning is negotiated during the first phase and, thus, how he uses the offer for subject-specific matters. In addition to use at the subject level, further statements also reveal his shortcomings in terms of his expected effectiveness in general. *"I think the problem is that (2) I am (2)—well, (2) this is how I see it—(.) I am not self-confident. So I don't just simply think, 'I can do it!', and then manage to do it. Rather, I tend more to think that I can't do it, and then I withdraw, don't even try. (2) That is also a reason why I always get very nervous during lectures, because I think, 'Uh, I (2)—I don't know, can I say that?—I will fail anyway, and then there is no desire either, and then no motivation either"* (Eron 2016 #00:08:33–8#). Obviously, being public in class inhibits his expectations when it comes to being effective in performance situations. This is different in the programme, because, here, he does not have to make his questions and difficulties public. Rather, he can discuss and

solve his learning hurdles or problems dyadically, with a teacher, or with peers selected by him. Through the form of negotiation of learning mentioned above, he also seems to be able to balance the pressure of being socially exposed.

After four months, Eron reports on the progress in his French performance as a clear gain. This progress is also confirmed by the French teachers during his regular class. Additionally, the fact that Eron passed the DELF exam (Le Diplôme d' Etudes en Langue Française) and attained a good grade in his written language testifies, in his mind, to the positive effect had on him by the support he received. His oral performance, on the other hand, brings him down as a result of his weak self-confidence. In German, on the other hand, he did not notice any learning progress. Additionally, this was despite the fact that, according to his own statements, he has very good teachers as part of the support programme as well as in regular lessons.

The project seems to support him at first in partially stabilising his shortcomings in specific subjects and identifying his difficulties when it comes to self-efficacy. With a view to these two areas, he seems to have found a stable formal place of support overall. Additionally, he is increasingly beginning to reflect on this in the context of "responsibility". It is an understanding of responsibility that can be understood as an equivalence in effort between him and the teachers. *"How should I put it...the responsibility of doing something, because the teachers also have to take time for it (. . .) they stay here, they help us. (. . .) You don't have that in class."* (Eron June 2016 #00:37:55–1#).

Eron 2017 (one year later)

After a year and, therefore, at the time of the second interview, Eron knows that he has failed the final exam. He received several grades that did not meet the mark, including in subjects that he particularly wanted to improve as part of the support programme. Nevertheless, he rates his language skills, for example, as increasing over the course of the support programme. This was due, on the one hand, to the targeted support provided by the programme teachers, and, on the other, to his own motivation to learn: *"I also did my bit because I wanted a better grade"*. Self-doubts become evident again, especially with regard to his concept of himself in the subject of German, and a certain level of despair becomes noticeable at the time of the second interview. *"Everything"* was somehow for nothing. Eron questions the final exams as a system he does not quite understand. In particular, the teachers' statements that *"you are always half a grade worse in the final exams"* (Eron 2017 00:33:04–8) strips him of any motivation to learn. Additionally, his motivation to set goals has also dropped significantly. The project head prompts him to formulate his requests in terms of support, a form of negotiation process on the part of the intervention. After three months, he comes back to the programme with the specific wish of receiving personalised support in the subject of economics and law. He is encouraged to negotiate here by the project head. A year later, he passes the exams.

Nevertheless, he sees changes in himself that he regards as success. He talks about having *"become a little more confident"*. During the last year, he also frequently heard that he *"can talk well"*, from both the young people present and the teachers. His personal accounting is clear. He no longer sees himself as *"the extremely shy person"* that he used to be. Apparently, this also has an effect in the regular class, where he and a colleague were discussing an unjust situation, and the class teacher saw him as being in the right, to the surprise of all his school peers present. This reveals a public performance that expresses self-assurance—a self-assurance that was not able to be seen in him last year.

This year, Eron is most often in exchange with Ricardo and Daniel within the context of the support programme. All three often studied together for upcoming exams and projects. Again, when looking for an internship, the three of them write application letters that are proofread before the teachers do the final correction. Generally speaking, Eron experiences the entire third year of school as *"a great burden"*. Searching for an internship in parallel with preparing for the exams does not just create *"stress"* for him, but for all learners. The teachers, on the other hand, seem *"more comfortable"* for Eron than they did in the last school year. However, he also points to the major differences that exist between

them, for example, in terms of exam preparation. Eron describes some of these as utterly senseless things, for example, in the form of writing summaries or solving tasks for which he hardly receives any substantive feedback.

In retrospect, Eron describes himself as active during the second year of the programme. He prepares in a much more targeted way than just a year before. His knowledge of himself as a result of reflection, his desire for success at school, and his willingness to go to an extensive, additional effort for school are what control his self-efficacy. There is an interaction here from navigation to resources and his negotiation with these. As mentioned, this takes place against the background of the experience that learning within this form of support is also a social requirement. It is important for the teacher's attention to be divided, and, at the same time, to be able to make use of the divided attention efficiently. He seems to expand this social level of learning by also being there for others. During the period of the support programme, he also begins to negotiate by staging himself as a helper in a certain way, but without then receiving a lot of help in return from Ricardo and Daniel, especially—his closest colleagues. *"Well, it wasn't a problem for me if someone came up to me and said, 'Hey, can you help me?' (2) Unfortunately, I'm the kind of person who can't say no. (.) Unfortunately @(.).@."* (Eron 2017 #00:06:33–0#). Over the course of the third school year, it is interesting how Eron seems to gradually overcome his shyness. He is found again and again in interactions with younger learners to provide clarification, and so, in a certain way, he takes on an active (teaching) role with respect to them. This is exemplified when he sits on the table next to Li-Ming, who has just joined the project and who is learning economics and law. Eron explains an example and asks Li-Ming questions. Then, he gives him two tasks to solve, which he then corrects. *"Do a few more,"* he then says, and moves away from him. (Report 6 April 2017, AK)

These kinds of subject-specific negotiations among peers within the programme allow Eron to experiment with a new performance of himself. In such situations, he seems very present and confident in his actions. Eron moves more freely within the support project compared to a year ago and seems to feel "at home". Eron can be called a receiver from the project's very start, as he asks others (teachers and peers) for their opinions and support in relation to the what and the how. He needed one year to gain acceptance among his teachers and peers as well as self-confidence before he then started to himself be a supporter of others and, thereby, to be more of a giver and, thus, also a significant other for his peers. He is experimenting with the notion of justice through mutual support and develops strong social relations to Ricardo, in particular, but also to other students: he is receiving support in one school subject from his peers and is himself supporting them in school subjects where they need his help. Interestingly, when he does not pass the final exam, he develops the externalising attributional narrative of himself as an extensive giver who did not get as much support from others in return.

The fundamental "group dynamics" that he experiences with both the young people and the teachers is felt to be an extremely positive experience. They offer a helpful learning climate that enables the young people to mutually support each other, especially Ricardo and Daniel. *"(. . .) We could all say, OK, (.) After that, it's over. After the first, after the question—we even argued about who asked the first question. (.) Because then some other person comes along, and we then thought it would go on too long. And then we would always say, 'No, no!' I would ask the question briefly and then I would think about it, and so that's what it was like, like a pact between us."* (Eron 2017 #00:27:46–4#). Eron also seems to find new meaning in "prepared" content. *"(. . .) But also the last thing I said earlier, that I have now prepared, for example, that is, I've read through the book and then went there, that is, I went to the discussion. That really, really helped."* (Eron 2017, # 00:43:34–3#). This is a change compared to how he used things a year ago, and he sees that he can then react even better to his difficulties and deal with them. During the support lessons, Eron discusses the German books he has selected for the final exam with the same German teacher who caused him "stress" a year earlier. Over time, he has left what were initially hurdles to his support behind. He even recognises new opportunities for learning. When asked what helped him the most during

the support programme, Eron emphasises two learning activities. First, the books they read and prepared, which he then discussed in the programme with the German teacher, and then also “*the spontaneous way of things*” as he puts it. He is also positively surprised by what his colleagues do from a substantive point of view, and he follows suit. “*Hey, I find what you do exciting. I want to do it too*” (Eron 2017 #00:44:00–3#).

Summing up: Eron navigates his way to the programme with the aim of improving his German and French skills. Four months later, he notices a growing motivation to learn French, which can be explained by his rising grades. In German, on the other hand, he does not notice any positive change, despite good teachers. The recommendations of one of the German teachers—to prepare before attending the programme and to bring specific questions with him—are stressful for him at this point in time. He generally rates the additional learning time he receives in the programme as positive. Here, he can clarify any questions he has, which he cannot do in regular lessons. During the programme, he experiences teachers who want to support him in his performance. A year later, although he fails the final exams, Eron reports on his increasing self-confidence. He often hears from teachers and learners how he can speak well. This time, Eron also reports positively about his growing language skills in French and German. Compared to a year ago, when he turned up with a learning attitude that primarily prioritised clarifying his ad hoc questions, just a year later, he is now showing a certain degree of expansion of his activities. He is opening up his attitude to learning by coming to the support programme increasingly prepared and is able to recognise the gains in learning for himself. Eron seems to mature into more efficient negotiation over time.

Case 2: Ricardo (June 2016, four months after the start)

Ricardo was put on the list of registered young people by a teacher. He agrees to this gentle duress. His goal is to work on his German language skills from the very beginning so as “*not to speak like a 5-year-old foreigner. It’s not professional, and people can’t take me seriously*” (Ricardo 2016, 00:20:16–5). Ricardo’s strong will to improve his German skills can also be linked to the upcoming internship. He must be able to speak German, according to his overall assessment as a partial motive for the focus of his performance in this regard. His German teacher in the regular class sees his progress in German, but gives him an unsatisfactory grade. Italian, on the other hand, which he speaks very well, is of great help to him, as well as for learning French. He achieves good grades and also passes the DELF exam (Le Diplôme d’Etudes en Langue Française) without any effort, as he reports.

Class observations reveal Ricardo to be a very motivated and active student during the first few months of the support programme. Either he learns alone, is in contact with his two colleagues, Eron and Daniel, or he clarifies his questions directly with the teachers present. Ricardo focuses on the following protocol in this first phase of the support project. The following observation shows an example of this:

Shortly after the support programme started, the German teacher wants to know what is coming up that day. As Eron talks about the upcoming discussion in German, the German teacher asks about the topics that were to be prepared. Eron announces his topic: “*Whether young people need guardians*”. “*And you?*” she asks Ricardo. “*If someone has problems at home,*” Ricardo says, “*so: ‘Homes for Youth—yes or no?’ Instead of sending young people to homes, my suggestion would be to bring them into a shared flat,*” he adds. This is followed by a substantial discussion between Ricardo and the teacher on the topic of the advantages of and the need for homes for young people. After a while, the teacher takes up the steering question again by asking: “*And what do you want to do now?*” “*When is it ‘der’ and when ‘dem’ after the comma?*” asks Ricardo. The teacher stands up, fetches a few grammar books from her desk, opens one, and shows him a page. “*OK, I’ll try it,*” says Ricardo, and shortly afterwards, begins to write in his notebook. The teacher moves away (recording position 20/05/2016 AK). The use of learning resources in the interests of navigating is shown to be multi-layered for Ricardo and appears in a kind of synchronicity. The topic changes from an opinion-based exchange with the teacher about the topic to be worked on dialectically to questions of grammar, to which the teacher reacts not as a partner in discussion and for

argumentation, but as a supplier of appropriate books in which he can find solutions to his problem himself.

With a view to himself, Ricardo has noticed that the teachers in the school building approach him differently since he started attending the programme “(...) *They notice that I (.) make an effort, because they, they can see that. Because sometimes (.) you can do that, (.) you can make an effort, but the others don't see it. (. . .) And, and yes. (.) The teachers (.) talk to each other. And they see 'Yes R. is there, yes he is doing a support project, he is making an effort', that's why.*” (Ricardo 2016, #00:27:06–5#). This positive perception, and the fact that his German grades are getting better, seems to stabilise his self-efficacy in the subject of German. He notices how he gradually understands German better. “*You just understand,*” says Ricardo. This can be interpreted as the result of his negotiation in that specific subject, which he realises during the first phase of the project, as he describes things.

With a view to the management of his actions, Ricardo also experiences the challenge of how to orient himself within the openness of the support project. He needs more structure, he says. “*Yes, yes, structure, yes. For me, it is very important. I have almost no structure in my life actually. But I think it's very important at school. I am a very spontaneous person.*” (Ricardo 2016, #00:28:42–5#). From his point of view, the current openness of the support project calls for self-discipline on the part of the learners, which is not constantly available. Sometimes, Ricardo allows himself to be infected by the demotivation of other young people, the cause of which is to be found in the stresses of everyday school life. In such moments, Ricardo cannot distinguish himself from a certain group dynamic that simply arises and which can be understood as giving structure in a negative way “(...) *It's like, (.) for example, (.) one of the three... (.) one of the bunch of them says, 'OK, come on, let's not do anything to today', and then (.) the other thinks, OK, 'Mhh, come on, let's not do anything'. And there is simply—(.) it happens quickly, that you quickly get there, to it's nothing to me.*” (Ricardo 2016 #00:33:50–4#). This spontaneously arising negative dynamic of action does not seem to be compatible with his motivation to participate. However, he realises that he needs a form of guidance that gives structure and regulates him, so that he can learn more efficiently. “(...) *well, I am a person who, when I see something... (.) I can do what I want sometimes. Then I don't play along at all. That's that. Sometimes... For example, if you've had a tough week and have run out of steam (.) (. . .)*” (Ricardo 2016 #00:29:51–4#). On the basis of self-reflective considerations of this kind, he begins to actively think about how the programme could be designed for the coming school year so that he can benefit even more. He suggests three hours of support, with a clear division of time between subjects. Nevertheless, you can also start to like having several teachers present who offer support in their subjects at the same time. Here, Ricardo seems to show a structure-seeking kind of navigation and, at the same time, a negotiation of avoidance that gives itself structure. By searching for structures from the outside, his form of negotiation rejects his avoidance of giving himself structures. The reason that is given for this is a possible increase in efficiency, which he would see in this way for the future design of the programme.

Looking ahead to the next and final school year, Ricardo said at the end of June 2016: “*Well, now that I'm in the third year, yes. (.) I would just be (.) I have (.) I'm very, very motivated and I have already... (.) So, I'm going on holiday on 13th July, and I've already got everything organised now until 13th July. Because of a CV, for example, because of applications, because of an internship*” (Ricardo 2016, #00:48:01–2#). At the end of June 2016, Ricardo is aiming to pass the final exams, which are due in a year, with the highest possible qualification (FVB) and to find an internship at the beginning of the third school year already.

Ricardo in 2017 (one year later)

At the time of the second interview, Ricardo knows that he has passed both exams. He is proud of that and receives recognition for it from his family. However, a new challenge for him is to find an internship. He only manages to find an internship shortly before the final exams. From his memory, however, the second year seems to have been “*more stressful*” for him compared to the third year: “(...) *the most difficult year is, uh, the most difficult year is the second year, because in the second year you do more interdisciplinary project*

work, and more projects, and that stretches into the first semester of the third year. This means that, unless you are on provisional status for moving into the third year, you're already in the final exams. (3) (.) Because of that." (Ricardo 2017, #00:02:17–2#). From a social point of view, the second year is also negatively characterised for him with ambivalent experiences within group work. He reports on graded project work in which there were profiteers who let themselves be carried through at the expense of others. However, even under these rather difficult conditions, Ricardo seems to learn something, as he tells in his retrospective account: "I learned something that sometimes... (2) well, now maybe I am a little bit_ it's exaggerated, but...how should I say this? (2) Sometimes you have to work in bad situations and, although you give everything, (.) you still can't_ you are unlucky anyway." (Ricardo 2017, #00:08:21–5#). Additionally, "That was unfair for me, very unfair. (3) But you also have to accept it and move on. Because if I_ if I had said, 'No, that doesn't work,' then I would be so angry with the teachers (.) Then that would only be a disadvantage for me. (2) I said thank you and kept at it anyway, and now I've done it." (Ricardo 2017#00:09:27–1#).

In addition, the programme has developed further in this third year, in that the structure he required has, at least in part, been implemented. Teachers from different subject areas are now present at each meeting, and a subject-matter-based rota is available. German is still a subject in which he needs support, even if his competence has developed positively in the last year. He no longer stutters, as he says, and the numerous books he had to read for the final exams have helped him in his linguistic development. In general, it can be seen that he is expanding his learning strategies and also that he evaluates social learning experiences as positive results of his progress. This is shown by an incident when he and a colleague from school studied for an exam together. He reflects on what happened and can consciously integrate it into his actions. "It all started with my schoolmate. (.) We said it like... I suggested it to her like, 'Hey, shall we study together?' And she said, 'No, let's not study together. You study it alone, I will study it alone, we'll meet tomorrow, and (.) we'll talk about it.' I got a fail on this test. (.) And since then, I have understood that this is the only way to go. It's exciting and faster—it's just faster. (. . .) And because she wanted to carry on, I wanted to stay, and it just takes longer, but if you read a little on your own first, and check and research it, it is then faster, because_ it is part of a conversation. (.)" (Ricardo 2017, #00:28:51–4#). Ricardo also uses subject-based negotiations based on pre-learning for his negotiations with the teachers in the programme. At the same time, Ricardo discovers that preparation makes it possible to have "conversations on an equal footing". "Well, I noticed that when I am already learning on my own and then come into the project, (.) and ask (.) an (.) opinion (.) a stance (.) in any case, (.) then it_ is not learning in that way, it is like a conversation. For example, I had an experience where I had to read the books, and Mr R. had also read these—I think he read them especially for me—and because we could just talk about them—and, for example, I had information that he did not know and vice versa—it was like an exchange. And that's why, I think, you don't just have to go into a support project and say, "I have to learn". You have to_ you have to have already done something at home (...). Because that way, it's just_ it's exciting for teachers and also for students, that's what I've learned." (Ricardo 2017, #00:27:20–5#). Ricardo continues and laughs in the interview about how he cannot slow down the teacher when he's talking and is not able to get a word in himself. "(. . .) Because the teachers also say, 'Ah, yes, he did some research. He really wants to know something about this'. And, as well, you think... I think it's a psychological, I think it's a psychological game, how should I put it @(.)@ Yes, so: oh, and then_ and then_ I just noticed how at a certain point Mr. R. just @spoke@ (.)@ He just wanted to teach more, more, more @. @Simply more@. @Simply more@. @And I just had to stop him like that; I want to speak too @. @. It was like a competition, how should I put it @." (Ricardo 2017, # 00:30:25–1 #). It seems that he uses the structure of the offer, as it existed 1 ½ years after the start of the support programme, to control his own learning processes in a more autonomous manner and, at the same time, to encounter the teachers with greater emancipation when it comes to the specifics of the subjects. As a result, he experiences not only gains in his learning in the specific subjects, but also recognition on the part of the teachers, and it opens him up to the interactive experience of being meaningful as a learner who not only processes the content

to learn, but also shapes it. His experience is that preparation not only makes learning more exciting, but he also makes progress faster. This discovery is able to keep his motivation to learn high. Ricardo also wants to transform the learning communities among the peers, above all, those with Eron and Daniel. Preparation has become important to him, because otherwise, the group will not make good progress. It is about the experience that fellow students should also have expectations for their own learning and progress, and that one, therefore, has to prepare well so that everyone can benefit from everyone else (efficiency negotiation). At this point, Ricardo changes his negotiation of the subject with his peers and focuses on only learning with those who prepare. If Eron does not come prepared, he says, Ricardo will not study with him. For this reason, the relationship between them within the support programme becomes a bit more unstable overall towards the end of the training.

In general, Ricardo's learning behaviour seems to have become more targeted and focused over the course of the third year, and, at the same time, more autonomous and flexible. Whereas, a year ago, he asked for structure in the support project, a year later, he is ready to disregard project structures that seem useless to him. For example, he tilts away from sticking to daily goals when he pauses a while in the project to learn, a goal that the project teachers introduced when he stated that it was of no use to him. In order to achieve his goal of passing the final exams, he navigates to various learning opportunities (OTLs; also outside the project) and invests in preparation as a negotiation figuration. In retrospect, he appreciates the support he received very much and sees it as a very good opportunity to develop further "(2) to properly consider what exactly it is you want to do (3) and (.) and, how should I put it, (5) mmm. I don't know how to put it. @(..)@ (5) So, (3) for example, (.) for example you can study different subjects and you can concentrate on one, um (2) the teachers help you (.) and if you are in a bad financial situation (.) then it is very good, because it's free. (.) And it's also a kind of responsibility, because you yourself have to know that you can't be absent. Like that, for example. (3) I would have told it like that." (#00:54:31–2#). You can see that he appreciates and makes use of the openness of the programme as the basis for his work performance.

At this point, Ricardo begins to design new prospects for his training. After his internship year, a further condition of the school regulations for obtaining a FVB, he wants to enrol at a university to study economics. Other general goals also come into being at this point; for example, he resolves to improve his English skills.

In summary: as a lateral entrant into the Swiss school system, Ricardo mainly reports difficulties with German as the language of education. This is the reason why he comes to the programme. He quickly notices that he can learn and understand there, and do so in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Four months after starting, Ricardo would like more structure and rules within the programme in order to achieve his goal of successfully passing the final exams. The structure that the programme then develops suits him very well for the third year of school. At the same time, he develops a new figuration of negotiation than the one he has tried and tested so far, and he increasingly practices this with both teachers and the young people present with a view to the final exams. Ricardo prepares the content before attending the programme and discovers how he can learn more quickly and in a more substantiated way. Not all young people appear more willing to learn together; they come unprepared.

5. Discussion

We analysed the interplay of structural and procedural risk and protective factors for resilience pathways by combining gender, SES, and migrant background of the respective students. Male migrant students with low SES are internationally seen as at risk when it comes to successfully completing upper secondary school [2,6,8,9].

Even if the knowledge that failure to complete upper secondary education is highly problematic for individual, social, and financial prosperity is internationally validated [2], it is surprising that EU-wide more than 16 percent of young people aged 20–24 still have

not completed any upper secondary education [3]. Interestingly, the heterogeneity between the different young adults in terms of their success levels for completing upper secondary education is enormous, with male migrant students having the highest risk for poor school outcomes [9] at the upper secondary level. With the three categories “gender”, “migration”, and “low SES”, the present work focuses on three dimensions that are widely and comprehensively analysed and discussed as causes of social discrimination and inequality at upper secondary school. For this reason, this research is also situated and discussed in the context of intersectionality. This differentiates existing knowledge by providing deeper insights into new ways of applying educational interventions. The present research is to be seen as a beginning, which must be followed by further research, for example, by studies that focus on young women under similar conditions. It is also conceivable, however, to conduct research that expands the analytical perspective longitudinally, i.e., that takes a closer look at biographical trajectories.

Picking up on these insights, we used a qualitative exploratory design to longitudinally examine resilience pathways out of the school failure cycle by applying an intersectional approach for male migrant students with a low socio-economic status at upper secondary school in order to overturn the almost unavoidable negative assumptions and deficit-focused models about migrant students growing up under the multi-layered threats of adversity. Proceeding from Masten’s [26,28] insights—that resilience refers to the positive adaptation of a system, not just an individual, in the context of risk or adversity—we asked what this resilience-oriented adaptation of systems in upper secondary education might look like when it comes to fostering success of male migrant students with a low socio-economic status at school. In the context of our study, this not only means an individual’s “just do it mentality”, nourished by Hollywood misconceptions of migrant students being “invincible” or “invulnerable” despite existing odds.

The material (interviews, field notes, and reports) was openly coded in a first evaluative run (initial coding), with the aim of recording the thematic case structure of the interviews. The codes were developed into categories for the specific interviews. This was followed by differentiation in terms of content, which increasingly resulted in more theoretical and more targeted foci. These methodological considerations, to be situated within the framework of grounded theory, were relevant in order to develop categories that reflect the viewpoint of those concerned and, at the same time, open up targeted perspectives that help break down the ties between structural conditions and individual explanations [42]. We also followed the qualitative approach of Strauss’ and Corbin’s (1996) “coding paradigm” [43], which directed our data analysis in order to understand and explain human action under a micro-sociological approach. We followed contemporary epistemological discussions and used the theoretical knowledge Ungar’s, especially his concepts of “navigation” and “negotiation” relating to child and youth services in order to outline their perspective for the school context. Therefore, the concepts of “navigation” and “negotiation” were used as heuristics, not as a model to be applied on [44].

Masten’s resilience model was enriched by Ungar’s [32,45] insights from social services to school resilience. The resilience turning points in schools would consist in resilience pathways fostered by proactive actions of the students in question, called navigation, in correspondence to students-focused interventions by the respective schools sustaining positive school outcomes, called negotiation. Following these insights, we performed an exploratory analysis of the turning points for success at school in two “cases” of young male adolescents with a migration background and low socio-economic status at upper secondary level. Very much like Masten [28] and Ungar et al. [18], we specifically asked about the processes within a dynamic school system for fostering resilience pathways and, thereby, allowing turning points in the development of success at school to unfold.

Even when resources were provided to Eron, his path into accepting them and adapting them to his school practices, and into becoming performative for school success, did not take the course of a straight line, but was much rather a meandering endeavour. His teachers and peers in the project first had to make positive relations and experiences possi-

ble, and by that, overturning former negative school experiences because of his migrant background and low SES before Eron started to engage in navigation-oriented actions approximately one year into the programme. He developed his own priorities and goals for achieving success at upper secondary school and took action to lead to accomplishing the “how” and the “what”. We conclude that, again, in school settings at upper secondary level, you cannot force resilience upon anyone; you have to apply the knowledge that a student’s resilience “... is as dependent on what is built inside them as what is built around them.” [32] (p. 425). For Eron, especially the associations between his gender, his family’s low SES, and his migrant background had first to be taken into account when aiming on success at secondary school. Especially, but by far not just for him, the role of the specific schools and the respective teachers involved [18] had to be connected to this former educational failure experiences.

Even at the very end of the project when Eron had successfully passed the two final examinations, he needed external support to adapt and successfully pass. Contrary to former situations of failure, and the period before the intervention at school, this time, he merely knew what had to be learned content-wise, knew how to achieve this goal, and showed proactive navigation. He just needed social support and, thus, additional negotiation in order to make it happen.

Eron can be called a *receiver* from the project’s very start, as he asks others (teachers and peers) for their opinions and support in relation to the what and the how. He needed one year to gain acceptance among his teachers and peers as well as self-confidence before he then started to himself be a supporter of others and, thereby, to be more of a giver and, thus, also a significant other for his peers. He is experimenting with the notion of justice through mutual support and develops strong social relations to Ricardo, in particular, but also to other students: he is receiving support in one school subject from his peers and is himself supporting them in school subjects where they need his help.

One of the most challenging results identified from Ricardo’s interviews was the fact that teachers working on the project were also not “just” teaching in a very general way, but also adjusting their approach to their students to the particular students in question. Additionally, for Ricardo, it was very important that the negotiation by the teacher also took into consideration the individual needs expressed by the students, as well as the specific competence requirements of the student in question. As an example, because of the lack of Ricardo’s family to support him academically, the teacher involved started offering Ricardo reinforcement in German as a second language, in particular, but moved on to self-regulation and social relationships with peers, and to learning techniques and effective planning of one’s week.

It became evident for both students that their own personalities and school histories represented an apparent socialisation paradigm for their success at school at upper secondary level. Eron’s low self-esteem, his depressive symptoms, his still low-level language skills, and his experiences that teachers have not been able to teach him how (procedural knowledge) and what (declarative knowledge) to learn in order to feel and be successful at school represented a failure pattern, as far as success at upper secondary school can be predicted. Due to this quite dense arrangement of negative experiences, his performativity in proactive navigation was very low. He first needed negotiation-oriented structures and—here, especially—a teacher to push him. It was obvious that waiting for Eron to drag himself out of the downward spiral—following the popular but still not evidence-based individualistic mantra of resilience “of being the architect of your own future”—would have been the wrong choice. Ungar calls it “professional myopia” [32] (p. 425) when interventions in schools or social services are primarily focused on provision and neglect and, therefore, on the perspective of the children as agentic consumers of a service. This way, school resilience in upper secondary education moves us beyond studies of how individual students overcome academic problems. Instead, successful resilience pathways at school are understood as dependent upon the service ecologies and result from “... the interaction between what is provided to at-risk children, children’s access to health resources on

their own terms, and how well the resources that are provided address children's unique constellations of problem behaviours and psychopathology" [32] (p. 425).

In order to identify possible long-term effects of the described navigation and negotiations processes, a project representative met the two young men one year after they completed secondary school. Ricardo was following a long-term goal and started studying at the university, showing a clear and distinctive navigation regarding his professional development. Even if the exams seemed very demanding to him, he was making his way. Right after leaving school, he had first started a one-year internship, and he reported being very well prepared by the project for the demands of the internship. His high levels of language skills and the knowledge he had acquired on how to learn more effectively and push himself—even if a specific school subject is, for the most part, not fun—were very supportive factors. He even halved his summer holidays and gave himself more time to learn for the upcoming exams at the university, both individually and in a group setting with fellow students. At the time of the interview, just few weeks before the exams, he was very much looking forward to this challenge, because he felt very optimistic and was very well prepared.

One year later, Eron has completed a one-year internship in the commercial field, which he provides a very critical report of. During this time, he often undergoes pointless activities and, at the same time, feels bored, which is also because he rules out a future professional career in this field. The specific choice of internship was made more for reasons of practicality; it was the only internship position that was still open. Following the internship and the associated 4-month military service, however, he is aiming to start studying business psychology.

The available findings can, moreover, be classified in educational offer–benefit models as well as in theoretical concepts of the expectancy value [29] of action control. While the former were widely used in studies for analysing educational decisions, the latter were more likely to be discussed in the context of process–product (–effect) models of lesson design [30]. Due to the openness of the support programme examined here, the learners were, on the one hand, able to shape their learning in a differentiated way, as shapers of the process, as a form of individual negotiation. To a certain extent, they were, therefore, able to help shape the aspect of their learning that was to do with the offering itself. At the same time, value-specific valences or moments of expectation played into how they controlled their actions, which shaped their navigation and negotiation activities. This was the case, for example, when the two learners noticed that they would profit more from the programme if they prepared for it and were, thus, able to make use of the open opportunities to learn as learning resources in a more effective manner.

Navigating towards school resilience at upper secondary level requires a high level of individual strength, according to our insights. Our intention was to identify these aspects of personal strength that lead to resilience, e.g., self-efficacy and self-acceptance. We expect that these aspects of personal strength, called individual supportive factors in resilience theory, will have to be adjusted to resilience factors that come in the form of academic and personal support from the teacher. This process of connecting individual and social supporting factors still has to be explored and empirically validated.

In addition, against the backdrop of these theoretical discussions, we may now think further about the extent to which the dynamics of a socio-ecological-oriented concept of resilience can be differentiated. In both cases, one could see at the beginning of the programme that the focus of the negotiation is strongly teacher-centred. Eron and Ricardo immediately look to the teacher to see if they are available to help solve their problems. Over time, however, they begin to prepare at home, and so, they are familiar with the questions or problems before the session. Moreover, during the programme, they both begin to collaborate with their peers as a form of self-directed social learning, initially, as support receivers, then also as support givers. Their negotiations seem to move from a situational, teacher-centred problem-solving focus in two directions. One is internally oriented, a kind of negotiation of shortfalls in preparation, and one is outwardly oriented,

as a kind of navigation of competence among social peers. Perhaps this expresses an increasing sense of efficiency regarding their efforts at self-directed stabilisation.

Following Masten [28], when analysing our data, we addressed the interplay of structural and procedural risk and protective factors for resilience pathways. As we know from the initial work of Aisenberg and Herrenkohl [46] and Ungar and Liebenberg [15], resilience is better understood if protective and risk factors are modelled not only on individual factors, but also on contextual factors, such as at the family and school class [45,47] levels. If we continue to structure our analysis of protective and risk factors only in terms of individual traits and characteristics in upper secondary education, we continue to run the risk of victim blaming, that is, turning back to the individual as the sole source of explanations for why resilience is not achieved.

When positively framed and viewed from a content perspective, we emphasise that a male migrant student's school resilience status in upper secondary education could also be influenced by minimising contextual risk factors and supporting contextual protective factors in their everyday lives [45]. If we knew which of these factors make a sustainable difference—especially those concerning family's low SES and school class—they could be named "resilience factors" and used to support students, families and schools. We must, of course, also support students' personalities, thereby combining external and internal factors.

Following Tashakkori and Teddlie [48,49] when applying an exploratory (not explanatory) heuristical approach, we need first a deeper qualitative understanding of the specific processual patterns and their meanings for the respective adolescents. We applied the heuristic approach not as a speculative formulation but serving as a guide in the investigation of school success in upper secondary school. It constituted an approach in which methodological and theoretical learning took place. Therefore, case studies would best achieve these insights to deepen the understanding of how school success is socially enacted in adolescence during upper secondary school.

Another problematic aspect of the advanced intervention that needs to be discussed is the relationship of responsibilities between subject and society, as noted at various points, especially in the context of questions of equal opportunities [47]. In this regard, there is a kind of ambivalence associated with navigation- or negotiation-based promotion of resources. On the one hand, one must rule out the possibility of learners being disadvantaged in the education system due to characteristics of their background. This responsibility lies with the system and must not be passed on to individuals. On the other hand, programmes, and, above all, the resilience concept, signal that people can overcome experienced adversities and are, thus, considered a beacon for individual responsibility and for personal strength in proving oneself. To make matters worse, this is a circumstance that, for everyone else, is then often declared a heroic excessive elevation towards the goal that also has to be achieved. The programme in question and the findings presented here wish to show, in the context of this discussion, that, for one thing, when the state uses programmes such as these, it is paying for unpleasant effects that it has evoked itself. Additionally, the fact that the discourse on systemic success carried out elsewhere is legitimised here by individually sustained selection mechanisms that pose problems in terms of justice does not need to be elaborated further.

6. Limitations

By endorsing Ungar's navigation and negotiation social-work approach [32] to educational psychology, we tested the possibility of an interdisciplinary avenue. We applied an exploratory qualitative analysis to two cases in order to understand processual and structural dynamics of success at school at the upper secondary level. Even though our results detect the interwoven effects of individual and institutional responsibilities and the interrelatedness of navigation and negotiation towards school success in a very distinctive way, we still have to confirm our point by using larger samples.

A further extension of this work, which is needed in order to understand these resilience processes in a more immersed way, would be to apply a mixed-methods design with qualitative and quantitative research tools and also use data from the teachers involved. So far, we have only used the students' data. Using a mixed-methods design [48,49] would be highly recommended in order to understand the interdependence of navigation and negotiation processes in a more future-oriented way. Therefore, we additionally needed a quantitative exploration of the structure, function, and dynamics of navigation and negotiation. For example, we still have to understand if navigation and negotiation processes are connected unmediated.

By using an intersectional approach, we were able to underline the specific relevance of school interventions at upper secondary level for male students with a migration background and low socio-economic status, as they are the most vulnerable group internationally for failure at school [18]. The possibly differing effects of the intervention upon the female students with a migration background and low socio-economic status who also attended the programme, and the respective processes for them, still have to be identified.

Regarding the analyses of the two case studies, it can be stated that even though the intervention's effects point clearly towards the desired directions of school development, the sample remains too small to generalize these insights. Therefore, a central concern for a future intervention should be to increase the number of students and to accompany them constantly over the entire school period of three years (first to third grade of upper secondary school). A design with comparison and control groups should bring an additional important extension to the current design. Furthermore, the respective school classes as a relevant contextual factor should be taken into account, and we should specifically ask for class not only individual effects by a multilevel analytical approach. By this approach, we could also focus on the development of the teachers running the program.

Finally, in the future, we would like to add a control group design to similar analyses in order to test the validity of the navigation and negotiation approach and, in so doing, also the longitudinal effects of the intervention that are identified. We hope that, in the meantime, with our revision of the existing approaches, we have made a good start towards understanding resilience at school at upper secondary level.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization W.K., A.D. and M.K.; methodology, M.K.; formal analysis, M.K. and A.D.; writing—original draft preparation, W.K., A.D. and M.K.; writing—review and editing, A.D., M.K. and W.K. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was funded by the Foundation-Group ChagAll Zurich, Switzerland, the Departement of Education BS/CH and the Forberg Foundation. Grant number (intern P276-2108-2-PS.f2), and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) through the NCCR—on the move, grant number 51NF40-182897.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by the Institutional Review Board of the School of Education FHNW.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The datasets for this study are still not available to the public.

Acknowledgments: The implementation of this project was also supported and promoted by the teaching staff and the school principal.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

1. Sassen, S. *Expulsions, Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy*; Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, USA, 2014.
2. OECD. *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*; OECD: Paris, France, 2018. [CrossRef]
3. Eurostat. 2020. Available online: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00186/default/table?lang=de> (accessed on 22 May 2021).

4. BfS. Bildungsabschluesse. 2020. Available online: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/bildung-wissenschaft/bildungsabschluesse/sekundarstufe-II.html> (accessed on 22 May 2021).
5. Eurostat. 2020. Available online: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Migrant_integration_statistics_-_at_risk_of_poverty_and_social_exclusion (accessed on 22 May 2021).
6. Papadakis, N.E.; Drakaki, M.; Kyridis, A.; Papargyris, A. Between a frightening Present and a disjointed Future. Recession and social vulnerability in the case of Greek Neets: Socio-demographics, facets of the Crisis' Impact and the revival of the intergenerational transmission of poverty. *Adv. Soc. Sci. Res. J.* **2017**, *4*, 8–20. [CrossRef]
7. Alieva, A.; Hildebrand, V.; van Kerm, P. *How Does the Achievement Gap between Immigrant and Native-Born Pupils Progress from Primary to Secondary Education?* Working Paper Series 2018-20; Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER): Luxembourg, 2018. [CrossRef]
8. Papadakis, N.; Amanaki, E.; Drakaki, M.; Saridaki, S. Employment/unemployment, education and poverty in the Greek Youth, within the EU context. *Int. J. Educ. Res.* **2020**, *99*, 101503. [CrossRef]
9. OECD. *Education at a Glance 2020: OECD Indicators*; OECD: Paris, France, 2020. [CrossRef]
10. Stahl, G. 'My little beautiful mess': A longitudinal study of working-class masculinity in transition. *NORMA: Int. J. Masc. Stud.* **2020**, *15*, 145–161. [CrossRef]
11. Becker, R.; Schoch, J. *Soziale Selektivität. Empfehlungen des Schweizerischen Wissenschaftsrates SWR*; Schweizerischer Wissenschaftsrat SWR: Bern, Switzerland, 2018.
12. SKBF. *Bildungsbericht Schweiz 2018*; Schweizerische Koordinationsstelle für Bildungsforschung: Aarau, Switzerland, 2018; Available online: <https://www.skbf-csre.ch/bildungsbericht/> (accessed on 22 May 2021).
13. Theron, L.C. Black students' recollections of pathways to resilience: Lessons for school psychologists. *Sch. Psychol. Int.* **2013**, *34*, 527–539. [CrossRef]
14. Ungar, M.; Theron, L. Resilience and mental health: How multisystemic processes contribute to positive outcomes. *Lancet Psychiatry* **2020**, *7*, 441–448. [CrossRef]
15. Collie, R.J.; Martin, A.J.; Bottrell, D.; Armstrong, D.; Ungar, M.; Liebenberg, L. Social support, academic adversity and academic buoyancy: A person-centred analysis and implications for academic outcomes. *Educ. Psychol.* **2017**, *37*, 550–564. [CrossRef]
16. McCall, L. The complexity of intersectionality. *J. Women Cult. Soc.* **2005**, *30*, 1771–1800. [CrossRef]
17. Brahm, A.; Phoenix, A. Ain't I a woman? Revisiting intersectionality. *J. Int. Women's Stud.* **2004**, *5*, 75–86.
18. Ungar, M.; Connelly, G.; Liebenberg, L.; Theron, L. How schools enhance the development of young people's resilience. *Soc. Indic. Res.* **2019**, *145*, 615–627. [CrossRef]
19. Cullen, F.T.; Unnever, J.D.; Hartman, J.L.; Turner, M.G.; Agnew, R. Gender, bullying victimization, and juvenile delinquency: A test of general strain theory. *Vict. Offenders* **2008**, *3*, 346–364. [CrossRef]
20. Rebellon, C.J.; Leeper Piquero, N.; Piquero, A.R.; Thaxton, S. Do frustrated economic expectations and objective economic inequity promote crime? A randomized experiment testing Agnew's General Strain Theory. *Eur. J. Criminol.* **2009**, *6*, 47–71. [CrossRef]
21. Murray, J.; Farrington, D.P.; Eisner, M. Drawing conclusions about causes from systematic reviews of risk factors. *J. Exp. Criminol.* **2009**, *5*, 1–23. [CrossRef]
22. Pauwels, L.; Svensson, R. Adolescent lifestyle risk by gender and ethnic background. *Eur. J. Criminol.* **2009**, *6*, 5–24. [CrossRef]
23. Brubaker, R. Ethnicity, race, and nationalism. *Annu. Rev. Sociol.* **2009**, *35*, 21–42. [CrossRef]
24. BfS. International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011). 2020. Available online: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/asset/de/do-d-15.01-isced-01> (accessed on 22 May 2021).
25. Van der Put, C.; Van der Laan, P.; Stams, G.-J.; Deković, M.; Hoeve, M. Promotive Factors during Adolescence: Are there Changes in Impact and Prevalence during Adolescence and how does this relate to risk Factors? *Int. J. Child Youth Fam. Stud.* **2011**, *2*, 119–141. [CrossRef]
26. Masten, A.S. Ordinary Magic. *Am. Psychol.* **2001**, *56*, 227–238. [CrossRef]
27. Masten, A.S. Regulatory Processes, Risk, and Resilience in Adolescent Development. *Ann. N. Y. Acad. Sci.* **2004**, *1021*, 310–319. [CrossRef]
28. Masten, A.S. *Ordinary Magic: Resilience in Development*; Guilford Press: New York, NY, USA, 2014.
29. Eccles, J.; Wigfield, A. Motivational Beliefs, Values, and Goals. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.* **2002**, *53*, 109–132. [CrossRef]
30. Seidel, T. Angebots-Nutzungs-Modelle in der Unterrichtspsychologie. Integration von Struktur- und Prozessparadigma. *Z. Fuer Pädagogik* **2014**, *60*, 850–866.
31. Luthar, S.S.; Cicchetti, D.; Becker, B. The construct of resilience: A critical evaluation and guidelines for future work. *Child Dev.* **2000**, *71*, 543–562. [CrossRef]
32. Ungar, M. Pathways to resilience among children in Child Welfare, Corrections, Mental Health and Educational settings: Navigation and Negotiation. *Child Youth Care Forum* **2005**, *34*, 423–444. [CrossRef]
33. Ungar, M. Putting resilience theory into action: Five principles for intervention. In *Resilience in Action*; Liebenberg, L., Ungar, M., Eds.; University of Toronto Press: Toronto, ON, Canada, 2008; pp. 17–36.
34. Ungar, M. The social ecology of resilience. Addressing contextual and cultural ambiguity of a nascent construct. *Am. J. Orthopsychiatry* **2011**, *81*, 1–17. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

35. Statistisches Amt des Kantons Basel-Stadt. Berufsfachschulen. 2021. Available online: <https://www.statistik.bs.ch/zahlen/tabellen/15-bildung-wissenschaft/berufsfachschulen.html> (accessed on 22 May 2021).
36. Schmidt, W.; Burroughs, N.; Zoido, P.; Houang, R. The Role of Schooling in Perpetuating Educational Inequality: An International Perspective. *Educ. Res.* **2015**, *44*, 371–386. [[CrossRef](#)]
37. Dueggeli, A. Direkter oder verzögerter Uebertritt? In *Bildungsverläufe von der Einschulung bis in den Ersten Arbeitsmarkt. Theoretische Ansätze, Empirische Befunde und Beispiele*; Neuenschwander, M., Nägele, C., Eds.; Springer VS: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2017; pp. 163–177. [[CrossRef](#)]
38. UNESCO. *International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011)*; Unesco Institute for Statistics UIS: Montreal, QC, Canada, 2012.
39. Witzel, A. The Problem-Centered Interview. *Forum Qual. Soc. Res.* **2000**, *1*, 22.
40. Breidenstein, G. Ethnographisches Beobachten. In *Beobachtung in der Schule—Beobachten Lernen*; Springer VS: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2012; pp. 27–44.
41. Reh, S. Beobachten und aufmerksames Wahrnehmen. In *Beobachtung in der Schule—Beobachten Lernen*; de Boer, H., Reh, S., Eds.; Springer VS: Wiesbaden, Germany, 2012; pp. 3–25.
42. Charmaz, K. *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*; Sage: London, UK; Thousand Oaks, CA, USA; New Delhi, India, 2006.
43. Strauss, A.; Corbin, J. *Grounded Theory: Grundlagen Qualitativer Sozialforschung*; Belz: Weinheim, Germany, 1996.
44. Kelle, U. Emergence vs forcing of empirical data question: A crucial problem of grounded theory reconsidered. *Qual. Soc. Res.* **2005**, *2*, 1–18.
45. Ungar, M. Which counts more? The differential impact of the environment or the differential susceptibility of the individual? *Br. J. Soc. Work* **2017**, *47*, 1279–1289. [[CrossRef](#)]
46. Aisenberg, E.; Herrenkohl, T. Community Violence in Context. Risk and Resilience in Children and Families. *J. Interpers. Violence* **2008**, *23*, 296–315. [[CrossRef](#)]
47. Loeber, R.; Slot, W.; Stouthamer-Loeber, M. A cumulative developmental model of risk and promotive factors. In *Tomorrow's Criminals: The Development of Child Delinquency and Effective Interventions*; Loeber, R., Koot, H.M., Slot, N.W., Van der Laan, P.H., Hoeve, M., Eds.; Ashgate Publishing: Hampshire, UK, 2008; pp. 133–161.
48. Tashakkori, A.; Teddlie, C.B. *Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*; Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2008.
49. Tashakkori, A.; Teddlie, C.B. *Sage Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research*; Sage Publications: Los Angeles, CA, USA, 2010.

MDPI
St. Alban-Anlage 66
4052 Basel
Switzerland
Tel. +41 61 683 77 34
Fax +41 61 302 89 18
www.mdpi.com

Education Sciences Editorial Office
E-mail: education@mdpi.com
www.mdpi.com/journal/education



MDPI
St. Alban-Anlage 66
4052 Basel
Switzerland

Tel: +41 61 683 77 34
Fax: +41 61 302 89 18

www.mdpi.com



ISBN 978-3-0365-3101-4