

PARENTAL INFLUENCE ON UNION FORMATION PREFERENCES AMONG TURKISH, MOROCCAN, AND DUTCH ADOLESCENTS IN THE NETHERLANDS

HELGA A.G. DE VALK

Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute

AART C. LIEFBROER

Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

This study first examines union formation preferences of Turkish, Moroccan, and Dutch adolescents. Second, the study shows how and to what extent parents are of influence on these preferences. Hypotheses are derived from cross-cultural psychology and theories on intergenerational transmission. Self-reported data of approximately 19,000 Dutch, 460 Turkish, and 400 Moroccan adolescents 11 to 23 years of age are used to test the hypotheses. Youth with a Turkish and Moroccan background, particularly those with a strong ethnic identification, more often prefer marriage than Dutch youth. Unmarried cohabitation (before marriage) is most popular among Dutch adolescents, but substantial proportions of immigrant youth also prefer this type of relationship. In addition, both parental characteristics and characteristics of the parent-child relationship are of major influence for adolescents' union formation preferences. The process of intergenerational transmission is found to be largely comparable among all groups.

Keywords: immigrant youth; preferences; union formation; intergenerational transmission

Until the 1970s, couples who decided to start living together were generally expected to marry, but this is no longer automatically the case in the Netherlands. Today, the majority of young adults enter a union by unmarried cohabitation, and among the native Dutch, it is generally assumed that the decision for a subsequent marriage is a matter of individual preference. This practice is often contrasted with that of Turkish and Moroccan migrants living in the Netherlands, most of whom are assumed to hold a strong preference for marriage and to disapprove of unmarried cohabitation. It is also generally believed that among these migrant groups, parents have a strong influence on their children's preferences. But what *are* the actual union formation preferences of Turkish, Moroccan, and Dutch adolescents in the Netherlands? Do their parents influence their preferences? How can differences in parental influence within and between these groups be explained?

With this study, we aim to contribute to our knowledge of parental influence on the formation of relationships in two ways. First, although unmarried cohabitation has become a very popular living arrangement in many Western countries, including the Netherlands, so

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far little is known about preferences of migrant youth regarding unmarried cohabitation. Most studies on union formation among Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands have focused on the choice of a partner rather than on the type of union (Esveldt, Kulu-Glasgow, Schoorl, & van Solinge, 1995; Hondius, 1999; Hooghiemstra, 2001; Veenman, 2002; Vermeulen & Penninx, 2000; Yerden, 1995). The same is true for studies carried out in the United States, Germany, and Belgium (e.g., C. Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1987; Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1996; Lodewijckx & Hendrickx, 1998; McLoyd, Cauce, Takeuchi, & Wilson, 2000; Nauck, 2001; Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil, 1981), which at best only indirectly address the issue of unmarried cohabitation.

Second, the majority of studies on the influence of the parental family on union formation preferences, both in the Netherlands and in other Western countries, focus on native adolescents (Axinn & Thornton, 1993; Hogan, 1986; Kalmijn, Bernasco, & Weesie, 1999; Liefbroer, 1989; Starrels & Holm, 2000). Although these studies generally assume that parents play an important part in the transition to adulthood, migrant parents' influence on their children's union formation preferences has yet to be systematically analyzed (Elderling, 2002; Pels & Dieleman, 2000). Little is known about the extent to which findings on native families apply to migrant families as well.

Theoretically, this study builds on cross-cultural literature about acculturation and family change. In the literature on acculturation, it is suggested that the value orientation of immigrants depends on both the level of attraction to the new culture and the importance of preserving one's own values from the country of origin (Berry, 1980). According to the model for family change put forward by Kagitcibasi (1996), migrant families from group-oriented countries do become more materially independent after migration, but they will continue to attach importance to emotional interdependent family relations. These theoretical notions suggest that migrant parents may be particularly keen on influencing their children's union formation choices.

This article broadens the scope of previous studies by comparing native Dutch adolescents with their peers from two large migrant groups in the Netherlands—Turks and Moroccans. Young migrants are a growing population group, so it is becoming increasingly important to gain an insight into the processes of parental influence among these adolescents (Dagevos, 2001; Nauck, 2001; Oropesa & Landale, 2004). The preferences of Turkish, Moroccan, and native Dutch adolescents for a particular type of union are examined. We go beyond a simple distinction by ethnic background and formulate hypotheses regarding the influence of ethnic origin, personal characteristics, and intergenerational transmission on adolescents' union formation preferences. We do so by following insights from cross-cultural psychology as well as theories on acculturation and socialization. Parental influence on adolescents' preferences are studied by distinguishing socioeconomic, family, and parent-child relationship characteristics. We test our hypotheses with data about Turkish, Moroccan, and native Dutch pupils attending secondary school in the Netherlands.

UNION FORMATION AMONG DUTCH AND TURKISH AND MOROCCAN MIGRANTS

Union formation in the Netherlands has changed quite considerably since the 1960s. Until then, the majority of young adults married as soon as they left the parental home. Today, however, most young adults cohabit with their partner before marriage (Liefbroer,

1999), although many do marry before they start a family (Garssen, de Beer, Cuyvers, & de Jong, 2001; Kalmijn et al., 1999). People's norms and values about union formation have also changed (Brewster & Padavic, 2000; Liefbroer, Gerritsen, & de Jong Gierveld, 1994), and consequently their behavior has changed, as is shown, for example, by the fact that young adults with a more traditional outlook are more likely to marry than those with a modern outlook (de Jong Gierveld, Beekink, & Liefbroer, 1993).

It is unclear to what extent these changed preferences regarding union formation have been adopted by Turkish and Moroccan immigrants, whose numbers have grown considerably since the 1960s. The majority of young Turks and Moroccans living in the Netherlands today are the offspring of the generation of migrant workers who were recruited in the 1960s and early 1970s from various rural parts of Turkey and Morocco to carry out unskilled labor in the Netherlands. These migrants were brought up with union formation traditions that differ widely from those that are prevalent among the native Dutch. Turkish and Moroccan societies are traditionally patrilineal, and much value is attached to marriage. Marriages are traditionally instigated by the parents and arranged by the two families, making them less of an individual affair and more of an occasion at which family honor is at stake. According to tradition, sons and their families stay with their parents after they marry, and daughters move in with their stepfamilies. Marriage is therefore a way of perpetuating family cohesion and patriarchal family ties. In addition, the lives of men and women are strongly segregated. The role and behavior of women in particular are bound by rules. Because of the importance that is attached to a woman's virginity, fathers and brothers are deemed to be responsible for the (sexual) behavior of female members of the family until they marry. For this reason, families supervise the behavior of their daughters more strongly than that of their sons (Eldering, 2002; Pels & Vedder, 1998; Phalet & Schönflug, 2001; Timmermans, 1994).

In Turkey and Morocco, this pattern has changed to some extent in recent years. Norms regarding union formation and partner selection are being adapted and reinterpreted (Cressey, 2002; Kagitcibasi & Ataca, 2005; Pels & Vedder, 1998; Wakil et al., 1981). In the Netherlands, young Turks and Moroccans are looking for ways of choosing their own partner without completely rejecting the part played by their parents (Esveldt et al., 1995; Hooghiemstra, 2001). However, despite shifts in marriage traditions and the process of partner selection, marriage is still the dominant type of union. Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands marry younger than their native Dutch peers. The age at first marriage for men in these three groups was 25, 28, and 30 years old, respectively, for the period 1995 to 1999 (de Valk, Liefbroer, Esveldt, & Henkens, 2004). Research in both the Netherlands and Belgium suggests that young adults from the two migrant groups do not yet regard unmarried cohabitation as a viable option (Hooghiemstra, 2003; Lodewijckx & Hendrickx, 1998). When asked, for instance, highly educated Moroccan girls in Belgium said they would like to cohabit before marriage to get to know their partner better. However, they did not expect to be able to achieve this aspiration, because it would be frowned upon by the Moroccan community (Lodewijckx & Hendrickx, 1998).

HYPOTHESES

Three sets of hypothesis are formulated in this section. Starting from cultural models distinguished in cross-cultural psychology, we derive a general hypothesis on differences in union formation preferences between Turks and Moroccans on one hand and native

Dutch adolescents on the other. Furthermore, we formulate hypotheses on differences within the migrant groups related to adolescents' personal characteristics. Finally, we focus on the process of intergenerational transmission by including socioeconomic family factors and aspects of the parent-child relationship.

DIFFERENCES IN UNION FORMATION PREFERENCES BETWEEN ETHNIC GROUPS

Adolescents' preferences for unmarried cohabitation or marriage are not formed in a vacuum. These preferences are part of a cultural context and influenced by the attitudes of people and institutions that are important to the young adult (Georgas, Van de Vijver, & Berry, 2004; Trommsdorff, 2002). Research has shown that the parental family plays a major part in the process of intergenerational transmission of norms and values (Glass, Bengtson, & Dunham, 1986; Younis & Smollar, 1985). Parents are particularly keen on influencing their children's attitudes toward key aspects of life, like union formation.

Traditions and norms regarding partner selection and union formation are part of a wider cultural context (Hooghiemstra, 2001; Keller et al., 2006; Trent & South, 1992; Wakil et al., 1981). Within cross-cultural psychology, a number of classifications of cultures—based on comparisons of individual traits, values, or types of family and interpersonal relations—have been suggested (Hofstede, 1980; Kagitcibasi, 1996, 2005; Keller et al., 2006; Schwartz, 1994; Triandis, 1996). In most of these classifications, group versus individualistic orientation forms an important underlying principle for categorizing cultures. Following this tradition in cross-cultural psychology, Kagitcibasi (1996, 2005) suggested three cultural models of family relations, namely, the model of independence, the model of interdependence, and the model of autonomous relatedness. The first model is predominant in Western industrial societies, whereas the second is common in many non-Western agrarian societies worldwide. According to Kagitcibasi (1996, 2005), the model of autonomous relatedness would best describe the experience of many migrant families: Originating from group-oriented societies, these families become more materially independent in an individualistic-oriented host society but remain characterized by emotional interdependence.

Kagitcibasi's model thus suggests that migrant families will adhere to interdependent family relations and traditions. This assumption has also been postulated in studies on acculturation of immigrants. Acculturation studies have shown that migrants may change after coming into contact with a new sociocultural environment in the host society. In this process of acculturation, Berry (1980; Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1992) distinguished between two main dimensions: the extent to which the migrating individual adheres to his or her own cultural traditions and the focus on the host society. It is often assumed that migrants orient themselves to the culture and customs of their country of origin because this offers a sense of security and identity in new circumstances after migration (Distelbrink & Pels, 2002; McLoyd et al., 2000). According to this line of reasoning, migrant youth will continue the union formation traditions that are dominant in their parents' countries of origin. As we discussed in the previous section, in both the Turkish and Moroccan cultures, great importance is attached to marriage, and many Turkish and Moroccan parents will oppose unmarried cohabitation. So our first hypothesis is that Turkish and Moroccan adolescents will have a stronger preference for marriage than Dutch adolescents.

DIFFERENCES IN UNION FORMATION PREFERENCES WITHIN MIGRANT GROUPS

The literature suggests not only differences in union formation preferences between ethnic groups but also that there will be variation in the union formation preferences of adolescents within migrant groups. In particular, the concept of ethnic identification is useful in deriving hypotheses about the differences among Turkish and Moroccan adolescents in their union formation preferences. Ethnic identification indicates the extent to which the individual is attracted to the culture of the host society or strives to maintain his or her own cultural identity (Berry, 1980; Erez & Gati, 2004). For instance, identification with their own ethnic group can be expected to be stronger among adolescents who were born in their parents' country of origin than among Turkish and Moroccan adolescents born in the Netherlands. The latter have been more exposed to norms and values prevalent in Dutch society. As a result, they will be more familiar with Dutch practices in terms of union formation and living arrangements than first-generation migrants (Zhou, 1997). Of course, this does not have to imply a complete break with parental traditions. Research shows that the second generation wants to have more freedom of choice but still regards the protection and support of the family as extremely important (Cressey, 2002; Kagitcibasi, 1994). In general, however, second-generation young migrants can be expected to be more in favor of Dutch customs than first-generation migrants. This leads to the formulation of our second hypothesis: First-generation Turkish and Moroccan adolescents will have a stronger preference for marriage than second-generation Turkish and Moroccan adolescents.

Besides the level of exposure to their (parents') country of birth, the adolescents' ethnic identification can also indicate to what extent they are focused on the family's ethnic origin. Ethnic identity has been recognized as an important concept in the lives of migrant adolescents (Phinney, 1990). In cross-cultural psychology, identification with the ethnic group of origin has been related to adopting the traditions and norms of the ethnic group rather than those of the host society. More recently, it has been recognized that adolescents may identify with different ethnic groups at the same time, including both their ethnic group of origin and that of the host society (Buriel & de Ment, 1997; Phinney, 1992). Nevertheless, it can still be assumed that those who strongly identify with their own ethnic group will be more influenced by the prevailing union formation practices of their group than adolescents who lack a strong ethnic orientation. The latter are more likely to share the union formation preferences of native Dutch adolescents (Phalet, van Lotringen, & Entzinger, 2000). This leads to the formulation of the third hypothesis: Turkish and Moroccan adolescents who predominantly identify with their own ethnic group will have a stronger preference for marriage than those who identify with the native Dutch.

Finally, differences can occur in union formation preferences between male and female migrant adolescents. Because of the importance that is attached to patriarchal family lines, Moroccan and Turkish parents can be expected to have stricter union formation expectations for their daughters than for their sons (Kagitcibasi, 1994; Todd, 1985). As discussed earlier, girls are expected to be virgins when they marry, and the honor and reputation of the family are important issues in this context (Esveldt et al., 1995; Lievens, 2000; Yerden, 1995). Parents expect their daughters in particular to carry on cultural traditions in the family. As a result, migrant parents can be expected to invest more in transmitting ethnic-specific family formation traditions to their daughters than to their sons (Gonzalez, Umana-Taylor, & Bamaca, 2006). Thus Turkish and Moroccan girls in the Netherlands usually get little scope for experimenting with relationships, whereas boys are given more freedom in this

area and it is easier for them to have a (sexual) relationship without getting married (Hooghiemstra, 2003; Nijsten, 2000). Besides, for male adolescents, marriage represents a financial obligation that they may well want to delay (Yerden, 1995). We would therefore expect Turkish and Moroccan boys to be more in favor of unmarried cohabitation than their female counterparts. Given the much stronger emphasis on gender equality in Dutch society, we do not expect to find such gender differences among Dutch adolescents. So our fourth hypothesis is that Turkish and Moroccan girls will have a stronger preference for marriage than Turkish and Moroccan boys.

PARENTAL INFLUENCES ON ADOLESCENTS' UNION FORMATION PREFERENCES

Core values regarding family life are shared and transmitted within families from one generation to another (see Brewster & Padavic, 2000, for a discussion on cohort change). Socialization theory allows for the derivation of hypotheses about intergenerational transmission of preferences that operate in all three groups. Within each of the ethnic groups, variation exists in the extent to which parents disapprove of unmarried cohabitation. We would expect to find that the stronger the parents' disapproval of unmarried cohabitation, the greater their desire to transmit this attitude to their children. Earlier research has indicated that certain characteristics, such as a low level of education, a strong religious commitment, and a gender-specific division of labor, are associated with more traditional attitudes toward family life (F. K. Goldscheider & Waite, 1991; Starrels & Holm, 2000; Thornton & Camburn, 1987; Trent & South, 1992). It can be expected that these more traditional parents have a negative attitude toward unmarried cohabitation as well. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis is that adolescents whose parents have characteristics associated with more traditional attitudes toward relationships and the family will have a stronger preference for marriage than adolescents whose parents have characteristics associated with more modern attitudes toward relationships and the family.

The hypotheses we have formulated thus far are based on the assumption that Turkish, Moroccan, and native Dutch parents are fairly successful in transferring their attitudes about unmarried cohabitation to their children. In reality, however, this will by no means always be the case. This raises the question as to the circumstances under which adolescents adopt their parents' attitudes. Despite the fact that adolescents in Western societies strive for independence, parents remain an important source of close relationships (Blustein, 1982; Coleman, 1980; Sabatier & Lannegrand-Willems, 2005; Younnis & Smollar, 1985). Research shows that a good parent-child relationship is essential in intergenerational communication and attitude transmission (Sartor & Younnis, 2002; Taris, Semin, & Bok, 1998). The quality of the parent-child relationship can thus facilitate or inhibit the intergenerational transmission of norms and values (Brody, Moore, & Gleib, 2001; Helsen, Vollebergh, & Meeus, 2000; Steinberg, 1990; Taris et al., 1998). Adolescents may be less willing to adopt the union formation preferences of their parents when their relationship with them is characterized by many problems. This leads to the sixth hypothesis: Adolescents who have a high-quality relationship with their parents will have a greater preference for marriage than those whose relationship with their parents is of a lesser quality.

This sixth hypothesis presupposes that the parents of Turkish, Moroccan, and native Dutch adolescents will react in the same way if their children develop preferences different

to their own. But is this a correct assumption to make? We mentioned earlier that family relations in Turkey and Morocco differ from those in the Netherlands. Compared with Dutch families, Turkish and Moroccan family relationships are more likely to be characterized by a strong group orientation and interdependent relations. For Turkish and Moroccan parents, this generally means that, when it comes to relationships and the family, a deviation in norms and values can adversely affect the family's honor and consequently the family's position within the ethnic community. These parents are therefore expected to put a stronger emphasis on compliance of their children in socialization than Dutch parents. At the same time, Dutch parents are expected to encourage independence and autonomy in the development of their children to a larger degree than Turkish and Moroccan parents (Distelbrink & Pels, 2002; Eldering, 2002; Lievens, 2000; Nauck, 1988). As a result, we expect that it is less likely that Dutch parents will challenge deviant preferences of their children than the parents of young Turks or Moroccans. This brings us to our final and seventh hypothesis, namely, that the hypotheses formulated earlier on intergenerational transmission (fifth and sixth hypotheses) will apply less to Dutch adolescents than to adolescents of Turkish or Moroccan origin.

DATA AND METHOD

DATA

To test our hypotheses, we used data from the Dutch National (Secondary) School Pupil Surveys of 1996 and 1999 (the Dutch National Budgeting Advisory Centre and the Social & Cultural Planning Agency). In these surveys, pupils in secondary education complete a written self-report questionnaire on a set of themes like finances, leisure time, school, and politics. Data are collected at schools that represent different levels of education, denominations, and regions in the Netherlands (Zwart & Warnaar, 1993).

One important advantage of the Dutch National (Secondary) School Pupil Surveys is that they incorporate a considerable number of young migrants as well as Dutch adolescents. Few data sets are available in the Netherlands that contain a sufficient number of Turkish and Moroccan adolescents to analyze these groups on a differentiated basis.

The data collected in 1996 and 1999 were pooled, and Turkish, Moroccan, and native Dutch adolescents were selected. This resulted in a data set containing 19,792 native Dutch, 549 Turkish, and 453 Moroccan respondents. To check for effects of weighting, analyses with and without weighting were carried out on the 1999 data. Because no differences were found, unweighted data were used for further analyses.

MEASURES

The dependent variable was the preference for a particular type of union based on the question, "When you are older, do you want to cohabit and/or marry?" Answering categories were 1 (*no* [1999]/*neither* [1996]), 2 (*cohabit rather than marry*), 3 (*cohabit first, then marry*), and 4 (*marry without having cohabited*). Excluded from analyses were the group of adolescents ($n = 463$) who answered *no* to this question. For analyses, the response categories on the preferred type of union were reverse coded and ranged from 1 (*marry without cohabiting*), to 2 (*cohabit first, then marry*), to 3 (*cohabit and never marry*).

TABLE 1
**Descriptive Information on Independent Variables for Native Dutch,
 Turkish, and Moroccan Adolescents**

Variable	Range	Native Dutch		Turks		Moroccans	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Ethnicity and gender							
First-generation migrant ^a	0/1			0.21	0.41	0.26	0.44
Ethnic identification ^b	0/1			0.71	0.46	0.78	0.42
Gender ^c	0/1	0.50	0.50	0.51	0.50	0.53	0.50
Parental socialization							
Maternal religious denomination							
Christian	0/1	0.56	0.50	0.02	0.13	0.03	0.15
Islamic	0/1	0.00	0.04	0.87	0.34	0.92	0.28
Other religion	0/1	0.04	0.21	0.02	0.15	0.01	0.10
Maternal labor force participation ^d	0/1	0.63	0.48	0.29	0.46	0.15	0.35
Educational level of parents	1-8	4.35	1.83	2.80	1.61	3.49	1.11
Family type ^e	0/1	0.08	0.28	0.13	0.34	0.12	0.32
Ethnic mixed-marriage parents ^f	0/1			0.05	0.20	0.05	0.22
Quality of relationship with parents	0-1	0.84	0.23	0.79	0.27	0.81	0.25
Conflict with parents	0-1	0.19	0.20	0.24	0.20	0.25	0.23
Control variables							
Age	11-23	14.71	1.66	14.89	1.59	14.77	1.47
Level of education	1-4	2.41	0.98	2.07	0.94	2.05	0.85
Survey year	0/1	0.57	0.49	0.67	0.47	0.74	0.44
N		18,452		467		385	

SOURCE: Dutch National (Secondary) School Pupil Surveys, 1996, 1999.

a. 1 = first generation.

b. 1 = migrant group.

c. 1 = girl.

d. 1 = work.

e. 1 = other than two-parent family.

f. 1 = intermarried.

The independent variables were grouped in line with the hypotheses. Descriptive information on the independent variables for each of the three ethnic groups is presented in Table 1. Direct measures of the adolescents' characteristics, such as gender, migrant group, and reported ethnic identification, are included.

1. Gender: A dummy variable indicated the adolescent's gender, with boys being the reference group.
2. Migrant group: We included a migrant origin variable for Turks and Moroccans. To define the migrant group of the respondent, the current Statistics Netherlands definition was used, which states that a person is considered a migrant when she or he has at least one foreign-born parent. The adolescent was assigned to a particular migrant group according to his or her and both parents' reported country of birth. Native Dutch adolescents were the reference group.
3. Ethnic identification: Young Turks and Moroccans were asked, "Which ethnic group would you say you belong to?" Those who considered themselves to belong to their own ethnic/migrant group were compared with the category that regarded themselves as Dutch (the reference category).
4. Migration generation: The adolescent's country of birth was used to determine who was born in Turkey or Morocco (first generation). The second generation was the reference group.

With regard to intergenerational transmission, we have included five family characteristics.

1. **Maternal religiosity:** It is a well-known fact that religious people marry younger and are less likely to opt for unmarried cohabitation (Jansen, 2002). The adolescents were asked, "What religious denomination does your mother belong to?" The various religious persuasions were included in the analyses as separate dummy variables. Adolescents whose mothers had no religious persuasion were the reference category.
2. **Maternal labor force participation:** In the traditional breadwinner model, the man works and the woman's work outside the home is limited. We would expect those women who combine paid work with child rearing to have a more modern outlook on relationships (F. K. Goldscheider & Waite, 1991). To know whether the mother participated in the labor market, we used the question, "How many hours a week does your mother work on average (excluding time spent on housework and commuting)?" Mothers who did not work (0 hr) were compared with those who had a paid job outside the home.
3. **Parental level of education:** We would expect parents with a higher level of education to have a more positive attitude toward unmarried cohabitation (Barber, Axinn, & Thornton, 2002; Esveldt et al., 1995). The highest known educational level of both parents was determined by using the question, "What is the highest level of education your father/mother has completed?" The answer categories ranged from 1 (*primary school*) to 8 (*university*).
4. **Type of family:** Children who are not part of a two-parent family are expected to attach less importance to marriage and be more open toward other types of unions (F. K. Goldscheider & Waite, 1991). We included a variable that compared adolescents from two-parent families (the reference group) with others (such as those from one-parent families or stepfamilies). This was obtained by using the answers to the question, "What type of family do you live in?"
5. **Ethnically mixed marriage:** Parents of mixed ethnic origin may well be more open to modern attitudes toward union formation because they themselves know what it is like to cross clear group boundaries (Hondius, 1999). This measure was constructed on the basis of the question, "Which country was your father/mother born in?" If one of the parents was born in the Netherlands and the partner in Turkey or Morocco, this was defined as a mixed marriage. Homogamous couples were the group used for the purpose of comparison.

Furthermore, adolescents' reports on the parent-child relationship were used.

1. **Quality of relationship with parents:** The quality of the relationship indicates how important the relationship with the parents is to the adolescent. Research (Brody et al., 2001) shows that the attitudes of parents and children are more similar in case of a good relationship quality. The quality of the relationship was determined on the basis of the responses to five dichotomous items, such as "I don't like spending time at home" and "Have you had any serious problems with your parents over the past year?" Together, these items formed a reasonable scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .62$). The scores on each of the items were summed and divided by the total number of valid answers. The created scale ranges from 0 to 1: a score close to 1 indicates that adolescents have a good relationship with their parents, and a score close to 0 indicates a more problematic relationship.
2. **Conflict with parents:** Having many conflicts and conflicting views with the parents is used as a second indicator for the relationship with the parents. If there is a lot of conflict between a child and his or her parents, it is assumed that the adolescent will be less inclined to adopt the parents' attitude toward union formation. The level of conflict with parents was assessed using the adolescents' responses to the statement, "Please indicate whether you and your parents generally agree or disagree about the following things . . ." The adolescents could indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with their father and mother on nine issues, including "Your behavior at school," "Your friends," and "Your plans for the future." Separate scales of conflict created for mothers and fathers correlated at .7. The answers given for father and mother were combined to create one scale for "conflict with parents" by adding up the number of times the respondent disagreed and dividing this by the total number of valid answers. An analysis of the scale showed that these nine items could be regarded as a scale of the degree to which the adolescents' attitudes conflicted with those of their parents (Cronbach's $\alpha = .75$). Conflict scores could range from 0 to 1, with a low score indicating a high level of agreement and a high score indicating a high level of disagreement between adolescent and parents.

Finally, some control variables were included in the analyses.

1. Age: This variable represented the adolescents' age (in years) at the time of completion of the questionnaire.
2. Educational level: This variable indicates the type of education the adolescents were following at the time they completed the questionnaire, ranging from 1 (*Lower General Secondary Education*) to 4 (*Upper General Secondary Education*).
3. Survey year: This was the year the survey was conducted, with 1996 as the reference category.

METHOD

The dependent variable on the preferred type of union has an ordinal measurement level. Therefore, ordinal logistic regression was used. Five models of increasing complexity were estimated. In the first model, only migrant origin was incorporated. Adolescents' ethnic orientation and gender were entered in Model 2. To test the socialization hypotheses, variables on characteristics of the parents and the adolescents' relationship with the parents were entered (Models 3 and 4). In the fifth and final model, interactions between migrant origin and socialization were added. Only those interactions that produced a significant effect are shown in the results.

RESULTS

DIFFERENCES IN UNION FORMATION PREFERENCES BETWEEN ETHNIC GROUPS

First we present the union preferences of boys and girls from each ethnic group (see Figure 1). Broadly speaking, a large majority of all adolescents wanted to marry in the future. Only a small minority (between 4% and 10%) was contemplating unmarried cohabitation without subsequent marriage. The current Dutch practice, whereby partners cohabit for a period before marrying, was reflected in the preferences of the native Dutch adolescents, with a broad majority (80%) preferring this option.

Even though young Turks and Moroccans were more likely than their native Dutch peers to prefer marriage not preceded by cohabitation, premarital cohabitation was also popular among them. Of all Moroccan and Turkish adolescents, respectively 51% and 42% preferred a period of unmarried cohabitation. Young Turks were most traditional: 56% preferred marriage not preceded by cohabitation. Clearly, many adolescents from the two migrant groups consider a period of unmarried cohabitation, which is the norm in the Netherlands, to be an attractive option.

Significant gender differences were found only in the two migrant groups. The preferences of the migrant girls were more traditional than those of the migrant boys. Turkish girls were the most traditionally oriented in their preferences: 65% wanted to marry without previous cohabiting. The preferences of Moroccan boys were most similar to those of the native Dutch adolescents.

UNION FORMATION PREFERENCES: INFLUENCE OF INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION AND ETHNIC ORIENTATION

To test our hypotheses on differences within the ethnic groups as well as on the influence of parents on the union formation preferences of their children, a series of ordinal logistic regressions were estimated. The results are presented in Table 2.

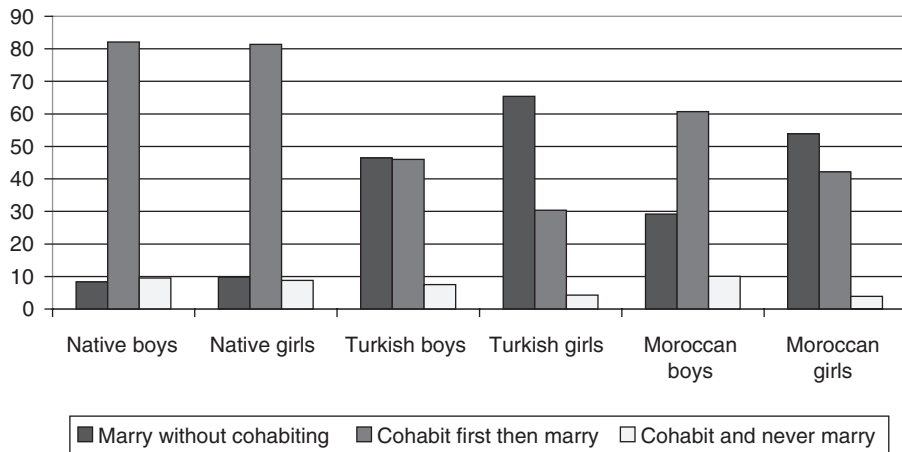


Figure 1: Dutch, Turkish, and Moroccan Adolescents' Union Formation Preferences, by Gender

According to our first hypothesis, Turks and Moroccans should have a stronger preference for marriage than native Dutch adolescents. Our findings (Table 2, Model 1) were indeed consistent with this hypothesis: Young Turks and Moroccans had significantly more traditional union formation preferences than their native Dutch counterparts. In addition, we found that Turkish adolescents were in general more in favor of (direct) marriage than adolescents with a Moroccan background.

In the second model (Table 2), migration generation, ethnic identification, gender, and control variables were entered. The results showed that both our second and third hypotheses, based on ethnic orientation, were confirmed. In line with our expectation, the first generation of Turks and Moroccans was more in favor of marriage than the second generation. The adolescents' ethnic identification was also clearly an important factor in terms of their preference for a particular union. As hypothesized, we found that those who identified more with their own ethnic group were more in favor of marriage than those who regarded themselves as Dutch.

We had different expectations about how gender would affect migrant and native Dutch adolescents. In the second model, the main effect of gender and an interaction variable for gender and migrant origin were added. In general, we found that girls were somewhat more in favor of marriage than boys. In line with our fourth hypothesis, it became evident that a clear gender difference exists in preferred type of union among the two migrant groups. Turkish and Moroccan girls were more in favor of marriage than their male counterparts.

Of the control variables (age, level of education, and survey year), only survey year resulted in a significant effect on the union formation preferences. Adolescents who took part in the 1999 survey had a more traditional union formation preference than those who participated in the 1996 survey.

Model 2 also showed that after inclusion of ethnic orientation, gender, and control variables, preferences of Moroccan youth no longer differed from their Dutch compatriots. This was in particular attributable to inclusion of the adolescent's ethnic identification. The effect of having a Turkish migrant background declined in the second model as well, but the preferences of these adolescents remained significantly different from those of their Dutch peers.

TABLE 2
**Ordinal Logistic Regression Models for the Preferences for Different Types of Unions
 Among Turkish, Moroccan, and Native Dutch Adolescents**

Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Ethnicity ^a										
Turkish	-2.43***	0.09	-1.11***	0.19	-0.69**	0.29	-0.70**	0.29	-1.19*	0.54
Moroccan	-1.84***	0.10	-0.16	0.22	0.31	0.32	0.39	0.32	-0.05	0.68
First-generation migrant			-0.27*	0.18	-0.32	0.18	-0.34	0.18	-0.33	0.18
Ethnic identification			-1.14***	0.17	-0.93***	0.18	-0.91***	0.18	-0.93***	0.18
Girl			-0.14***	0.04	-0.08*	0.04	-0.10**	0.04	-0.10**	0.04
Turkish × Girl			-0.86***	0.20	-0.92***	0.21	-0.87***	0.21	-0.88***	0.21
Moroccan × Girl			-1.14***	0.23	-1.17***	0.23	-1.17***	0.23	-1.22***	0.23
Age			-0.02	0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.02	0.01	-0.02	0.01
Level of education			0.01	0.02	-0.05*	0.02	-0.01	0.02	-0.01	0.02
Survey year			-0.30***	0.04	-0.36***	0.04	-0.35***	0.04	-0.36***	0.04
Maternal denomination ^b										
Christian					-1.04***	0.04	-1.03***	0.04	-1.03***	0.05
Islamic					-1.23***	0.25	-1.33***	0.25	-1.27***	0.25
Other religion					-1.52***	0.09	-1.54***	0.09	-1.54***	0.09
Maternal labor force participation					0.55***	0.05	0.55***	0.05	0.55***	0.05
Educational level of parents					0.07***	0.01	0.07***	0.01	0.06***	0.01
Family type					0.78***	0.06	0.70***	0.07	0.70***	0.07
Ethnic mixed-marriage parents					0.60	0.42	0.51	0.43	0.67	0.43
Quality of relationship with parents							-0.69***	0.09	-0.72***	0.09
Conflict with parents							0.65***	0.10	0.69***	0.10
Quality of Relationship									0.98*	0.48
With Parents × Moroccan										
Maternal Labor Force										
Participation × Moroccan										
Pseudo R ² (Nagelkerke)	0.06		0.08		0.14		0.15		0.16	

SOURCE: Dutch National (Secondary) School Pupil Surveys, 1996, 1999.

a. Reference = Dutch.

b. Reference = no religion.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

The fifth hypothesis emphasized the general importance of intergenerational transmission. Characteristics indicative of the modernity of the parents and the parental home were expected to have a direct effect on the adolescent's preferences. Model 3 (Table 2) showed that our hypothesis was corroborated by the results. Those with a religious mother (regardless of which denomination) were more in favor of marriage than those whose mother was not religious, whereas a higher educational level of the parents, having a working mother, and growing up outside a two-parent family were found to have a modernizing effect on the adolescent's union formation preferences. Although the effect of mixed marriages was in the predicted direction, it was not statistically significant. The addition of the variables on intergenerational transmission resulted, nevertheless, in a considerable improvement of the model's predictive value.

The sixth hypothesis predicted that a good child–parent relationship would have an effect on the union formation preferences of adolescents. The quality of the relationship and the degree of conflict with the parents were added in the fourth model. Both indicators produced the predicted effect. A poor relationship and a high level of conflict with parents both resulted in a greater preference for unmarried cohabitation among adolescents.

According to our final hypothesis, influences of intergenerational transmission in the parental home should apply more to young Turks and Moroccans than to native Dutch adolescents. However, our results showed only limited differences. Compared to the native Dutch reference group, having a working mother was found to be less associated with the union formation preferences of Moroccan adolescents. Furthermore, we found that the quality of the relationship with the parents had a different effect on the union formation preference of Moroccan adolescents. We found that a better relationship quality among Dutch youth was related to a preference for marriage, whereas among Moroccans, results pointed in the opposite direction. The quality of the relationship with the parents was not found to affect the union formation preferences of Moroccan adolescents.

CONCLUSIONS

We started this article with the observation that unmarried cohabitation had effectively become the norm among the native Dutch, but the extent to which young Turks and Moroccans also opt for this type of union is much less clear. Our first aim was to provide a better insight into (differences in) union formation preferences of native Dutch, Turkish, and Moroccan adolescents. Second, we wanted to study the influence parents have on adolescents' preferences regarding union formation. We explored how migration-specific factors as well as intergenerational transmission affect the adolescent's preference for a particular type of union.

Our data showed that the vast majority of native Dutch adolescents had a preference for unmarried cohabitation (before marriage). Contrary to our expectations and to current practice, a very considerable proportion of young Turks and Moroccans also favored a period of unmarried cohabitation. Between 30% and 50% of adolescents from these migrant groups said they would prefer to cohabit before marriage. This finding is not in accordance with findings from previous, focus group–based research into the union formation intentions of young Turks and Moroccans (Hooghiemstra, 2003; Lodewijckx & Hendrickx, 1998). This divergence may well have been because of the research method used. The respondents involved in this study completed a written questionnaire at school. This is a completely different research setting from a focus group discussion with peers

from one's own ethnic group. The more anonymous (and individualized) collection of the data used in this article may well have resulted in adolescents giving less socially acceptable responses than they might have given in focus groups.

The relatively strong preference for unmarried cohabitation of Turkish and Moroccan adolescents is in sharp contrast with the current union formation practice among these ethnic groups in the Netherlands. Currently only a very small percentage of Turks and Moroccans actually cohabit. So why is it that stated preferences so rarely translate into actual behavior? Part of the explanation may lie in the fact that behavior is more determined by restrictions than is the case for preferences. When adolescents express a preference, they may pay relatively little attention to the reactions of their parents and the attitude of the broader community, whereas they will certainly become aware of these reactions and related consequences when they have to make an actual union formation decision. If this line of reasoning is correct, then the parents will influence their children's *choices* (even) more so than their preferences. The young migrants may thus overestimate the likelihood and possibilities to opt for unmarried cohabitation in the belief that they themselves have more control over these choices than they actually have in reality. Panel studies among these groups are needed to determine how parental influences may change over time with regard to union formation behavior.

The results showed that young Turks (and Turkish girls in particular) were more in favor of marriage than native Dutch or Moroccan adolescents. Turkish and Moroccan youth are thus found to differ in their union formation preferences. Although the union formation traditions in Turkey and Morocco are broadly similar, earlier research has also brought to light some differences between these groups after migration. Turkish migrants are more inclined to rely on closed family networks with a high degree of solidarity and social control than Moroccan migrants. Earlier studies have, for example, shown that Turks are more traditional in their union formation attitudes and that the control exerted by their social network is stronger than it is for their Moroccan counterparts (Dagevos, 2001; Lodewijckx, Page, & Schoenmaeckers, 1996). Turks (including the second generation) more often stick to traditional family values, whereas Moroccan migrants are believed to be more individualistic and inclined to break with traditional role models (Crul & Doornik, 2003; Lesthaeghe, Surkyn, & Van Craenem, 2000).

This latter finding also implies that, although cross-cultural classifications are useful in identifying general cultural commonalities within regions, one should not overlook the variation that exists within each of these regions. More attention should be paid to diversity among migrant groups originating from countries that generally adhere to the same cultural model. Furthermore, our findings suggest that migrant families may differ in the way they deal with acculturation. In this respect, Turkish migrant families in the Netherlands seem to fit Kagitcibasi's (1996, 2005) model of "autonomous related" family relations better than Moroccan families. To further explore this issue, it would be worthwhile to include a wider variety of ethnic origins in studies on cross-cultural differences in family formation within specific countries. By studying a variety of migrant groups, we could also start to test whether Kagitcibasi's model of autonomous relatedness is really a distinct model of family relationships or rather a transitory stage between the interdependent and independent family relations models (see also Keller et al., 2006).

Whereas Moroccan boys did not differ significantly from native Dutch adolescents, Moroccan girls had a stronger preference for marriage without preceding cohabitation. The fact that Moroccan boys held preferences similar to native Dutch adolescents can perhaps be accounted for by the large degree of freedom Moroccan boys have compared to girls

from this group. Moroccan girls may place more emphasis on having a modern approach to relationships and to the task division within a relationship, whereas the actual type of union itself is less of an issue for them.

The ethnic identification of adolescents was found to have a considerable predictive value for the union formation preferences of young Turks and Moroccans. Turkish and Moroccan adolescents who identify with their own (ethnic) group are more likely to prefer marriage than those who regard themselves as Dutch. Ethnic identification partly explained the independent effect of ethnic origin among Turks and completely explained it in the case of young Moroccans. This, too, corroborates the explanation previously given that young Moroccans have more individual freedom of choice than young Turks. The fact that young Turks, even those who felt themselves to be Dutch, tended *not* to favor unmarried cohabitation suggests that social control within the Turkish community is more effective than it is within the Moroccan community. We cannot ignore, however, the fact that the concept of ethnic identification was measured in a very general way in the data used here. It did not provide, for example, scope for identification with more than one (ethnic) group. Recent (integration) studies have shown that belonging to several (transnational) communities is becoming increasingly important for young migrants (see, e.g., Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002). Further research might provide a better insight into which groups migrant youth identify with and how this influences their union formation preferences. It is definitely clear that ethnic identification is an important factor that should not be neglected when studying adolescents with a migrant background.

Regarding intergenerational transmission in the parental home, the effects of religion, parental educational level, and maternal labor force participation are striking. Adolescents with a religious background were less in favor of unmarried cohabitation than adolescents with a nonreligious background. Given the importance of Islam to a large proportion of young Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands (see, e.g., Phalet et al., 2000), we expect this to remain an important factor in union formation choices. A low level of parental education and a nonworking mother is also related to a stronger preference for marriage among adolescents. Given that both educational attainment and employment are expected to increase among second-generation migrants, second-generation parents may be expected to have more modern union formation attitudes than first-generation parents. As a result, third-generation migrant adolescents may well have a stronger preference for unmarried cohabitation than adolescents from the previous two migrant generations of Turks and Moroccans.

The effects of intergenerational transmission on adolescents' union formation preferences were generally not found to differ between native Dutch, Moroccan, and Turkish adolescents. The only two exceptions that were found relate to Moroccan youth. Our results showed that having a working mother had a strong modernizing impact on union formation preferences of Dutch and Turkish adolescents, but no such effect was found for those with a Moroccan background. Our findings also showed that the quality of the parent-child relationship is essential in the transmission of union formation preferences among Dutch and Turkish adolescents: A good parent-child relationship results in a stronger preference for marriage. For Moroccans, however, a good relationship with the parents is not found to have an effect. Compared to Dutch families, the parent-child relationship and socialization among Moroccan families have been proven to be rather authoritarian (see, e.g., Pels & Dieleman, 2000). In the Moroccan parent-child relationship, a more affective component, like the parent-child relationship quality, thus seems to be less important as a facilitator for intergenerational transmission. Our findings do show, however,

that also among Moroccan adolescents, the level of conflicts with the parents is related to union formation preferences. This could indicate that Moroccan adolescents who discuss more with their parents achieve more freedom in forming their own union formation preferences. Future research should take into account different aspects of the parent–child relationship to gain a better understanding of how this relationship affects the union formation preferences of adolescents with a different background.

This study shows the general importance of the parent–child relationship for the formation of union formation preferences among both native Dutch and migrant adolescents. In addition, however, other significant people in the lives of adolescents, like peers or other family members, may have an impact on the development of (union formation) preferences. Therefore, it would be interesting if follow-up studies examined broader family relationships and included not only parents but also other relatives and peers to examine the relative influence of these different persons in the adolescents' environment. This could provide new insights into the role of the family in the choices that adolescents of different ethnic origins plan to make.

As is clear from our findings, cultural group membership cannot fully explain the individual preferences. Research should further aim to understand commonalities and differences between members of the same cultural model. Finally, based on our results, we would expect premarital cohabitation to remain popular among native Dutch young adults in the future and to increase in popularity among Turks and Moroccans. The difference we found between first- and second-generation adolescents suggests that union formation among second-generation migrants will more closely resemble the native Dutch pattern. Further (longitudinal panel) research among migrant groups, in which preferences and actual behavior at a later age are compared, would be valuable to gain more insight into these processes.

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Helga de Valk received her PhD in sociology from Utrecht University. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Amsterdam and the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute. Her research interests include international migration, processes of acculturation, socialization, and immigrant youths' transition to adulthood.

Aart C. Liefbroer is head of the Department of Social Demography at the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute and professor of Demography of Young Adulthood and Intergenerational Transmission at the Department of Social Research Methodology of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. His research focuses on trends (both within and across countries) in living arrangements of young adults, their determinants, and consequences.