The Third Transitional Identity of Migrant Adolescents. The Case of Hotel House, an Italian Multi-Ethnic Skyscraper-Ghetto

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Abstract: The adolescent's identity achievement is a complex task, even more so if they are migrants living in a particular context of ethnic ghettoization. Hotel House is an enormous, isolated condominium situated on the outskirts of Porto Recanati, a small Italian town. It is a unique reality poorly studied from a social psychological perspective. The present paper aims to measure the perceived levels of self-concept clarity, self-determination, ethnic group identification, relationship with parents, depression and life satisfaction in a group of 91 adolescents (11–19 years; 30% females; 1.5 immigrant's generation) living in this context. The analysis shows low levels of self-concept clarity and self-determination, especially in female adolescents, quite satisfactory relationships with their parents and medium levels of group identification and life satisfaction. The identification with their ethnic subgroups seems to provide a third transitional identity which works as a temporary link between native country values and host country values. The regression analysis shows significant associations: self-determination is negatively associated with depression and positively associated with the perception of life satisfaction; the father's closeness is a negative predictor for depression and a positive predictor for life satisfaction; mother's closeness is negatively associated with depression.

Keywords: identity; migrants; adolescence; parent attachment; depression; life satisfaction; gender; self-esteem; person–context interaction

1. Introduction

In contemporary times, owing to massive migratory flows, studying the processes of adolescents' ethnic identity formation is highly significant, especially in contexts where inclusion seems particularly difficult. The impact of migration on identity development during adolescence was overlooked for a long time, since identity was primarily conceptualised as an intrapersonal attribute [1,2]. However, recently, social psychology has highlighted the role of person–context interactions in the identity formation process [3]. In this paper, we study the ethnic identity achievement in a group of male and female migrant adolescents living in an ethnic ghetto, engendered by the environment and architecture of the building which they inhabit, i.e., the skyscraper named Hotel House in the city of Porto Recanati (Marche Region, Italy). In this context, 'ghetto' refers to an area in a city, especially a poor area, where people of particular ethnic groups or religions live closely together but apart from other people; it is characterised by members of minority groups living there because of social, legal or economic pressure [4].

The adolescents under study had migrated to Italy to rejoin their parents. The adolescent participants were not born in Italy and belong to 1.5 generation (which includes those who migrate to a new country before or during their early teenage years). Many of them live temporarily in Hotel House, waiting for a better accommodation; nonetheless, during

the time they stay there, they seem to develop what we call a *third transitional identity*, i.e., an intermediate identity. This identity functions as a temporary bridge (for the period when the adolescents stay in between) between native and host country values.

Tobias Jones [5] wrote in the Guardian:

Hotel House is the most fascinating and perplexing building in Italy: a semi-derelict tower block that has become synonymous, in the Italian imagination, with drug dealing, prostitution and clandestine migrants. Nobody knows how many people live here. In the summer, when large numbers of Bangladeshi and Senegalese people come to the area to work as beach vendors, the number probably surpasses 3000.

The measures of self-concept clarity, self-determination, ethnic group identification, attachment and relations with parents, depression and life satisfaction used in this study are relevant to understanding identity achievement and mental illness [6]. Some people are more resilient to depression as they have good social networks, supportive families and friends and better access to coping strategies that uplift their mood. The more control people perceive to have over situations, the more confident they remain about their abilities [7].

The situation in Hotel House appears complex and shows typical alarming signs of economic, emotional and cultural deprivation, which can affect the life quality, as shown by the results of psychological literature [6].

The debate over migrants has polarised Italian society, since it represents an important political and economic question. While 30 years ago, Marche, as well as many other Italian regions, was predominantly a rural area characterised by a homogenous society, nowadays the percentage of migrants living on Italian national territory is only 8.5%, as per the statistics published by Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT). This percentage is noticeably higher in Porto Recanati, where it reaches 23% [8]. Municipality data, referring to 2018[1], shows that migrants in Porto Recanati predominantly live in Hotel House.

To summarise, this paper tries to fulfil the social-psychological gap that exists due to the lack of studies in this context, which is crucial for understanding how immigration is addressed in Italy. In our opinion, conducting research on adolescents' mental health and adjustment in this unique context as well as studying identity and parental attachment during adolescence across cultures is of crucial importance. These aspects can be particularly challenging during adolescence, especially for 1.5 generation migrants, who are marked by being less integrated into the social context of host location in comparison to their second-generation counterparts (those who are born in the receiving country and stay there); the situation could be worse for those living in this place as a transitional space. Although Hotel House presents a specific architectural structure [5], many areas in Italy and Europe are similarly evolving: migrant populations are increasingly being isolated and the allocated economic and political resources are decreasing.

This study analyses data from 91 migrant adolescents (1.5 generation) to explore self-concept clarity, perception of self-determination, ethnic group identification in Hotel House, relationship with parents and impact on depressive symptoms or life satisfaction. The study also takes into account specific demographic variables such as gender and age.

1.1. The Context for Hotel House

Hotel House is an isolated condominium situated on the outskirts of Porto Recanati, a small town on the Italian Adriatic coast. Its construction began in the late 1960s, during the Italian economic boom[2]. The aim was to create a self-sufficient condominium. The building was and continues to be a residential and commercial structure with a cruciform plan divided into 17 floors and 480 flats (see Figure 1).

In June 1973, the construction company declared bankruptcy, and the initial project, which included the area where Hotel House now stands, ended abruptly. Gradually, Hotel

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[1] All municipality data referring to 2018 were collected by one of the authors of this paper, who personally checked the municipal registers.

[2] The source for all the descriptions about history and the architectural features of the Hotel House was Cancellieri [9].

House transformed from a luxury residence for tourists to a small, vertical 'town' destined for a different type of residents with different purposes and a social composition that continuously changed demographically.

Figure 1. The original architectural project of the Hotel House. The building at present.

Most newcomers were from Senegal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Tunisia. Almost all of them looked for and found work: the men in Ancona's shipyards and the women as care attendants, waitresses, nurses and cleaners. In addition, there was a noticeable number of criminal elements on the block-pimping and drug dealing. Further, mismanagement of communal maintenance funds had created a debt of hundreds of thousands of euros [5].

Starting from 2008, Hotel House has seen many social and sanitary crises. In 2008, the recession hit again and apartment prices further reduced. In recent years, it has been the scene of several crimes: homicide, prostitution, terrorism, mafia, smuggling, counterfeiting and trafficking. Each of its eight lifts is presently broken; there is no piped drinking water; the sewage is backing up; and there are holes in the walls and floors on every storey [5].

Italian and international press have occasionally compared Hotel House to Scampia (the famous neighbourhood in suburban Naples), the Olympic village in Turin and the Morandi's complex in Rome:

High-concept architectural projects that have, over time, become dystopian citadels for drug dealers and an Italian and immigrant underclass. These are places where honest destitution mixes with criminal wealth, and where the Italian state often appears to have lost control completely. Today it's almost inconceiv-

able that a local would buy a flat here, but there's still a regular turnover of immigrants attracted by the dirt-cheap property and the presence of so many compatriots. It's a place of strange speculation: when things are this cheap, both the poor and those who exploit them see an opportunity (flat now costs only €6000). For as long as everything is in private hands, the state is unwilling or unable to intervene [5].

The residents choose to move to Hotel House through word of mouth, mostly from friends. They either decide to live there or relocate. Many live in Hotel House illegally and leave the building within a few months. Nonetheless, many of those who have a legal status believe and hope that their life will not be spent in Hotel House. In fact, the municipal statistics (2018) show a big migratory flow to the hinterlands of the Marche region or the European countries further north (usually France, Germany, Belgium, Nederland, England, etc.). Some inhabitants arrive at Hotel House to rejoin their relatives or friends who live there, often hoping to find some initial economic stability but not to reside in the building for a long time. Thus, Hotel House often serves as a passing residence, especially for people who have decided to build a better future for themselves and their families in other European countries.

According to the latest municipal statistics (2018), at the time of our research, Hotel House was home to 573 families, which had a total of 1681 members (1180 males and 501 females), of whom 410 residents were minors (226 males and 184 females). Among these, 106 were adolescents aged 11–19 years (67 males and 39 females): 68 were aged 11–14 years and 38 were 15–19 years old. Moreover, 1420 residents were foreign citizens (see Table 1 for details).

Table 1. Frequency and percentages of residents in Hotel House.

Citizenship	Males n (%)	Females n (%)	Total
Senegalese	308 (18.3%)	75 (4.5%)	383 (22.8%)
Pakistani	262 (15.6%)	66 (3.9%)	328 (19.5%)
Bangladeshi	199 (11.8%)	114 (6.8%)	313 (18.6%)
Nigerian	52 (3.1%)	25 (1.5%)	77 (4.6%)
Moroccan	28 (1.7%)	26 (1.5%)	54 (3.2%)
Afghan	36 (2.1%)	0	36 (2.1%)
Macedonian	17 (1.0%)	10 (0.6%)	27 (1.6%)
Indian	16 (1.0%)	4 (0.2%)	20 (1.2%)
Italian	156 (9.3%)	105 (6.2%)	261 (15.5%)
Tunisian	72 (4.3%)	50 (3.0%)	122 (7.3%)
Algerian	13 (0.8%)	6 (0.4%)	19 (1.1%)
Chinese	8 (0.5%)	6 (0.4%)	14 (0.8%)
Egyptian	4 (0.2%)	2 (0.1%)	6 (0.4%)
Romanian	2 (0.1%)	3 (0.2%)	5 (0.3%)
Dominican	1 (0.1%)	4 (0.2%)	5 (0.3%)
Argentinian	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.1%)	2 (0.1%)
Bosnian	1 (0.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.1%)
Brazilian	1 (0.1%)	0	1 (0.1%)
French	0	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.1%)
Ghanaian	1 (0.1%)	0	1 (0.1%)
Eritrean	0	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.1%)
Maliana	1 (0.1%)	0	1 (0.1%)
Moldovan	1 (0.1%)	0	1 (0.1%)
Ukrainian	0	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.1%)
Hungarian	0	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.1%)

During summer, many other illegal migrants arrive at Hotel House, mainly to work as street and beach vendors. Currently, 1711 individuals from 21 countries (90% migrants) live in Hotel House—395 from Pakistan, 303 from Senegal and 235 from Bangladesh [10].

Owing to the building's isolation and the continuous movement of people, the relationships among inhabitants are discontinuous and often limited to relatives and migrants from the same ethnic group (adults and peers). Further, adults have strong control over adolescents, especially girls. School, cultural and social associations run free after-school courses, movies laboratories, sports activities and Italian courses for young people living at the place. Nevertheless, the local Italian community tends to isolate Hotel House residents, since they often consider the people (and the place) as a 'security problem' [5,10].

Such a reality represents a unicum, at least in Europe. Unlike other similarly notorious estates across Europe, it is not run by the State, but all the flats are privately owned. Apart from its architectural uniqueness, it is also greatly important from the social and political point of view, since it presents psychosocial dynamics shared with other similar Italian contexts where delinquency and violence increase the perception of fear and insecurity originating from intolerance and racism.

1.2. Identity Formation in 1.5 Generation Migrants

Although the achievement of cultural and personal identity remains important during the whole life, it can undoubtedly be considered most prominent during adolescence [11]. Parental contribution is fundamental to reach this goal: 'Parenting styles and beliefs are subjected to social and cultural influences and the effects of different parenting styles on children's developmental outcomes also vary among cultural groups' [1] (p. 796).

The process of acculturation, which includes behavioural orientation, values and identification, becomes more complex among migrant adolescents, since the destination context involves potentially new cultural components [2]. One's cultural heritage, which may be 'taken for granted' in the country of origin, paradoxically, is more likely to become part of one's identity when one starts living in a new country [12]. Consequently, the task of identity formation becomes more difficult for adolescents belonging to ethnic minority groups. Adolescents from migrant families need to consider a larger array of values and norms than those belonging to their family traditions and those from the culture of the host society. Balancing these often-contrasting cultural systems proves difficult for them [2]. Furthermore, adolescents' attempts to explore alternatives are occasionally impeded by familial obligations or by the prejudices of the host society [13].

Family acts as the first site of socialisation, where each member contributes to the quality of life, especially during adolescence [1]. Usually, mothers play a caring role and lead to internal reflection, while fathers provide more opportunities for exploring the social world outside. Thus, each parent's contribution to the family's quality of life is different [14]. This reflects the dynamic of acculturation within immigrant families, where each parent transmits different values of cultural competence and identity [14,15]. Family rituals that are deeply rooted in cultural identity could have a protective function in the family's well-being and could support its identity continuity in the context of migration [16]. Furthermore, gender differences are greater among more masculine cultures [3].

One of the primary goals of this paper concerns the adolescents' perception of their relationships with their mother and father and their contribution to the following three dimensions: trust (mother/father respecting and accepting the adolescent's feelings and wishes), communication and relational closeness. According to Fermani et al. [17], relational closeness also interacts with communication to influence self-concept clarity. These dimensions may be critical for adolescents' identity achievement [2].

Low levels of trust, communication and closeness can cause conflicts and psychosocial problems [12,16,17]. However, a certain distance between the cultural values of the parents and those of adolescents in migrant families is normal, and in fact, the conflicts may become a source of development. Further, adolescents' self-disclosure to parents is the most important source of knowledge about their emotional states and is related to mutual trust [14].

Psychologists distinguish 1.5 generation (the one made up of those who come as children and stay) from the second generation (the one made up of those who are born in

the receiving country and stay there) [18]. The 1.5 generation immigrants may be worse off in terms of cultural pressures and mental and physical health compared to first-generation immigrants [19]. Many 1.5 generation immigrants indeed experience limited contact with their family's country of origin. Consequently, direct ties to the family's heritage—ties that culturally ground people and protect them against several negative psychosocial and health outcomes—may not be present. Although 1.5- and second-generation migrants may face similar post-migration stressors such as lower socioeconomic status, disrupted family structure, discrimination and lack of legal status, 1.5 generation migrants may experience greater adaptive challenges, manifested in higher levels of mental illness and risk-taking behaviours [20]. It is likely for second generation migrants, who are born and grow up in Italy (although they may not have legal status there), to get exposure to the Italian language and culture since their birth and to socialise through the educational setting. Thus, they may experience lesser linguistic and cultural barriers and are less likely to be depressed.

As anticipated in the introduction and in the previous section, Hotel House is a place of passage and the adolescents who live there all belong to generation 1.5. This generational homogeneity of the context is also of particular importance for research and shows another peculiarity of certain ghettoised environments, where the comparison between second (generally more integrated) and 1.5 generation is not possible.

Studies on familial ethnic socialisation in adolescence have produced many results, showing how parental context contributes to the identity and adaptation of migrant youth [1,5]. Ethnic pride, adaptation, affirmation and satisfaction with life are enhanced by more emphatic parents, i.e., by trusting family with good communication where parents promote autonomy [2]. However, father's impact and monitoring are observed to be higher compared to mother's [17]. Considering such differences, this study uses an instrument that measures the relationship with father and mother separately.

In Hotel House, besides parents, adults of the same ethnic group also strongly control the external relations of the adolescents; they consider them potentially dangerous as they can clash with and threaten the community's native values.

Tajfel and Turner [21] identified several consequences of being a member of a devalued group and outlined three coping strategies: individual mobility (escape from the group), involvement in social movements and reinforcement of ethnic identity by comparing oneself positively with an outgroup. It will be important to analyse which of these strategies can be implemented (e.g., through the evaluation of self-determination levels or identification with the ethnic group).

2. Aims of the Study

The main aim of this study is to describe the characteristics of Hotel House adolescents (belonging to 1.5 generation) involved in the process of identity acquisition. Particularly, the issues highlighted below are investigated for the entire sample as well as the subsamples divided by gender (males and females) and age (early and middle adolescence, according to [17,22]). Specifically, the present study:

1. measures the levels of self-concept clarity, perception of self-determination, ethnic group identification in Hotel House, relationships with mother and father and depression or satisfaction with one's life;
2. evaluates the impact of self-concept clarity, self-determination, ethnic group identification and relationship with the parents on the depressive symptoms or satisfaction with life.

Regarding the research aims, based on the reviewed literature, we expected to find:

1. A lack of self-concept clarity, lower life satisfaction or self-determination, difficult relationships with parents or with ethnic group, disorder symptoms especially with growth and mostly girls compared to boys;
2. Self-concept clarity, self-determination, identification with ethnic group and attachment with parents as protective factors against depression, which in turn increases life satisfaction.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants consisted of 91 adolescents belonging to 1.5 generation (32 females and 59 males from the 106 adolescent residents) with age between 11 and 19 years (Mage = 14.18 years, SD = 2.35). Two age groups were represented in the sample: an early adolescent group (aged 11–14 years) comprising 54 adolescents (Mage = 12.2 years, SD = 0.6) and a middle adolescent group (aged 15–19 years) comprising 37 adolescents (Mage = 16.5 years, SD = 0.8). Second generation adolescents were not present at the time of the data collection in Hotel House. In particular, at that time, 70% of those who were 11–13 years old (arrived in Italy at the age of 11), 80.5% of those who were 14–16 years old (arrived in Italy at an average age of 14 years) and 86.66% of those who were 17–19 years old (arrived in Italy at an average age of 16) had completed primary school in their country of origin. This data cannot be specified in more detail since, as explained by the cultural mediator, family reunification is not always accompanied by official documentation and the participants were reluctant to give certain information.

Some of the participants are enrolled in primary schools (*n* = 4, 4.4%) or secondary schools (*n* = 56, 67.5%,), while the rest mostly attend technical or vocational institutes (*n* = 23, 27.7%; only one girl among them attends a Classical Lyceum.

The participants are of 16 different citizenship: Bengali (24%), Senegalese (24%), Pakistani (18%), Moroccan (10%), Tunisian (7%), Indian (2%), Bosnian (3%), Romanian (3%), Albanian (2%), Macedonian (1%), Chinese (1%), Moldovan (1%), Lithuanian (1%), Russian (1%), Ukrainian (1%) and Nigerian (1%). The majority follows Islam (92%).

3.2. Procedure

The anonymous self-report questionnaire was handed over to the adolescents officially residing in Hotel House. A cultural mediator played an active role in drafting the questionnaire and obtaining parents' approval to include their children in the study. The questionnaires were translated from Italian to English, French and Arabic (all the participants were able to fill the questionnaire in one of the available translations). The adolescents and their parents were informed about the aims of the research, and they consented to participate. After we received parental permission, all the adolescents we had approached chose to participate. Researchers visited Hotel House with the cultural mediator to meet the adolescents and to distribute the questionnaires to the 91 participants there. It was not possible to reach the 14 remaining adolescents whom the municipal statistics (2018) had officially counted as residents of Hotel House since their parents refused to give them the permission to participate. The participants could be reached thanks to the after-school service that an Italian association promotes in some rooms on the first floor of the building.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that although the scales we used are Western psychological constructs, which may be less applicable to migrant populations, these scales have been frequently used in multi-ethnic contexts and have displayed excellent psychometric properties [17,23,24].

We used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 running on Windows-SPSS (Chicago, IL, USA, 2002) for data analysis.

3.3. Measures

The first part of the questionnaire was composed of socioanagraphic items (e.g., gender, age, school). The participants' nationality, religion, and arrival in Italy were determined via open questions (e.g., 'Quelle est votre nationalité?' ('What is your nationality?')).

The second part of the questionnaire comprised the following validated scales:

- Self-Concept Clarity Scale (SCC) [25]: It consists of 12 items, scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item is as follows: 'In general, I have a clear sense of who I am and what I am'. Cronbach's alpha was 0.73.

- Self-Determination Assessment Scale [26]: It consists of 14 items, scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (someone else makes decisions on my behalf) to 5 (it is always me who makes decisions). A sample item is as follows: 'I make my own decisions' Cronbach's alpha was 0.77.
- Short version of the Identification Scale [27]: This scale was used to assess the positive identification processes in the group. It consists of six items with a response scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item is as follows: 'The success of my ethnic group in Hotel House is also my success'. Cronbach's alpha was 0.77.
- Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) [28]: It is a self-reporting tool aimed at measuring the quality of the relationships between adolescents and their fathers (12 items) and mothers (12 items). A six-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (completely untrue) to 6 (completely true), was used. The singled-out factors measured three dimensions in the relationship between adolescents and their parents: trust, communication and alienation, recoded as closeness. Some sample items are as follows: 'My father/mother respects my feelings' (trust); 'I talk to my father/mother about my problems and worries' (communication); 'My father/mother does not care much about me (Reverse)' (closeness). The reliability of the factors, based on value of Cronbach's alpha, was adequate: trust on father and mother = 0.79; communication with father = 0.76; communication with mother = 0.78; closeness with father = 0.71; closeness with mother = 0.71.
- The Children's Depression Inventory (CDI) [29]: This tool was used to assess depressive symptoms. The CDI is a self-report questionnaire aimed at screening subclinical depressive symptoms among children and adolescents. The CDI consists of 27 items, scored on a three-point scale: 1 (false), 2 (a bit true) and 3 (very true). A sample item is as follows: 'I am sad all the time'. Cronbach's alpha was 0.91.
- The Satisfaction with Life Scale [30]: It is a short, five-item instrument, with a response scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). It measures global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's life. The following is an example: 'I am satisfied with my life.' Cronbach's alpha was 0.71.

4. Results

The first aim in this study was to explore the variation (by considering gender and age separately) in the levels of (1) self-concept clarity, (2) perception of self-determination, (3) ethnic group identification in Hotel House, (4) relationship with the parents, (5) depression and (6) satisfaction with one's life.

Since the participants belonged to a variety of ethnic groups, some comprising a large population, others smaller, we could not statistically determine their impact on the data results.

The difference scores were examined with a $2 \times 2 \times 11$ multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA): Age (young, older; recoded in two classes: 11–14 years and 15–19 years) $\times$ gender (males, females) $\times$ the dimensions obtained from the 11 factor analyses (self-concept clarity; self-determination; identification with the ethnic group in Hotel House; relationship with the parents; depression and satisfaction with life).

The MANOVA did not indicate statistically significant differences in self-concept clarity and identification with the ethnic group. As presented in Table 2, the average values of self-concept clarity are of moderate level.

As far as self-determination is concerned, statistically significant differences were observed for gender but not for age. In general, the mean scores were much below the scale medium point (3). Specifically, females perceived themselves as less self-determined compared to their male counterparts ($F(3, 91) = 2.80$, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.05$).

Table 2. Mean scores of Self-concept clarity, Self-determination, Group identification, Parents' attachment, Depression and Satisfaction in function of gender and age.

	11–14 Early Adolescents n = 54		15–19 Middle Adolescents n = 37	
	Males n = 32 M (SD)	Females n = 22 M (SD)	Males n = 27 M (SD)	Females n = 10 M (SD)
Self-concept clarity	2.55 (0.60) [a]	2.78 (0.73) [a]	2.60 (0.63) [a]	2.56 (0.75) [a]
Self-determination	2.86 (0.75) [a]	2.24 (0.86) [a,b]	2.88 (1.21) [a]	1.12 (0.76) [b]
Group identification	3.44 (0.94) [a]	3.65 (0.55) [a]	3.41 (0.83) [a]	3.57 (1.19) [a]
Father attachment				
Trust	4.97 [a] (0.72)	4.82 [a] (1.11)	4.26 [a] (1.46)	4.2 [a] (1.58)
Communication	4.27 [a] (1.14)	4.00 [a] (0.93)	3.89 [a] (1.39)	3.87 [a] (0.86)
Closeness	4.73 [b] (1.14)	4.40 [b] (0.92)	4.42 [b] (1.33)	3.30 [a] (1.42)
Mother attachment				
Trust	5.08 [a] (1.09)	4.88 [a] (1.22)	4.95 [a] (1.06)	4.60 [a] (1.57)
Communication	4.47 [a] (1.16)	4.32 [a] (1.26)	4.24 [a] (1.18)	4.47 [a] (0.82)
Closeness	5.02 [a] (1.03)	4.82 [a] (1.20)	4.78 [a] (1.26)	4.02 [a] (1.25)
Depression	1.23 (0.23) [a]	1. 45 (0.26) [a]	1.33 (0.31) [a]	1.90 (0.22) [b]
Satisfaction	3.81 (0.56) [b]	3.72 (0.56) [a,b]	3.66 (0.44) [a,b]	3.28 (0.53) [a]

Notes: M = means; SD = standard deviation. [a,b] Tukey test.

The identification with the ethnic group was moderate and neither age nor gender was significant. Generally, the adolescents claimed to have good relationships with their parents, particularly with their mothers. The perception of being understood by father is the only item that elicited statistically significant results for gender ($F(1, 91) = 6.95$, $p < 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.07$) and age ($F(1, 91) = 6. 59$, $p < 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.07$). Males felt more understood than females, and the females aged 15–19 years felt least understood.

The females aged 15–19 years perceived themselves as more depressed than males ($F(1, 91) = 6.95$, $p < 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.07$). With increase in age, males displayed higher levels of depressive symptoms ($F(1, 91) = 20.73$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.19$).

Life satisfaction was not high. Males were more satisfied with life than females ($F(1, 91) = 2.61$, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.08$). The level of life satisfaction diminished for males and females with increase in age. This reduction was higher in females ($F(1, 91) = 6.47$, $p < 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.07$).

Regression Analysis

We undertook a Pearson correlation and a linear regression analysis to single out associations and predictors of depression or life satisfaction, in keeping with the second aim of this research. Depression and life satisfaction were considered dependent variables, while self-concept clarity, perception of self-determination, identification with ethnic group and attachment with parents were all introduced together as predictors. The results of the regression analyses are listed in Table 3.

Results of the regression analyses revealed that some dimensions explain significant portions of the variance of the two examined variables. Self-determination was negatively associated with depression and positively associated with the perception of life satisfaction. Unexpectedly, self-concept clarity and identification with the ethnic group did not have significant results. Further, relationship with parents provided statistically significant evidence. Specifically, father's closeness was a negative predictor for depression and a positive predictor for life satisfaction, while mother's closeness was only negatively associated with depression.

The regression analysis was also undertaken using the stepwise method, but the interaction between gender/age and the predictors did not lead to any increase in the proportion of variance.

Table 3. Standardized Beta Scores and proportion of variance explained for the regression analysis on depression and life satisfaction with self-concept clarity, self-determination, dimensions of the relationship with parents and ethnic group identification as predictors.

Total *n* = 91	Depression	Satisfaction
Self-concept clarity	0.01 (0.19)	−0.05 (−0.05)
Self-determination	−0.20 * (0.20)	0.14 * (0.14)
Identification	0.13 (0.09)	0.02 (0.06)
Father attachment		
Trust	−0.07 (−0.17)	0.17 (0.22)
Communication	0.07 (0.01)	−0.16 (0.04)
Closeness	−0.28 * (−0.38 ***)	0.28 * (0.26 **)
Mother attachment		
Trust	−0.09 (−0.07)	0.03 (0.11)
Communication	0.07 (0.08)	0.06 (0.03)
Closeness	−0.19 * (−0.37 ***)	0.05 (0.22 *)
R^2	0.26 ***	0.16 *

Note: levels of sig. * $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$. *** $p < 0.001$.

Finally, through logistic regression, we examined the relationship between gender (females vs. males) and the dependent variables (depression and life satisfaction). The regression coefficient B, odds ratio Exp(B) and *p* values were noted. Odds ratio, an exponentiation of the B coefficient, measures the strength of the statistical association (see Table 4).

Table 4. Results of the logistic regression model on gender and depression and life satisfaction.

	Depression			Life Satisfaction		
	Coeff B	**Sig.**	**Exp(B)**	**Coeff B**	**Sig.**	**Exp(B)**
Gender (ref females)						
Males	−2.017	0.000 ***	0.133	0.687	0.137	1.987
Constant	1.273	0.003 **	3.571	−0.788	0.039 *	0.455
Case numbers	91			91		

Note: levels of sig.* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$. *** $p < 0.001$.

Significant results were obtained with respect to depression but not for life satisfaction. Males were associated negatively with depression compared to females (B = −2.017, Exp(B) = 0.133, $p < 0.000$).

5. Discussion and Conclusions

Growing up in a stable home environment or in an atmosphere of deprivation with emotionally unavailable caregivers can make a huge difference to our lives [16,17,31]. This study contributes to contemporary literature by examining an important yet unexplored topic: identity acquisition among migrant adolescents growing up in a complex environment such as Hotel House. Moreover, the 1.5 generation deserves more attention from researchers of migration and transnationalism. These migrant adolescents do not adapt easily to new cultural surroundings when compared to children born in Italy, or more in general in other countries, to migrant parents [16,19,24].

The first aim of this study was to explore the levels of self-concept clarity, perception of self-determination, ethnic group identification in Hotel House, relationships with mother and father and depression or satisfaction with one's life.

The situation in Hotel House is worrying. There is a lack of self-concept clarity and low life satisfaction, especially among the females. The females perceive themselves as less self-determined. Further, it was observed that generally, depression increased with age among all the participants.

Crocetti et al. [24] observed differences in the reconsideration of the commitment to relational fields among migrant adolescents. According to the authors, they reconsidered their choices to a greater extent than that of their counterparts from Italian and mixed families. High levels of reconsideration are symptomatic of an unstructured personality profile. Such a personality profile is positively correlated with internal and external problems (depression and behaviour disorders, respectively) as well as with poor parent–adolescent relationships [17,22,24]. These considerations, applied to the condition of the migrant adolescents, suggest that reconsidering one's current commitments and exploring alternative possibilities might support the discovery of other, more fulfilling commitments and, consequently, lead to a stable future identity that fosters adaptive functioning and life satisfaction. However, it must be borne in mind that such positive outcomes will only appear at a later stage. The moment when reconsideration happens will mainly be associated with identity distress and behavioural disorders [31]. Crocetti et al. [11] showed that relational development is more complex among adolescents from migrant families. Adolescents from migrant families, unlike adolescents from Italian ones, are less likely to report a strong attachment to both parents. In such families, the mother may mediate between her husband, who is often rooted in the culture of origin, and children, who are in the process of assimilating the culture of the host country.

Generally, the adolescents participating in our study showed low levels of self-concept clarity and self-determination, medium levels of group identification and life satisfaction and rather satisfactory relationships with their parents. This satisfactory relationship with parents is probably due to the fact that parents represent one of their most significant reference points.

According to the literature, low levels of self-concept clarity, specifically among females, could be explained in the light of the particular developmental period [17]. Females tend to explore their identities more in depth; however, often they end up disorienting themselves [17,32,33].

The urban segregation in Hotel House probably promotes conservative attitudes; this segregation aims to preserve migrants' own culture against external influences and their identification with the ingroup [34]. Our participants preferred reinforcing their subgroup ethnic identity in Hotel House since it seems to provide a specific, temporary, third identity between that of the host country and the native one. This may explain their low levels of self-concept clarity.

The adults of the same ethnic subgroup living in Hotel House can strongly control adolescents, especially girls. They try to keep the girls and their families tied to the values of the origin country. We refer to this third identity as a transitional one. Indeed, very often the girls come back to their origin country to get married. Regardless of whether they will return to their origin countries or not, they seem to have mixed feelings: they would like to stay in Italy but also to return to their countries, such as the girl (G) in fragment 1 below, which is taken, as well as the fragment 2, from a corpus of in-depth interviews that we collected in a second step after the administration of the questionnaire[3]. She answers (line 3) the interviewer's question (line 1), by claiming that she 'would like to stay in between'[4].

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[3] In this article we limit ourselves to presenting only two exemplary excerpts because the qualitative analysis of the whole corpus of in-depth interviews is still in progress. The letters I and G in extract (1) stand for the interviewer and the girl's name respectively; similarly, the letters D, F, G in extract (2) stand for the names of the participants, which have been removed to ensure their anonymity.

[4] See also [35].

(1)

1I:	*Adesso cosa pensi, di preciso di questa tua esperienza?* What do you specifically think now about this experience of yours?
2G:	*Adesso, non vorrei né lasciare Italia né Bangladesh.* Now, I wouldn't like to leave either Italy or Bangladesh.
3	*Vorrei stare in mezzo. Stare in tutte due parti. Veramente.* I would like to stay in between. Stay in both parts. Really.

Boys, on their turn, hope to move towards other countries, such as those (D, F, G) in the following excerpt.

(2)

1I	*Tu invece D, cosa vorresti fare?* What would you like to do, D?
2D	*Io voglio andare in un altro Paese.* I want to go to another country.
3I	*Dove?* Where?
4F	*In Canada.* In Canada.
5D	*No in Canada. (In un posto) più bello d'Italia.* No in Canada. (In a place) more beautiful than Italy.
6G	*Io pure mi sa che me ne vado.* I think I'm going away too.
7I	*Cos'è che non ti piace dell'Italia?* What don't you like about Italy?
8D	*Che c'è crisi.* That there is a crisis.

Figure 2 displays how the third transitional identity can be thought of as an intermediate identity, placed between native and host country values and functioning as a temporary bridge/link (for the period adolescents stay in between).

Figure 2. Third transitional identity in Hotel House.

Parents play a crucial role by supporting their children's physical, emotional, social and intellectual development [1,6]. Our participants' attachment was stronger towards their mother, while the mean levels of attachment to their fathers were lesser. Although the relationship with their parents was good, it seems to have worsened among the older adolescents in our sample (see Table 2). The weakest factor was communication, particularly with fathers. The females felt less close to their fathers. Compared to females, males felt closer to their fathers, especially the middle adolescents (15–19 years). Our findings showed high scores on the depression scale and lower scores on the life satisfaction scale for middle adolescent females. The logistic regression showed positive associations between females and depression (see Table 4). These data are consistent with the findings of Crocetti et al. [11], specifically, for the 1.5 generation. The 1.5 generation often goes through greater identification, acculturation and inclusion efforts compared to the second generation, who, for instance, do not have to leave friends back home and learn the language of the host society as a mother tongue (L1) [19].

Regarding the second aim of this study, we presupposed an association between some identity variables (self-concept clarity, self-determination, identification with ethnic group, attachment with parents) and depressive symptoms or life satisfaction. Contrary to the expectations, only two independent variables showed a significant association with the dependent variables. The results of the statistical regression suggested the following:

1. When self-determination increases, depression decreases;
2. Regarding attachment with parents, when the father's closeness increases, depression decreases and life satisfaction increases. Mother's closeness is only negatively associated with depression.

Although self-determination is a predictor of well-being [26,36,37], unfortunately, families living in Hotel House do not seem to push their offspring towards greater independence; this is especially applicable for girls (as shown by the MANOVA). Such situations occur in a male-dominated culture [3]. Dion and Dion [38] argue that females, who are traditionally cast in the role of the keepers of the cultural legacy, are likely to suffer more than males. Despite low levels of self-determination, strong parental monitoring and the many difficulties migrant adolescents face, they are strongly committed to solve their problems as migrants. As the literature suggests [39], adolescents can play a crucial role in mutual innovation and influence integration within their community.

As for the attachment with parents, our results are consistent with those obtained by Gozzoli and Regalia [40]: Adolescents with a weak attachment to both parents report less life satisfaction and higher depression and anxiety, suggesting that identity formation depends on the culture one is born into.

Reuniting with parents, sometimes after a long separation, is often a source of bitter disappointments and violent reactions from children [41]. In these situations, mothers and children do not understand each other and fail to overcome the idealised images favoured by the distance and nostalgia that have built up over time. Furthermore, the economic and social conditions of the parents are often much more precarious than what the child would have expected. These differences make parents less available to their children. The social context sharpens this phenomenon. In Italian literature, the information about the influence of the ethnocultural dimension or the social context on the risk and protective factors is lacking. For example, we know the percentages of suicides among migrants and also know that suicides are more frequent in the 1.5 generation compared to the second generation, but we have no information about the risks and protective factors [41]. In addition, architectural redevelopment is essential in this context since psychosocial studies highlight the importance of places in preventing deviance and internal symptoms and in creating more social cohesion [42].

Therefore, in our results, self-determination and parents' attachment impact adolescents' well-being. Further, it seems that adolescents are focused on the future, i.e., on their possibilities of changing and self-determining, rather than on the present, i.e., on their present identity (as revealed by the low levels of self-concept clarity). It seems that if adolescents perceive themselves as capable of planning their own future autonomously, the level of life satisfaction increases. In this context, parents' closeness plays a significant role by presenting their adolescents with a secure base.

The identification with the ethnic group, similar to what happens for the self-clarity concept, does not impact well-being, probably because it is transitory and also since it is difficult to manage three different identities simultaneously because of migratory complexity. In the present, temporary identity, identification with the ethnic group and parents' attachment bind adolescents with the values of their native country and, therefore, with a past temporal dimension. Conversely, self-determination is linked to a future temporal dimension and the values of the host country (both the country where they are living and the country where they could live in the future). While females often come back to their countries of origin (mainly to get married), males mostly migrate to other countries (mainly to France, Germany, Belgium, Netherland or England). Therefore, the Hotel House community, more in general Italy, seems to be a 'middle-earth'.

In this research, the reference sample was too small to reach conclusions with external validity. However, in Italy, new areas like the Hotel House ghetto are emerging, and it would be interesting to compare the identity peculiarities of those who assume this third identity in such 'passing' places. Now, what are the differences among migrants living in more inclusive areas or of second generation?

Generally, the welfare experiences of 1.5 generation and their ideal well-being may differ significantly if economic and human resources are introduced in terms of architectural requalification and social inclusions. Here, relationship with parents is not the only important factor; research suggests that social context also, with the architectonic one, is a significant factor and mediator [2].

The results of this report are also subject to other limitations. First, we employed a cross-sectional design and therefore cannot ascertain the developmental identity trajectories displayed by the Hotel House adolescents. Thus, future investigations could adopt a longitudinal design. Specifically, it would be possible to evaluate if and how traces of what we called third identity remain and/or affect people. Second, we did not consider variables related to the background story and living conditions of migrant families, which could have affected the findings (e.g., What is the degree of acculturation or language competence of each family member? What is the impact of schooling or Internet on the socialisation and identification processes?). Thus, future studies could account for these variables by testing whether they affect identity formation in adolescents from migrant families; this would help identify more specific protective, well-being and risk factors through a deeper qualitative analysis [43–45].

In any case, in our study, results should be interpreted with caution as they are based on observations made on only 91 participants.

In Hotel House, almost everyone says, 'I'm good here. It's not so different compared to Bangladesh or Senegal: the beach, the rubbish, the struggle' [5]. 'Every time you go, you meet someone new. However, often, when you ask after someone you met last time, you're told they've moved on—few remain' [8].

Additional Notes: *Homeward Bound* is the title of the film produced in collaboration with the Hotel House teenagers as a result of a cinema lab realised between 2013 and 2014 and directed by one of the authors of the present paper. The film (subtitled in Italian and English) obtained, among others, the sponsorship of Amnesty International. Recently it started its journey to International Film Festivals. 'Homeward Bound' has a duration of 97 min and narrate s the life of teenagers in an original combination of documentary and fiction, on the basis of the stories they narrated during the lab. Additional information concerning the questionnaire can be provided by contacting the corresponding author.

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