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**PECULIARITIES OF ETHNIC IDENTITY AMONG MOLDOVAN
ADOLESCENTS IN THE DIASPORA**

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ABSTRACT

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I. CONCEPTUAL RESEARCH LANDMARKS

The topicality and importance of the subject are nuanced by the ongoing social transformations as a result of the migration flows specific to the Republic of Moldova, which tend to include a very important community segment, that of children and adolescents, invisible until a few years ago. This is a huge social challenge, as it marks the end of the illusion of their temporary presence in other countries, while at the same time mirroring the current reality, which reflects both the image of the Republic of Moldova and the image of the host countries as benchmarks in their integration path.

In this context, the emergence of immigrant children on the public scene raises certain dilemmas related to the evolution of individual migration towards a family-type migration, which has its imprint on their social inclusion, school socialization and the establishment of relationships with their peers in the host country, as well as dilemmas related to the suffering caused by the choice of migration path by their parents and the consequences which feed their condition of suspension between two worlds: that of the country of origin and that of the country where they grow up.

The encounter between these worlds activates during adolescence reflections related not only to their ethnicity, but also to its influence on the construction of ethnic identity marked by many questioned components, being negotiated and reconstructed in the conditions of migration. „As this phenomenon of *hyphenated identities* becomes more pronounced, new dilemmas related to social transformation and cohesion emerge, forcing the redefinition of interpretations with reference to integration, especially in the adolescent phase, where immigrant adolescents are forced to define themselves and redefine their position in the world”¹.

In this way, the main interest of researchers related to the study of ethnic identity in diaspora adolescents is determined by the following aspects: the need to know the value of ethnic identity, understood as gratitude in defining who we are and who we want to become²; the importance of ethnic identity in a positive sense, as a resource for integration, and in a negative sense, as an obstacle to social inclusion³; understanding cultural ambivalence, which would give rise to identity dilemmas deriving from belonging to two cultures: the culture of origin and the majority culture; the implications of the social environment, family practices and adolescent culture in shaping and defining identity boundaries⁴; getting to the heart of the discrepancies between levels of acculturation among adolescents⁵; acceptance of ethnic awareness, which invites self-reflection and urges change, allowing to see the future without forgetting the past⁶.

Therefore, the topicality of the PhD thesis lies in the study of identity processes implemented by Moldovan adolescents in the process of social integration in Italy, through an ethno-psychological analysis of the dynamics which develop in their relationship with the Italian society.

The investigated aspects cover various dimensions of integration, namely: the relational aspect, which reflects on the influence of family, community and friends in defining the integration

¹ ANDALL J. *Italiani o stranieri? La seconda generazione in Italia*. In: SCIORTINO, G., COLOMBO, A. (coord. ed.). *Un'immigrazione normale*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2003. 281-307 p. ISBN 978-8815095459.

² RICUCCI, R. *Italiani a metà*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2010. 53 p. EAN 9788815137265.

³ PATTARIN, E. *Fuori dalla linearità delle cose semplici, migranti di prima e seconda generazione*. Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2007. 90 p. ISBN 9788846481474.

⁴ RIVERA, A. *Etnia-etnicità*. In: *L'imbroglione etnico in quattordici parole-chiave*. Bari: Dedalo, 2001. pp. 27-43. ISBN 8822062353.

⁵ AMBROSINI, M., MOLINA, S. *Seconde generazioni. Un'introduzione al futuro dell'immigrazione in Italia*. Torino: Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 2004. 1-22 p. ISBN 9788878601758.

⁶ ZANFRINI, L. *Sociologia della convivenza interetnica*. Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2004. 91 p. ISBN 9788842074014.

process; as well as the identity and cultural aspect, which analyzes the forms and use of socio-cultural references in everyday life, where we can observe latent forms of prejudice and discrimination.

This decision is linked to the need to examine the experience of immigrant adolescents in the Republic of Moldova during a period which is fundamental for the development of personal, social and ethnic identity. The focus on adolescents reflects a clear cognitive choice, as second generation studies have been gaining ground in recent years on the national and international scene.

The degree of study of the research topic. Researchers' interest in *ethnic identity* has undoubtedly led to different definitions of *ethnic identity*. Thus, Tajfel H.⁷ defines *ethnic identity* as a „product of self- and hetero-attribution, which is not absolute, but contextual and multiple”. In the opinion of the researchers Brubaker R. and Cooper F.⁸, *ethnic identity* is „something natural, essential, and found in all people, an emergence of biological, psychological, cultural and regional characteristics”. In his turn, Brass P.⁹ argues that „the construction of *ethnic identity* is the process of moving from the status of being a category to that of a community, being a consequence of elite action through the manipulation of selective cultural traits and an effort to bring congruence in a multitude of symbols”. The author focuses here on three basic vectors of the concept of *ethnic identity*: objective, being the cultural markers (language, dialect, distinctive clothing, food habits, religion); subjective (self-definitions of identity); and behavioral (specific ways of conduct and interaction).

The theoretical and methodological support of the research, was therefore related to the epistemological foundations for the study of ethnic identity in diaspora adolescents, consisting of: *theories* such as Social Identity Theory (Tajfel J., 1981); Psychosocial Development Theory (Erikson E., 1968); Identity Process Theory (Breakwell G., 2013); Ethnic Groups and Boundaries Theory (Barth F., 1981); Social Identity Theory (Stefanenko T. G., 1999); *models* such as the Identity Status Model (Marcia J., 1967); the Ethnic Identity Development Model (Phinney J., 1989); the Linear Model of Acculturation (Gordon M., 1964); the Two-Dimensional Model of Acculturation (Berry J., 1995); The cultural fusion model (Hermans H., Kempen H., 1998); the Interactive Acculturation Model (Bourhis R., 1997); The integration strategies model, linked to bilingualism (Portes A., Rumbaut R., 2001); *systematization of ideas* resulting from: a) *the anthropological approach to ethnic identity*, developed in the works of researchers such as Lévi-Strauss C., Graves T., Pintus A., Fabietti U., Aime M., Barth F., Geertz C., Warner W. L., Strole L., Clifford J., etc.; b) *the sociological approach to ethnic identity*, represented by: Calhoun C., Brubaker R., Queirolo Palmas L., Berger P., Sombart W., Park R. E., Simmel G., Waters M. C., Smith A., Tullio-Altan C., D'Anna L., Schultz M., Gordon M. M., Dubet F., Cesareo V., Colombo A., Barbagli M., Robertson I., Melossi D., Berti F., Boccagni P., Bourdieu P., Rumbaut R., Portes A., Ambrosini M., Hall S., Sayad A., Jenkins R., Jasper J. M., Leonini L., Rebughini P., Mantovani G., etc.; c) *the psychosociological approach to ethnic identity* as evidenced in the research of: *Western researchers* such as Valtolina G. G., Palmonari A., Ward C., Arends-Tóth J., Berry J. W., Hutnik N., Coleman H. L. K., La Fromboise T., Birman D., Devich-Navarro M., Sabatier C., Hermans H. J. M., Bourhis R., Bierbrauer G., Helms J. E., Ellemers N., Mancini T., Fenaroli P., Aboud F. E., Ancora A., Brown R., Marcia J., Phinney J., Rosenthal D., Breakwell G. M., Deaux K., Fruggeri L., Gozzoli C., Tajfel H., Turner J. C., Liebkind K., Halbwachs M., Ashmore R., etc.; *Romanian researchers* such as David D., Horvath, I., Scârnci F., Gavreliuc A., Sandu D., Anghel R. G., etc.; *Moldovan researchers* such as Caunenco I., Rusnac S., Gaşper L.,

⁷ TAJFEL, H. Quantitative judgement in social perception. In: *British Journal of Psychology*, 1959, vol. 50, p. 16-29. DOI 10.1111/J.2044-8295.1959.TB00677X.

⁸ BRUBAKER, R. COOPER, F. Beyond „identity” In: *Theory and Society*, 2000, nr. 29, p. 1-47. DOI 10.1023/a:1007068714468.

⁹ BRASS, P. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*. New York: SAGE, 1991, 323 p. ISBN 0803996942.

Horozova L., Caunova N., Ivanova N., Deleu E., Roșca T., etc.; *Russian researchers* such as Stefanenko T. G., Lebedeva N., Tatarko A. N., Soldatova G. U., Pavlenco V., Romanova O. L., Pocebut L. G., etc.

In this context, **the research problem** is centered on the contradiction between the social need to investigate the specific characteristics of the ethnic identity of migrant adolescents and the lack of studies on this phenomenon in social psychology, on the background of the difficulties encountered in explaining the development and transformation of the ethnic identity of adolescents in the process of adaptation to an intercultural context.

The aim of the research is to delineate the participatory factors in the constitution, development and maintenance of ethnic identity in adolescents, which would outline the specificity of its features in the context of migration, on the background of prevailing values, as a vector for identity choices.

The research objectives are:

(1) to analyze and systematize the theoretical and practical approaches regarding the issue of ethnic identity, emphasizing the condition of migration; (2) to establish an anticipatory plan of factors influencing the construction of ethnic identity in adolescents; (3) to identify the determinants and the relationship between them, which participate in finalizing the ethnic identity choice in adolescents; (4) to design the content of the semi-structured interview and to conduct *focus groups* in order to identify the adaptation and integration practices of Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy; (5) to elaborate recommendations for the development of positive ethnic identity in adolescents.

The research hypothesis. The ethnic identity of Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy differs from that of Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, considering the degree and content of ethnic identity components (cognitive, affective, axiological), as well as the sociocultural environment in which they live.

A brief overview of the research methodology and rationale for the research methods. The quantitative and qualitative research, of an exploratory and descriptive nature, focused on delimiting the factors influencing the identity dynamics of Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy. Therefore, the research has focused on the premise that the concept of value, taken from the perspective of desirability, explicit or implicit, distinctive of a group, which influences its actions and goals, is the guide of conduct of adolescents in the socialization process, through which they develop their core identity. Moreover, adolescents tend to represent themselves (in terms of interpersonal relationships, belief systems, etc.) in relation to their own values, which are shaped by their own identity and give it a logical validity.

In the same context, one of the guidelines, which justified the investigative approach, was based on the principle of value judgment, which allowed us to answer, by highlighting the defining characteristics which draw the image of the person representing the ethnic group (modern-day Moldovans) and examining whether the environment or living context can influence the connotations attached to them.

Similarly, as an indispensable part of ethnic identity research, we found it appropriate to assess the determinants of ethnic belonging through the parameters of ethnic identification, where we noted the influence of reference group status (majority/minority) not only in the sense of ethnic belonging, but also in the representation of the interrelationship between the majority and the ethnic minority.

We also considered it necessary to investigate the predominant identity components of ethnic identity (cognitive and affective), in the conglomerate of various identities of the adolescent personality, analyzed in the context of migration and vice versa, which allowed us to see the „color”

of „kinship” related to one's own ethnic group (affective or cognitive), especially in the multicultural society we live in today.

Based on the results derived from the focus groups, which constitute the argumentative core of the research and where the practices of adaptation, inclusion and integration of Moldovan adolescents in the diaspora were analyzed, all of this was explained by the relational dynamics of family, community, friendship, school, which adolescents experience in daily contact with the actors of the indigenous society, having an impact in determining ethnic identity (in relation to the Italian society and peers).

For this purpose, we applied: *theoretical methods* such as scientific documentation, comparative examination, generalization, classification, observation; *empirical methods of data collection* such as „*Level of correlation between „value” and „availability” in different spheres of life*” method developed by Fantalova E. B.; *the method of investigating ethnic stereotypes by semantic differential technique*, developed by Stefanenko T. G.; Romanova O. L. questionnaire, to measure ethnic identification parameters; Phinney J. questionnaire, to measure the degree of expressiveness of ethno-identity components; *focus group*.

IBM SPSS Statistics, version 23 was used for statistical analysis of the data. In addition to t-Student statistical comparison tests, we also performed qualitative and comparative analysis.

A review of the thesis chapters which concentrate on the investigations carried out and their importance in achieving the research's objectives and purposes. The PhD thesis is structured in the following sections: Introduction; Basic Chapters (3); Conclusions and Recommendations; Bibliography (303 titles) and Appendices (11). The volume of the basic text of the paper is 175 pages. The text of the work is illustrated by means of 24 tables and 36 figures.

In the **Introduction section**, the topicality and importance of the research topic is argued, emphasizing the scientific interest, driven by the need to know the value of ethnic identity in diaspora adolescents, in the context of migration, as a resource or obstacle in the process of integration in the host country. By outlining the different definitions of ethnic identity, a picture of the delimitations of the most important researchers dealing with ethnic identity issues was provided. In this regard, the theories and models developed in the works of anthropology, sociology, psychosociology researchers were presented, showing the framing of the topic in international, national, as well as in inter and transdisciplinary context, tracing the directions which define the research problem in social psychology. All this contributed to the establishment of the aim, the objectives of the investigation, the research hypothesis, with the justification of the selected methods. The compartments of the thesis are also briefly described here.

In **Chapter 1. Theoretical and Methodological Approaches to Ethnic Identity**, the theoretical and conceptual scientific framework and the main research contributions on the particularities of ethnic identity in the context of migration are presented. From the perspective of primordialism and social constructionism, the approaches to the key concept are explained. Both the ethnic identity problem in diaspora adolescents and the concept of the diaspora (definition, stages of construction, types) are addressed in this approach, which also highlights the classifications of generations formed by migration. Based on the context of the research, the developmental needs characteristic of adolescence were outlined, with an emphasis on *the task of identity construction*, through the typical *needs* of this age, intertwined with the condition of the „stranger” which adolescents experience in the context of migration. In the same vein, taking into account the complexity of the particularities of ethnic identity, the acculturation processes involved in the process of finalizing the identity choice were highlighted, along with the related integration strategies (exclusion, assimilation, provisionalism, multiculturalism).

In **Chapter 2. Investigating the particularities of ethnic identity in adolescents** the research design is evoked, through the model of conceptualization of variables, which contribute to the development of ethnic identity in Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy and Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova: the connection with the value sphere, specific to adolescence, which signifies that guide of conduct in identity choices; ethnic stereotypes related to the image of the person representing the group of belonging; the structure of ethnic identity (cognitive and affective component); the sense of belonging to one's own ethnic group and the determinants (importance of ethnic identity, interrelation between majority and minority). In the same context, the research stages, the purpose, the objectives, the methods used, the research sample, the research hypothesis and the assumptions to be explored are described. The presentation of the results of the investigation is elaborated on three dimensions: quantitative, quantitative-comparative and qualitative.

In **Chapter 3. Implications of psychosocial factors in the formation and development of ethnic identity in Moldovan adolescents in the diaspora**, there are the descriptive and synthetic results of the dimensions derived from the *focus groups* organized in the context of the research: family, as a basic determinant in shaping ethnic identity; community, as a relationship and resource; language - as an ethnic marker; peer group - an indispensable element in defining identity; school, as a path of adaptation and integration in the context of the host country; ethnic identity and culture; ethnic identity and cyberspace.

General conclusions and recommendations summarize the main theoretical and methodological results of the research, correlated with the research theme, objectives, aims and hypotheses. It contains the concrete arguments resulting from the analysis of the scientific problem solved in this work, the theoretical and practical value of the investigation, the conceptual and methodological limits of the research based on the obtained results, the recommendations regarding the dissemination of the results in the context of university education and psychological intervention, as well as possible future directions related to the topic.

II. DOCTORAL THESIS CONTENT

Chapter 1 (Theoretical and Methodological Approaches to Ethnic Identity) argues the choice of the research topic. Accordingly, the large body of literature provides a very clear picture of the investigative approaches in the field of ethnopsychology towards a detailed understanding of the construct of ethnic identity. In defining the dimensions which this concept encompasses, it is important to distinguish between the *objective component*, in the sense of an identity which is acquired at birth and cannot be changed, and the *subjective component*, which is determined by the personal meaning that individuals attribute to their *ethnicity*. In the first case, the concept of ethnicity is invoked, while in the second it refers to the concept of *ethnic identity*.

If sociological literature tends to take these concepts as synonyms, the psychological and psychosocial perspective emphasizes the importance of distinguishing these notions, anchored in identity processes, which relate to the structural components of groups¹⁰. The concept of *ethnicity* is linked to indicators such as geographical origin, language spoken, race, physical features, customs, history and refers to a group of people, who recognize themselves on the basis of biological, cultural and/or religious characteristics. Being considered a „false consciousness”, the anthropologist Pintus A.¹¹ sees ethnicity as an *irrational* attachment to his own origin, to his own territory and to his own

¹⁰ LIEBKIND, K. Ethnic identity - Challenging the boundaries of social psychology. In: BREAKWELL, G. M. (coord. ed.). *The social psychology of identity and the self-concept*. London: Surrey University, 1992, p. 147-186. ISBN 0121286851.

¹¹ PINTUS, A. *Psicologia sociale e multiculturalità*. Roma: Carocci, 2008. 68 p. ISBN 9788843047536.

religion. In this context, a more articulated definition of ethnicity was proposed by Smith A.¹² and subsequently taken up by the Italian researcher Tullio-Altan C.¹³. Smith A.¹⁴ sees ethnicity as a „mythical-symbolic complex”, based on shared memories which take the form of myth. In the same sense, Tullio-Altan C.¹⁵ distinguishes here several attributes which he considers necessary for the realization of a self-conscious ethnic community: a collective name, the myth of a common origin, memories and characteristic elements of one and the same culture, the association with a specific *national* territory and the feeling of solidarity among the members of the community. Later, the author¹⁶ proposes a definition of *ethnicity*, understood as a „symbolic complex, which is experienced by different peoples, as a constitutive element of their identity and as a principle of social aggregation”, identifying the components of this complex in the transfiguration of symbols and values concerning essential aspects of reality. The author divides *ethnicity* into five different components, referring to: the set of values, religious and civil norms, on the basis of which the social character of the group is constructed and regulated (*ethos*), „being produced by individuals and subsequently by the form of culture”; the story in the form of the myth about the origin of the ethnic group (*epos*); the structure of language through which social communication takes place (*logos*); the norms regulating the relations of descendants, on which families, lineages and all kinship relations are based (*genos*) and the localization aspects of an ethnic group on a territory (*topos*).

The concept of *ethnic identity*, on the other hand, being linked to *the subjective component*, implies a process through which the individual acquires the awareness of being a member of a certain group, together with the value and the affective meaning attributed to belonging¹⁷. However, in this case, we are not talking about a process of imperturbable adherence, but about an evolutionary dynamic, which requires a *pre-considered* psychological *positioning*. Ethnic identity is thus considered as: a subjective reality; being built on the importance attributed to one's own ethnic belonging; not completely overlapping with culture, language and territory; being guided by the idea that all human groups are the result of interaction processes between *each other*; being the result of a process of negotiation between the individual and social groups; involving a *rational* attachment to one's own origins (*ethnic identification*). Ethnic identity can therefore be said to be based on the (*subjective*) belief to commit to and share the belief systems, values, traditions and customs of a particular group or community, from which the idea and representation of self derives¹⁸.

Of particular interest is the issue of the ethnic identity of diaspora adolescents. In this regard, the multifaceted phenomenon of immigrant children is a recent reality for Italy and it is characterized by a profound heterogeneity, both in terms of context and ethnicity, accumulating over time numerous ambiguities due to the difficulty of defining this category. Referring to this fact, the anthropologists Warner W. and Stroala L.¹⁹ propose a complex classification of the generations formed as a result of migration: *the Ethnic Generations Classification Scale*, where immigrants constitute the *P Generation*

¹² SMITH, A.D. *National Identity*. Londra: Penguin Books. 1991. 16 p. ISBN 0140125655.

¹³ TULLIO ALTAN, C. *Antropologia. Storia e problemi*. Milano: Feltrinelli, 1996. 231 p. EAN 9788807100086.

¹⁴ SMITH, A.D., *Op. Cit.*

¹⁵ TULLIO ALTAN, C. *Op. Cit.*

¹⁶ *Ibidem*

¹⁷ ROȘCA, T. Componente etnoidentitare. Studiu cross-cultural comparativ. În: *Materialele Conferinței Științifice Internaționale: Preocupări contemporane ale Științelor Socioumane, Ediția a XIII-a*. Chișinău, 1-2 decembrie, 2022, p. 135-144. ISBN 978-9975-165-61-7.

¹⁸ PHINNEY, J.S. Stages of Ethnic Identity Development in Minority Group Adolescents. In: *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 1989, nr. 9, p. 34-49. DOI 10.1177/0272431689091004.

¹⁹ WARNER, W.L., STROLA L. *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups*. Greenwood: Praeger, 1976. 261 p. ISBN 0837185025.

(Parental Generation), making a clear distinction between adult immigrants (*P1*) and children arrived in the host country up to the age of 18 (*P2*), which is *the bridge generation* between adult immigrants and children born in the host country. Thus, the generations defined as *P1* are considered by some communities as *P2 immigrants* (half immigrant).

Later, the psychosociologist Rumbaut R.²⁰, being inspired by the classification of researchers Warner W. and Strola L., developed a gradual classification, which differentiates between the first generation of migrants, who arrived in the destination country as adults, and those who emigrated as children or adolescents. Thus, *1.5 Generation (1.5 G)*, is represented by school-age children (6-12 years old), who started their scholar path in the country of origin and then were brought to the host country; *1.25 Generation (1.25 G)*, is made up of children who emigrated when they were 13-17 years old, and *1.75 Generation (1.75 G)* is composed of children who emigrated at the pre-school age (0-5 years old).

Both classifications: *P1*, *P2* and the decimal delimitation *1.5 G*, *1.25 G*, *1.75 G*, lead to the acceptance of *fractional generations or involuntary immigrants*, their impact being considerable in the formation of the *new diaspora*, that of children, a game of words, which emphasizes their dispersion in a new world, „in a diaspora era”²¹.

The term *diaspora* originates from the Greek word *diaspeirō* and it is interpreted as *dispersion, spreading or scattering*, which over time, as a phenomenon, has acquired significantly larger meanings²². A few decades ago, the experience of the Jewish exodus had functioned as an „archetype” of diaspora, expressed in a form of forced and violent migration, characterized by persecution and a sense of loss²³. But with the exponential growth of the forms of diaspora recognized in the contemporary world, the etymological meaning of the term has been broadened and no longer focuses only on the experience of loss²⁴. Therefore, if the diaspora was initially approached as „migrants from abroad, united by a sense of national identity”, nowadays, *diaspora has an identity*, and the feeling of belonging to diaspora became an important identifying factor, where the „ethnic” component relates to the value system, history, culture and creative capacities of a nation²⁵.

According to Bauböck R.²⁶ *diaspora designates an ethnic community located outside the border of the country of origin, being defined as a congregation within the larger community, whose representatives have the same origins and memories, or share the same historical and cultural background, being identified with the transnational community*.

In the same framework, diaspora has at least three meanings within different scientific disciplines: *diaspora as a social form*, which emphasizes the triadic relationship between geographically dispersed, but self-identified and collectively identifiable ethnic groups, the territorial

²⁰ RUMBAUT, R. G. Paradoxes (And Orthodoxies) of Assimilation In: *Sociological Perspectives*. New York: SAGE. 1997, nr. 3, vol. 40. p. 483-51. DOI 10.2307/1389453.

²¹ AMBROSINI, M. *Sociologia delle migrazioni*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2011. 176-180 p. ISBN 9788823817500.

²² ROLLER, M. Conceptualizarea termenului și fenomenului diasporei. În: *Moldoscopie*, 2012, nr. 1(56), p. 10-19. ISSN 1812-2566/ISSNe 2587-4063.

²³ KENNY, K., *Op. Cit.* KENNY, K. *Diaspora: a very short introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2013. 22 p. ISBN 978-0-19-985858-3.

²⁴ ROȘCA, T., ROȘCA, N. Diaspora vs transnational: abordări ale migrației între online și offline. În: *Materialele Conferinței Științifice Internaționale: Preocupări contemporane ale științelor socioumane. Ediția a 14-a*. Chișinău, 7-8 decembrie., 2023, vol. 1, p. 144-159. ISBN 978-9975-165-61-7.

²⁵ GABACIA, D. *Emigrati. Le diaspore degli italiani dal Medioevo a oggi*. Torino: Einaudi Editore, 2003. 19 p. ISBN 9788806163846.

²⁶ BAUBÖCK, R. *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010. 300 p. ISBN 9789089642387.

states where the groups reside and the context of origin; *diaspora as a type of consciousness*, which is generated between transnational communities; *diaspora as a mode of cultural production*, which is directly related to the emergence of the phenomenon of globalization, as a flow of cultural objects, images and meanings, resulting from the process of creolization with multiple influences, negotiations and constant transformations²⁷. According to Safran W.²⁸, we can define a wave of migration as a diaspora if it meets the following characteristics: whether the members of the diaspora or their ancestors have been moved away from their original base towards two or more „peripheral” or foreign territories; *whether they maintain a vision, a myth, a collective memory about their homeland, its history and geographical settlement (fundamental characteristic)*; whether they claim that they are not fully accepted by the host society and feel partially alienated or isolated from it; whether they consider the homeland of their ancestors as a true home and the place to which they or their ancestors would like to return; whether they feel collectively responsible for the prosperity and security of their homeland; whether they continue to engage personally or on behalf of others with their homeland, with an ethnic and community consciousness deeply defined by the existence of this relationship.

Thus, *the universal determinants of the diaspora* are:

a) a diaspora is created as a result of migration, being a decided, voluntary process (the category of diaspora sometimes also includes groups displaced as a result of expulsion for political reasons, famine, war, calamities or deportations); b) it always has its own country which makes it unique; c) it maintains constant and coherent relations with the historical homeland, often defending its interests with solidarity in the country of residence; d) it is scattered, densely populating certain areas; e) it has a specific type of identity, based on its differences from the population of the „host” state and the realization of a common future with it²⁹; f) it shows a strong ethnic self-identification³⁰. Belonging to diaspora in these terms means having a clear awareness, a strong emotional bond which is built around the idea of being able to share a common heritage of cultural and symbolic origins, while being part of a diaspora group is something which involves present and past generations, language competence, ethnic relations and ethnic cultural consumption³¹.

In the case of the Republic of Moldova, the process of diaspora formation and consolidation is a topical issue, both scientifically and politically, which requires immediate attention³².

As far as the Moldovan diaspora is involved, we can say, according to Armstrong J.'s conception³³, that the Moldovan diaspora can be classified as a developing diaspora. In this regard, the Moldovan political scientist Moșneaga V.³⁴ notes that diaspora „begins to turn into *an independent*

²⁷ ROȘCA, T., ROȘCA, N. Diaspora vs transnational: abordări ale migrației între online și offline. În: *Materialele Conferinței Științifice Internaționale: Preocupări contemporane ale științelor socioumane. Ediția a 14-a*. Chișinău, 7-8 decembrie., 2023, vol. 1, p. 144-159. ISBN 978-9975-165-61-7.

²⁸ SAFRAN, W., *Op. Cit.* SAFRAN, W. Diaspora in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return. In: *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, University of Toronto Press, 1991, nr.1(1), p. 83-99. ISSN 1911-1568.

²⁹ COHEN, R. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997. 8 p. ISBN 9780203928943.

³⁰ ЛЕБЕДЕВА, Н. М. Этническая идентичность и благополучие русских на постсоветском пространстве: роль диаспоры. В: *Культурно-историческая психология*, 2021, н. 4, том 17, с. 16-24. DOI: 10.17759/chp.2021170402.

³¹ ROȘCA, T., ROȘCA, N., *Op. Cit.*

³² MORARU, V., RUSNAC, G., DELEU, E. Itinerarul definirii unui concept: generații secunde de migrații. În: *Moldoscopie*, 2019, nr. 4(87), p. 65-75. ISSN 1812-2566.

³³ ARMSTRONG, J.A. Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas. In: *The American Political Science Review*, 1976, nr. 2(70), p. 393-408. DOI 10.2307/1959646.

³⁴ MOȘNEAGA, V., RUSU, R. Formarea diasporei moldovenești peste hotare: esența și specificul. În: *Moldoscopie*, 2007, nr. 1, p. 91-103. ISSN 1812-2566.

actor in migration policy, demanding more attention and institutionalization of its role in the life of the country”.

Considering the complexity of the process of ethnic identity formation in diaspora adolescents, a special significance is the acculturation process involved in this difficult itinerary. The term „acculturation” was originally used by the anthropologists Levi-Strauss C.³⁵ and Liebkind K.³⁶ to describe the process of two-way change which occurs between two ethnocultural groups which come into direct and prolonged contact. Graves T.³⁷ proposes at this point the concept of *psychological acculturation*, to indicate the changes and perceptions of the individual who is part of a group involved in a process of acculturation. This means that the collective factors which arise from a process of acculturation are different and cover the aspects or characteristics typical of the society of origin as well as those typical of the host society. In this respect, an important role is played by ethnographic characteristics (language, religion, values), the political situation existing at the time of emigration (presence of conflicts, civil wars or ongoing repression), the economic conditions of the country of origin (poverty, unequal distribution of resources) and demographic factors (overpopulation, population growth), while in the case of the host society, the focus is on the policy and attitudes towards immigration and ethnic groups, the type of migration and the degree of social support which the acculturation group can count on in the host context.

Based on the literature review, the following **research problem** was formulated, which focuses on the contradiction between the social need to investigate the specific characteristics of the ethnic identity of migrant adolescents and the lack of studies on this phenomenon in social psychology, on the background of the difficulties encountered in explaining the development and transformation of the ethnic identity of adolescents in the process of adaptation to an intercultural context. The essence of the research consists in finding the answer to the following questions: *How does the ethnic identity of migrant adolescents change in the process of their adaptation to the intercultural space? What values characterize Moldovan adolescents today and what is their impact on their identity choices in different socio-cultural contexts? Taking into account the ethnic identity structure, what are the predominant identity components? What are the determinants influencing the process of ethnic identity formation in Moldovan adolescents?*. These results can serve as a basis for practical support activities for diaspora adolescents, by including them in various cultural and educational programs in order to develop an attachment and positive attitudes towards their country of origin

In order to solve the given problem, the following **research directions** have been mapped out: a) to determine the peculiarities of ethnic identity through the factors which contribute to its formation and development in Moldovan adolescents; b) to conduct focus groups in order to capture the characteristics of the (migration) context in which the process of formation and development of ethnic identity in adolescents takes place.

As described above, **the aim of the research** was focused on recognizing the factors involved in the constitution, development and maintenance of ethnic identity in adolescents, which would shape the distinctiveness of its features in the context of migration, on the background of prevailing values, as a vector for identity choices.

Chapter 2 (Investigating the particularities of ethnic identity in adolescents) represents the investigative approach we have adopted, with a focus on the key factors involved in the itinerary

³⁵ LÉVI-STRAUSS, C. *Antropologia strutturale*. Milano: Il Saggiatore, 2009. 403 p. ISBN 8856501066.

³⁶ LIEBKIND, K. *Acculturation*. In: BROWN, R., GAERTNER, S. (coord. ed.). *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Intergroup Processes*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001, p. 386-406. ISBN 0-631-21062-8.

³⁷ GRAVES, T. *Psychological Acculturation in a Tri-Ethnic Community*. In: *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 1967, nr. 4, p. 337-350. ISSN 00384801.

of identity construction in adolescents. For this purpose, practical, quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to explore: the dimensions of value spheres (“Level of correlation between *value* and *availability* in different spheres of life” method developed by Fantalova E. B.³⁸), the parameters of ethnic identity (Romanova O. L. questionnaire³⁹), the ethnic stereotypes which draw the image of the person representing the ethnic group of adolescents in the diaspora (analyzing ethnic stereotypes using the *semantic differential technique*, developed by Stefanenko T. G.⁴⁰) and the structure of ethnic identity (Phinney J. questionnaire⁴¹).

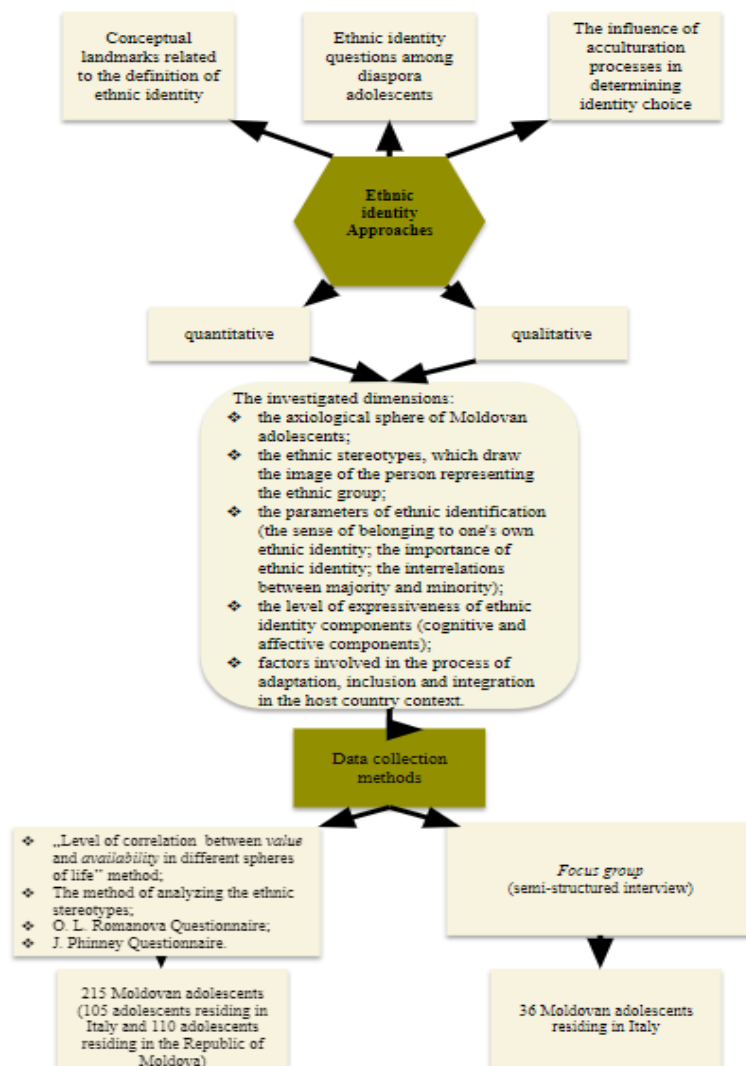


Fig. 1. The research design (elaborated by the author)

³⁸ ФАНТАЛОВА, Е.Б. *Диагностика и психотерапия внутреннего конфликта*. Москва: Бахрах-М, 2001, 128 с. ISBN 5-89570-016-0.

³⁹ РОМАНОВА, О.Л. *Развитие этнической идентичности у детей и подростков*: Автореф. дис. канд. психол. наук. Москва, 1994, 25 с.

⁴⁰ СТЕФАНЕНКО, Т.Г. *Социальная психология этнической идентичности*. Диссертация на соискание учёной степени доктора психологических наук. Москва: Московский Государственный Университет имени М.В. Ломоносова, 1999, 48 с.

⁴¹ ТАТАРКО, А.Н., ЛЕБЕДЕВА, Н.М. *Методы этнической и кросскультурной психологии*. Москва: НИУ ВШЭ, 2011, 132 с. ISBN 978-5-7598-0867-1.

The aim of the research. The investigation had the aim to study the ethnic identity of Moldovan adolescents in Italian and Moldovan socio-cultural environments.

The practical intervention included 4 stages: (1) *the investigation planning stage*: a) theoretical documentation, by consulting specialized literature; b) determining the methods of data collection, specifying the recruitment process of adolescents participating in the research; (2) *the stage of collecting raw data* from Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy (105) and from Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova (110); validation of the protocols with answers; realization of the database; conducting focus groups; (3) the quantitative and qualitative stage of *processing the data collected from both groups of adolescents*; (4) *the stage of analyzing and interpreting the results*, in relation to the aim and objectives of the practical intervention, correlated with the socio-cultural context from which the adolescents come from.

The research objectives were: (a) to establish an integrative plan/model of the factors which influence the construction of ethnic identity in adolescents; (b) to identify the spheres of life which have a value, as well as an impact on the process of formation and development of ethnic identity in adolescents; (c) to determine the level of ethnic identification parameters in adolescents; (d) to delineate the predominant components of ethnic identity structure in adolescents; (e) to identify the ethnic stereotypes which draw the image of the person representing the ethnic group of Moldovan adolescents.

The working hypotheses: (1) The value sphere of Moldovan adolescents reflects a hierarchical structure, which incorporates both common and different values, where the hierarchical place of values is determined by the impact of the socio-cultural context and social status (minority group); (2) Self-stereotypes of Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy differ from the self-stereotypes of Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova. In the case of Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy, they are an important resource for adaptation to the socio-cultural environment of the host country; (3) The sense of ethnic belonging is determined by the status (majority or minority) and the socio-cultural context of living conditions; (4) The affective component of ethnic identity in Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy is more pronounced than that of Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, in terms of experiencing the feeling of belonging to their own ethnic group and the level of adaptation to the majority group culture; (5) Gender has a significant influence in shaping the ethnic identity of Moldovan adolescents.

Composition and description of the research sample

According to the factors which participate in the process of ethnic identity construction, several variables-characteristics of Moldovan adolescents were taken into account: age, residence according to place of living, migration experience (in the case of Moldovan adolescents from the diaspora), non-migration experience (in the case of Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova), current status, gender, citizenship. The survey involved 215 adolescents. The first research group was represented by 105 Moldovan adolescents (62 boys and 43 girls), having Moldovan citizenship, legally residing in Italy, living in the regions of Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna, Liguria and Veneto; with school status, enrolled in 14 educational institutions; with the average age of 16.2 years; average time of stay on the territory of the Italian Republic - 7.4 years; The second research group was represented by 110 Moldovan adolescents (43 boys and 67 girls), residing legally in the Republic of Moldova; with school status, enrolled in 4 educational institutions: 2 - in Chisinau and 2 - in Floresti; with an average age of 15.8 years.

The results of the research

Based on the conviction that the axiological dimension influences the identity choices of individuals, special attention was paid to the discovery of adolescent values, dictated by the specific

characteristics of this age, as a fundamental moment in the fortification of their identity and their axiological baggage. Thus, after applying the „Level of correlation between value and availability in different spheres of life” method, developed by Fantalova E. B., the following data were obtained:

a) the hierarchy of values of Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova and Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy contains different axiological structures. *Freedom as independence in actions* represents the privileged sphere of life for both adolescents in the Republic of Moldova and adolescents from the diaspora, being one of the most important particularities, characteristic of this age period, regardless of the socio-cultural background. At the same time, if Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova *prioritize health and happy family life*, then the priority for immigrant adolescents in Italy is: *interesting jobs* and *material wealth*. According to the data derived from the comparison analysis (Table 2.1), there are significant differences between the Moldovan adolescents living in the Republic of Moldova and Moldovan adolescents living in Italy regarding the assessment of values in the following spheres: health, a happy family life and self-confidence (lack of doubts) ($p < 0.001$), where the results obtained by Moldovan adolescents living in the Republic of Moldova are statistically significantly higher than those obtained by Moldovan adolescents living in Italy. We also notice significant differences in the following spheres: *interesting jobs*, *love*, *material wealth*, *presence of good friends*, *knowledge* ($p < 0.001$). In the case of these spheres, Moldovan adolescents in Italy demonstrate higher values than Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova. Comparing (Table 2.2) the results of the comparative analysis (Table 2.2) concerning the appreciation of values in Moldovan adolescents in Italy according to gender, we note that for girls, the values such as: *presence of good friends* ($p < 0.001$), *love* ($p < 0.002$), *self-confidence (lack of doubts)* ($p < 0.012$) and *knowledge* ($p < 0.001$) are statistically more significant than for boys. Similarly, we find that Moldavian boys, immigrants in Italy, value *health* ($p < 0.002$), *happy family life* ($p < 0.015$), and *creativity* ($p < 0.016$) more than girls^{42,43}. Analyzing the differences by gender, regarding the appreciation of values in the case of adolescent participants in the Republic of Moldova, we observe from Table 2.3 that for boys, values such as *presence of good friends* ($p < 0.001$), *happy family life* ($p < 0.002$), *an active lifestyle* ($p < 0.001$) are more significant and *interesting jobs* and *knowledge* ($p < 0.001$) are less significant, compared to girls.

b) the spheres of life which show little interest for both Moldovan and diaspora adolescents are: *beauty of nature and art*, *an active lifestyle* and *creativity*.

c) the spheres of life which have a high level of availability for a very small number of adolescents in the Republic of Moldova are *an active lifestyle*, *health* and *happy family life*, the others being classified as completely unavailable. The same thing was noted in the case of adolescents in Italy, who chose, in very small numbers, *beauty of nature and art*, *love* and *interesting jobs* as spheres they can enjoy without problems;

d) the spheres of life which are perceived as less available are different among Moldovan and immigrant adolescents. In this respect, adolescents in the Republic of Moldova consider that *material wealth* is the least accessible sphere of life, while for immigrant adolescents, *happy family life* is the sphere they consider to be the least accessible. This suggests that the immigrant family faces difficulties, which leave their mark on the *happy family* of Moldovan adolescents, influencing their „self-confidence” and „presence of good friends”, both connected to family values;

⁴² КАУНЕНКО, И., РОШКА, Т. Ценности старших школьников молдаван в Италии и Республике Молдова: кросс-культурный аспект. În: *EcoSoEn*, 2023, nr. 1, p. 65-73. ISSN 2587-344X.

⁴³ КАУНЕНКО, И., РОШКА, Т. Ценностная сфера старших школьников и студенческой молодёжи в транзитивном обществе. În: *Materialele Conferinței: Știință, educație, cultură*. Comrat, 13 februarie, 2023, p. 611-614. ISBN 978-9975-83-254-0; 978-9975-83-256-4.

e) the discrepancy between desirability and subjective availability of life spheres shows us *that beauty of nature and art* is a value of low importance for both adolescents in the Republic of Moldova and Italy, which tells us that this life sphere is perceived as useless for adolescents. At the same time, an essential value for both groups is *freedom as independence of action*, being placed in the proximal zone of accessibility. The most significant spheres of life, but difficult to achieve for adolescents in Italy, are *interesting jobs, material wealth and knowledge*, while for adolescents in Moldova it is *health*. Similarly, for both groups of adolescents, the spheres of life which are equally significant but hard to achieve are *love, self-confidence (lack of doubts), freedom as independence in actions, happy family life and creation*. The sphere of life which is expressed the most harmoniously in both groups of adolescents is *an active lifestyle*. In the case of adolescents in Italy, the sphere of life which is the most harmoniously represented is *health*. This means that for adolescents in both groups, finding a harmonious match between what they want and what is available is still a difficult journey. Based on the comparisons made (Table 2.6) that examined the differences in the desirability and availability of life spheres for these adolescents, we observed that *beauty of nature and art* is a accessible but unimportant sphere for both groups of adolescents ($p < 0,05$). The most significant areas which are difficult to reach for Moldovan adolescents in Italy are: *interesting jobs, material wealth and knowledge* ($p < 0,001$), while for Moldovan adolescents it is only *health* ($p < 0,001$). Equally, for both groups of adolescents, the spheres that are equally significant, but hard to attain, are: *love, self-confidence (lack of doubts), a happy family life and creation*. The area in which both groups of adolescents feel the presence of harmony is *an active lifestyle* ($p < 0.036$). In the case of Moldovan adolescents in Italy, *health* ($p < 0.001$) is the domain where they have the feeling that there is a certain balance⁴⁴. In this way, both groups of adolescents are still struggling to find a balance between what they desire and what is currently available in their lives. Analyzing the discrepancies regarding the desirability and availability of life spheres according to gender for Moldovan adolescents in Italy (Table 2.7), we notice that boys and girls in the diaspora show an identical discrepancy between the attractiveness of the sphere and the difficulty in reaching it (meaning it is significant but hard to achieve) in terms of *an active lifestyle, interesting jobs, love, material wealth and freedom as independence in actions*. For both boys and girls, *an active lifestyle* evokes a sense of balance. In the case of girls, the sphere which corresponds to harmony is *creation* ($p < 0.020$). At the same time, the value of the *beauty of nature and art* ($p < 0.034$) - for both girls and boys, is an accessible, but not very attractive sphere. Compared to boys, the discrepancy between the sphere that is hardly accessible and its availability in relation to *knowledge and presence of good friends* ($p < 0.001$) is more pronounced for girls ($p < 0.001$). Similarly, according to the results received from the comparisons on the discrepancies between the desirability and availability of life spheres according to gender, we observe from Table 2.8 that adolescent boys in the Republic of Moldova perceive significant discrepancies in the spheres: *an active lifestyle* ($p < 0.037$) and the *presence of good friends* ($p < 0.001$), while girls in the Republic of Moldova perceive significantly higher discrepancies only for the *interesting jobs* area ($p < 0.001$). For the boys in the Republic of Moldova, the domains which are perceived to be in harmony with what they want and what is accessible are: *interesting jobs* ($p < 0.001$) and *knowledge* ($p < 0.044$), while for the girls in the Republic of Moldova, it is: *an active lifestyle* ($p < 0.037$). The

⁴⁴ ROȘCA, T. Axiological availability and desirability. Comparative study between moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy and moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova. In: *Studia Universitatis Moldaviae*, 2024, nr. 9 (169), p. 289-299. ISSN 1857-2103; ISSN 2345-1025.

accessibility of the value of *beauty of nature and art and creation* is equally portrayed to boys and girls, but it is perceived as unnecessary⁴⁵.

f) the presence of internal conflict among Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova and Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy, related to some spheres of life, revealed the fact that the number of adolescents who experience internal conflict, both in the Republic of Moldova and in Italy, is quite high. In this respect, it is remarkable that the spheres of life of high importance for both groups of young people are those that generate anxiety and psychological distress. The areas of internal conflict (including acute psychological concerns) among adolescents in the Republic of Moldova are related to the following life spheres: *freedom as independence in actions* - 87%, *happy family life* - 69.1%, *health* - 59.1% and *material wealth* - 25.5%. The internal conflict areas for Moldovan adolescents, immigrants in Italy, correlate with the following life spheres: *interesting jobs* - 83.8%, *material wealth* - 78.1%, *freedom as independence in actions* - 59%, *happy family life* - 59%, *knowledge* - 52.4%, *presence of good friends* - 49.5. It can be observed that Moldovan adolescents, immigrants in Italy, show more areas of internal conflicts than Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova.

An important difference in the structure of the internal conflict between Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova and those in Italy becomes evident here: if Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova are worried about building a happy family, which requires health and strength, which can be the basis of freedom of action, then in the case of Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy, the interesting jobs and material wealth will give them freedom of action. Therefore, we can see, on the background of the internal conflicts of both groups of Moldovan adolescents, *how the value spheres reflect the socio-cultural context in which the socialization, formation and transformation of their ethnic identity takes place;*

g) the presence of the feeling of inner emptiness was identified in the case of the value sphere *beauty of nature and art* in both groups of Moldovan adolescents.

After applying the method of analyzing the ethnic stereotypes through *the semantic differential technique*, developed by Stefanenko T. G., the following results were revealed: Moldovan adolescents in Italy have a more positive image of the person representing their ethnic group, in terms of *professional qualities*. The self-stereotype which is nuanced here includes the following professional qualities: *determination, organization, good household management* and *predisposition to lead*. However, being rather critical, they also point out some less positive traits such as *lack of initiative and rigidity*, which are part of the overall Moldovan image, even if they show a low level of expressivity. In the case of adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, the image of the person representing the ethnic group is also positive, although in terms of qualities, they are inferior to their peers in Italy. Therefore, in their perception, the image of the person representing their ethnic group is dominated by the following two qualities: *flexibility* and *spirit of initiative*. Based on the comparison of the professional qualities of Moldovan people from the point of view of Moldovan adolescents in Italy and those in the Republic of Moldova, the stereotype of the professional qualities of the person representing their ethnic group shows both similarities and differences. Even though the quality of *good household management* is revealed in the case of both groups, *when referring to Moldovan adolescents in Italy, good household management reflects that resource of integration in a foreign cultural environment, by maintaining the social image, which is a fundamental support point in the process of their integration in the host country.* According to the analyzed variables, where we noticed

⁴⁵ ROȘCA, T. Axiological availability and desirability. Comparative study between moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy and moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova. In: *Studia Universitatis Moldaviae*, 2024, nr. 9 (169), p. 289-299. ISSN 1857-2103; ISSN 2345-1025.

the stereotyped perception of adolescents, we observe that Moldovan adolescents in Italy, compared to those in the Republic of Moldova, consider Moldovans to be more *determined* ($t=-3,108$, $p<0,001$), more *organized* ($t=-11,991$, $p<0,001$) and more *predisposed to lead* ($t=-5,652$, $p<0,001$). In other words, in the perception of Moldovan adolescents in Italy, the image of what Moldovans are like today is more positive compared to that of Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova. Of course, this can be partly justified by the phenomenon of idealization of the representative of one's own ethnic group, but also by the need to develop these qualities in order to adapt as effectively as possible to the new conditions of the host country, on the background of migration⁴⁶. Thus, when we refer to professional qualities, we note that Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy present a rather positive image of the representative of their ethnic group, and their evaluation is defined by *determination*, *organization*, *good household management* and *predisposition to lead*. However, we note that *diligence* ($t=-6.867$, $p<0.001$), is also a quality showing favorable trends, even if it is not very evident. At the same time, in the stereotypical perception of Moldovan adolescents in Italy, Moldovan is defined as *rigid* ($t= 14.396$, $p<0.001$) and with *less spirit of initiative* ($t=10.619$, $p<0.001$). Although these traits are less frequently portrayed, they still predominate over qualities such as *spirit of initiative* and *flexibility*. Concerning the *passivity-activism dyad* ($t=-2.990$, $p=0.003$) (Table 2.11), we observe that the adolescents had some difficulty in determining the intensity of one of these traits (activism being more pronounced in the case of Moldovan adolescents in Italy), probably due to their minority position in the host country, fueled by the need for psychological adaptation to a different cultural environment, intrinsically comparing themselves with the dominant group (Italian adolescents). On the whole, therefore, we observe that *the stereotyped image of Moldovans is quite generous in positive qualities, which also decorates their image positively, which in our opinion is an important basis for self-identification in a foreign cultural space, by maintaining social and personal identity*.

At the same time, Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova have a less positive image of the typical representative of their ethnic group, being quite critical in this respect. Thus, in their opinion (Table 2.11), the most emphasized qualities of Moldovans are: *flexibility* and *good household management*. In the same context, according to them, the Moldovan is *determined*, with *spirit of initiative* and *predisposed to lead*, qualities with a low level of nuance, compared to adolescents in Italy, probably because of the need to be confirmed by the socio-cultural environment in which adolescents live day by day.

Comparisons between the ethnic self-stereotypes generated by Moldovan adolescents in Italy and Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova revealed that both groups have a positive image of Moldovans. However, the self-stereotype in the case of Moldovan adolescents in Italy is much clearer with reference to the qualities: *determination*, *organization*, *good household management* and *predisposition to lead*, which are more evident ($p<0.001$) than in the case of adolescents in the Republic of Moldova. In the same context, explicit differences were identified between the self-stereotypes of adolescents of both groups in the case of the dyad: *organization - disorganization*, where adolescents in the Republic of Moldova have difficulty in choosing the degree of intensity of the trait: *organization*. But, with reference to the quality of *good household management*, we see that both groups expressed themselves identically, as a significant quality for Moldovans, this leading us to assume that *good household management* is the defining, basic quality in portraying the representative of their ethnic group.

⁴⁶ ROȘCA, T. Stereotipul – marker al structurilor atitudinale. Investigație cross-culturală. În: *Materialele Conferinței Internaționale: Promovarea valorilor social-economice în contextul integrării europene. Ediția a 5-a*. Chișinău, 2-3 decembrie., 2022, vol. 1, p. 141-148. ISBN 978-9975-3527-2-7.

Therefore, both groups of adolescents have a positive image of the person representing their ethnic group in terms of professional qualities, but it is more pronounced in the case of Moldovan adolescents in Italy. The comparison of professional qualities by gender revealed that in the perception of Moldovan adolescent boys in Italy and adolescent boys in the Republic of Moldova, the image of the person representing their ethnic group is characterized by: good household management and determination. However, in the case of adolescent boys in Italy, the image of the professional qualities of Moldovans is more positive and more emphasized, while in the case of adolescent boys in the Republic of Moldova, Moldovans are characterized as more flexible and entrepreneurial. The comparative analysis of the self-stereotypes of the professional qualities of the ethnic representative in the case of Moldovan adolescent girls in Italy and adolescent girls in the Republic of Moldova, allows us to conclude the several points as follows: a) since the good household management is appreciated identically in both groups, we can assume that this quality is a defining, basic feature of Moldovans; b) in both groups of adolescent girls, the difficulty in choosing between passivity and activism was noted, where there were no statistically significant differences; c) the difference in the image of the person representing the ethnic group in terms of professional qualities is noticeable for the other pairs of qualities. In this regard, according to Moldovan adolescent girls in Italy, the image of the Moldovan is characterized by: determination, organization, diligence and predisposition to lead, while in the case of Moldovan adolescent girls in the Republic of Moldova, they indicated that the Moldovan is characterized only by flexibility and spirit of initiative. Consequently, the differences in adolescent girls' choices can be explained in terms of where they live, the different contexts and the different roles assumed. Thus, adolescent girls in the Republic of Moldova, being part of the majority group, assess themselves as more flexible and entrepreneurial (this depends on the majority group and its position in society), while for an effective integration as a minority group (immigrant group), adolescent girls in Italy would also be more open, determined, organized, hardworking and more likely to lead.

The self-stereotype related to personal qualities in Moldovan adolescents in Italy is dominated by positive traits, but it is less clear, compared to the self-stereotype related to professional qualities. At the same time, in addition to honesty, which is more predominant, the image of the person representing their ethnic group is also, „mastered” by: openness, peace-loving, delicacy, finesse and receptivity. In the same context, the self-stereotype regarding personal qualities, generated by Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, can be characterized as confusing and contradictory, as adolescents highlight positive traits such as honesty, delicacy and finesse „combined” with less positive traits such as aggression, withdrawal and insensitivity. The comparative analysis of self-stereotypes regarding personal qualities of the person representing the ethnic group in Moldovan adolescents in Italy and in Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, shows that the self-stereotype in the case of Moldovan adolescents in Italy is more positive and less controversial compared to Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, where it is confused and contradictory. Thus, the qualities which do not differ are: honesty, delicacy, finesse, and wickedness - qualities which are reflected to the same extent in both groups (Table 2.12). In the same way, we observe that honesty, delicacy and finesse, are the basic features in portraying the stereotype of the person representing the ethnic group.

Moldovan adolescents in Italy portray a positive image of the person representing their ethnic group, both in terms of personal and professional qualities. However, in the case of professional qualities, the self-stereotype is more pronounced and more positive. This is not surprising, as the aforementioned qualities are a strong foundation in the path of inclusion and integration of adolescents in the host country.

If we compare the image of the person representing the ethnic group in both groups of adolescents (Moldovan adolescent boys in Italy and adolescent boys in the Republic of Moldova), we observe that in the case of Moldovan adolescent boys in Italy, it is more positive. In the same context, the qualities: *honesty, delicacy, finesse, cunning* and *wickedness*, in the perception of both groups, are equally evaluated. *Honesty* being the most emphasized trait here, it is categorized as defining for Moldovans. At the same time, taking into account the current social-economic conditions, the trait of *cunningness*, as mentioned previously, can have positive connotations. Comparative analysis of the image of the Moldovan, in terms of personal qualities, in the case of Moldovan adolescent girls in Italy and those in the Republic of Moldova, highlights the common traits of the person representing their ethnic group, namely: *wickedness, honesty and delicacy, finesse*, which are almost identically reported by both groups of girls (Table 2.12). Although, if in the perception of adolescent girls in the Republic of Moldova, the Moldovan does not have *good household management*, then in the case of girls in Italy, the Moldovan is endowed with this quality. Analogically, we observe the same thing in the case of *receptivity-insensitivity* pairs, where for Moldovan adolescent girls in Italy, the Moldovan is *receptive* and *insensitive*, but for Moldovan adolescent girls in the Republic of Moldova - the Moldovan is only *insensitive*, despite the fact that in both cases the traits have a low level of consideration. In the same context, perhaps as a result of the current socio-economic situation of the society in which we live, the trait of *cunning* does not seem to have negative connotations for both groups of adolescent girls. Therefore, the image of the person representing their ethnic group in the case of Moldovan adolescents in Italy is more positive, compared to the image of Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova.

The results obtained due to the application of *the Romanova O. L. questionnaire* revealed the following aspect: the expression of the feeling of ethnic identification was shaped in different ways in Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova and Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy. Therefore, Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova had statistically significantly higher scores than Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy on all scales: *sense of belonging to one's ethnic identity, importance of ethnic belonging, interrelationships between ethnic majority and ethnic minority* ($p < 0,001$). Similarly, comparisons by gender and place of residence (Table 2.18) revealed that adolescent girls in the Republic of Moldova scored significantly higher than Moldovan adolescent girls in Italy⁴⁷ on all ethnic identification parameters. In the same context, as in the case of adolescent girls, we find significant differences between Moldovan immigrant adolescent boys in Italy and adolescent boys in the Republic of Moldova (Table 2.19), on all scales: *sense of belonging to one's ethnic identity, importance of ethnic belonging, interrelationships between ethnic majority and ethnic minority* ($p < 0,001$). Furthermore, in all cases, statistically speaking, adolescent boys in the Republic of Moldova had significantly higher results than Moldovan adolescent boys in Italy⁴⁸.

As a result of applying the Phinney J. questionnaire, it could be observed that the expressive side of the predominant ethnic identity components, manifested through the *cognitive* and *affective components*, is different in the case of adolescents in the Republic of Moldova and Moldovan adolescents in Italy. Thus, in the case of adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, *the cognitive component* ($p < 0,001$) of ethnic identity is more evident, while in the case of Moldovan adolescents in Italy, *the affective component* ($p < 0,001$) is more accentuated (Table 2.20). If we compare the data on manifestation of ethnic identity according to gender (Table 2.21), we observe significant differences between Moldovan adolescent girls and Moldovan adolescent boys in Italy on *the general indicator*

⁴⁷ ROȘCA, T. Determinants of ethnic belonging in adolescents. Cross-cultural investigation. In: *Annali d'Italia*, 2023, nr. 48, p. 63-69; ISSN 3572-2436.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

of expression of ethnic identity ($p < 0.05$) and on the affective component of ethnic identity ($p < 0.01$), where in both cases, Moldovan adolescent girls show significantly higher results than adolescent boys⁴⁹. At the same time, Moldovan adolescent girls in the Republic of Moldova obtained significantly higher scores than Moldovan adolescent girls in Italy on the cognitive component: $p < 0.05$, while Moldovan adolescent girls in Italy show significantly higher scores on the affective component: $p < 0.001$ ⁵⁰ (Table 2.23). We also note statistically significant data for the cognitive component: $p < 0.05$ for adolescent boys in the Republic of Moldova, who obtained significantly higher values than adolescent boys in Italy⁵¹ (Table 2.24).

In this context, according to the results we have obtained, we considered it essential to explore the factors involved in the process of adaptation, inclusion and integration, with direct impact on the ethnic identity dimension.

Chapter 3 (Implications of psychosocial factors in the formation and development of ethnic identity in Moldovan adolescents in the diaspora) presents the investigation of the relevant factors which participate in the process of adaptation and integration to the Italian socio-cultural context, with a focus on Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy.

The research aim: to identify the psychosocial factors which determine the process of adaptation and integration to the new socio-cultural context, with impact on the formation and development of ethnic identity in adolescents from diaspora.

The research objectives were: (a) to elaborate a model of the elements which interfere with the adaptation, inclusion and integration pathway of diaspora adolescents in the context of the host country; (b) to determine the psychosocial mechanisms which influence the formation and preservation of ethnic identity; (c) to identify the functions of language in the context of migration as an essential *marker* in preserving ethnic identity; (d) to establish the impact of social networking on the preservation of ethnic identity and connections with the close circle of people in the country of origin.

The working hypotheses: (1) The immigrant adolescent's family is the fundamental instance of anticipating success in the formation and preservation of the ethnic identity of Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy; (2) Relationship preferences with peers of diaspora adolescents are dictated by personal psychological particularities and intercultural experience; (3) Language is a basic marker of ethnic identity and, at the same time, it is an indicator of its preservation. Bilingualism among Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy is determined by their parents' attitudes, motivations and language skills in relation to the language of the host country; (4) Virtual ethnic networks support the process of adaptation, inclusion and integration in the host country, providing the opportunity to maintain and develop family ties (with the close circle of people).

The research participants. The research involved 18 Moldovan adolescent boys and 18 Moldovan adolescent girls from the diaspora, aged between 14 and 18 years (average age 15.2 years), enrolled in 8 educational institutions in the Emilia-Romagna and Lombardy regions, with an average time of living in Italy - 6.4 years.

Data collection method - Focus group

Data collection procedure. Focus groups and interviews were implemented in four stages: a) the preparatory stage, dedicated to activate the network of contacts, using the „avalanche” or

⁴⁹ ROȘCA, T. Componente etnoidentitare. Studiu cross-cultural comparativ. În: *Materialele Conferinței Științifice Internaționale: Preocupări contemporane ale Științelor Socioumane, Ediția a XIII-a*. Chișinău, 1-2 decembrie, 2022, p. 135-144. ISBN 978-9975-165-61-7.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

„snowball” technique, with the support of fellow countrymen settled on the peninsula, from the Lombardy and Emilia-Romagna regions, who made available to us their knowledge network in these territories, identifying the list of adolescents who were going to participate in the research; b) the implementation phase, in which meetings and interviews were carried out, finalized with the collection of experiences and reflections of adolescents in diaspora; c) the transcription and analysis phase of *focus groups* and interviews; d) the stage of comparing impressions, resulting from *focus groups* and interviews.

Within *the focus groups*, the following 7 dimensions were analyzed: family as a basic determining factor in shaping ethnic identity; community as a relationship and resource; language as an ethnic marker; peer group as a key element in defining identity; school as a path of adaptation and integration in the context of the host country; ethnic identity and culture; ethnic identity and cyberspace (Figure 2).

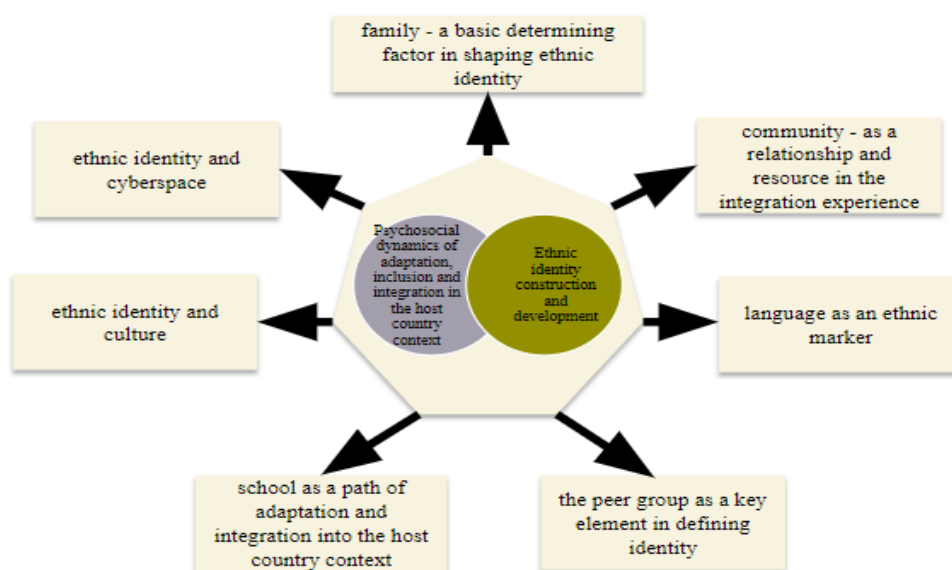


Fig. 2. The psychosocial factors involved in the construction and development of ethnic identity (elaborated by the author)

Based on the answers given by the Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy, the following data emerged:

a) with reference to *the family, as a basic determining factor in shaping ethnic identity*, we find that the psychological characteristics of the immigrant adolescent's family are a predictor of the successful formation and preservation of ethnic identity of the diaspora adolescents. Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy are mostly grown up and attached to close relatives before moving to live with their parents in Italy (most often by their grandparents). Therefore, the parental and social dynamics during the period of family reunification in Italy represent a decisive point for the psychological well-being of adolescents, where the adolescent crisis overlaps with the „family reunification” crisis. In the families of Moldovan immigrants in Italy, the traditional roles of father and mother are preserved (the father is responsible for material well-being, while the mother - for growing up, maintaining the common household and less for material wealth). However, for a significant number of Moldovan immigrant families, their mother remains the sole breadwinner.

b) *with regard to the role of the ethnic community*, based on the analysis of what was reported by the adolescents, its importance in the formation and support of ethnic identity, as a relationship and resource in the process of integration of adolescents in the host country, was revealed.

c) from the linguistic point of view, Moldovan adolescents in Italy are characterized by the same features as other adolescents in the diaspora (immigrants in other countries). Communication at school and with Italian classmates is usually in Italian, while in the family, with relatives or with Moldovan friends - in Romanian. Bilingual communication in the family depends to a large extent on the parents' proficiency in Italian and their motivation to develop bilingualism in their children. At times, language can be a form of protest by adolescents, emphasizing their uniqueness and maintaining cultural boundaries. Knowledge and *communication in their mother tongue (Romanian) is one of the fundamental markers in the formation and preservation of the ethnic identity of Moldovan adolescents*. In the case of Moldavian immigrant adolescents in Italy, communication with peers of the same culture is a distinctive aspect, because they belong to the same semantic cultural field and represent a support in the enculturation process.

d) concerning the preferences in relations with their peers, from what Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy reported, it emerges that they strive to preserve their ethnic belonging to their own group. In this sense, *belonging to one's own ethnic group is not only a point of support, but also a self-awareness in a foreign cultural environment, both on the basis of uniqueness („I am different”) and social status*. However, the lack of knowledge of the language of the host country and the peculiarities of communication, specific to Italians, can lead some Moldovan adolescents to conflictual situations, or to the desire to distance themselves, having a deformed perception of their Italian peers, where the adolescent maximalism overlaps.

e) in the context of migration, the internet offers a number of opportunities to satisfy the need to be part of the ethnic community. Thus, the Internet contributes not only to the ethnic self-determination, but also to maintaining the ethnic identity of Moldovan immigrant adolescents, contributing massively to their integration into the culture of the host country (Italian culture). Similarly, *digital ethnic networks strengthen family ties and provide an opportunity for adolescents to adapt to a foreign cultural environment without losing their cultural, family ties or ethnic identity*.

III. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the theme of the thesis, the basic hypothesis, the aim and objectives of the investigation, the following **scientific results** were obtained:

1. The concept of *ethnic identity* was shaped through psychological, sociological and anthropological approaches. *Ethnic identity* is a construct, which is formed within a culture, in the process of inter-ethnic interaction. It is actively constructed on the basis of an ascribable identity, but is not reducible to it⁵². Therefore, *ethnic identity* is not based on primordial values such as blood, language and territory, but is a historical construct, an „invention”, which changes its form and content according to the socio-political events to which it is subjected. As a structure, it contains *the cognitive component* (ethnic awareness and ethnic self-identification), *the affective component* (emotional attitude towards it) and *the evaluative component* (responsible for the positive or negative connotation of being part of a group, relating pride of belonging and evaluation of intra-group position in relation to other groups). In addition, ethnic identity is correlated with the concept of diaspora, which is described as „an ethnic group located outside the border of the country of origin, being defined as a collectivity within a larger society, where people representing it have the same origins and memories

⁵² СТЕФАНЕНКО, Т. Г. *Социальная психология этнической идентичности*. Диссертация на соискание учёной степени доктора психологических наук. Москва: Московский Государственный Университет имени М.В. Ломоносова, 1999, 48 с.

or share the same historical and cultural heritage, having one or more emblematic elements as summary of their people, being identified with the transnational community and having the following basic features: unity of common origin, strong ethnic self-identification, living in an ethnically different area, the presence of social institutions which respond to the needs of the diaspora, maintaining material and emotional ties with the country of origin while adapting to the opportunities of the host country". *The Moldovan diaspora is considered to be a developing diaspora*. In this context, ethnic consciousness and the manifestation of one's own ethnic identity are triggered by the migration process, where they can vary depending on the social and territorial context. Factors which play a key role in the integration of the immigrant adolescent in the context of the host country are human capital, the social capital of the family and the sense of „integrated being”, which is formed in the dialog of negotiation between different identities.

2. The study of the value sphere in adolescents, by recognizing some areas of life they are in contact with and which have an impact on their identity choices, has generated an explicit picture of adolescent values. Thus, *freedom as independence in actions* is the privileged sphere for adolescents in the Republic of Moldova and Italy. For adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, the priority spheres are *health* and *happy family life*, while for Moldovan adolescents in Italy, these are: *interesting jobs* and *material wealth*. Life spheres such as *creativity, beauty of nature and art* and *an active lifestyle* seem to be of little interest to adolescents of both groups. For very few adolescents, the spheres of life include values characterized by a high degree of availability. For adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, the life sphere which indicates the lowest degree of availability is *material wealth*, while for adolescents in Italy it is *happy family life*. Furthermore, both groups of adolescents rated the *beauty of nature and art* as important to them, but also unreal. With regard to *freedom as independence in actions*, this denotes the presence of a good balance between desirability and availability for both groups of adolescents. In addition, we note that the spheres of life, which are of high importance for adolescents, are also generators of internal conflicts. The sphere of life which evokes the feeling of inner emptiness for all adolescents is *the beauty of nature and art*. Gender differences related to the characteristics of ethnic identity and value sphere among Moldovan adolescents from the diaspora and the Republic of Moldova, make it possible to understand and predict their influence on ethnic identification processes, marking important directions of intervention in the practical work of a psychologist, both in multicultural counseling and increasing cultural competence.

3. Assessing the image of the person representing the ethnic group in Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy and Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, we can observe both common and distinctive qualities. Therefore, in the perception of Moldovan adolescents in Italy and Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, the image of the person representing their ethnic group stands out through a common professional trait - *good household management*, as an essential quality, regardless of *status, gender or place of living*. In the same sense, (without taking into account *status, gender and place of living*), the evaluation of personal qualities highlights the following qualities of the Moldovans: *delicacy, finesse, honesty*, but also *wickedness*, although they are not very much reflected. Therefore, based on these results, it seems that the mentioned qualities are basic in the perception of adolescents of both groups. In the light of these findings, however, the need for further research on other groups of adolescents who have emigrated to other countries arises.

4. Measuring the *sense of belonging to one's own ethnic group* showed that Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova show a stronger *sense of belonging to their ethnic group, a greater importance of ethnic identity* and *an average desire for domination*. In the same context, Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy, obtained lower scores on the parameters *feeling of belonging to their own ethnic identity, importance of ethnic belonging* and *interrelations between*

majority and minority, which can be explained by their status as minority, immigrant and foreign socio-cultural context (adaptation to another dominant culture - Italian). With regard to the structure of ethnic identity, according to the results received, we see that in adolescents, the degree of expressivity regarding the predominant ethnic identity components (*cognitive and affective components*) is different. Thus, in the case of Moldovan adolescents in the Republic of Moldova, *the cognitive component* of ethnic identity is more evident, while in the case of Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy, *the affective component* is more predominant.

5. Conclusions of the focus group discussions highlighted the factors involved in the process of adaptation and integration to the socio-cultural context of the Italian Republic, with impact on ethnic identity. A relevant factor in this regard is the family, as a predictor of the psychological well-being of adolescents in the diaspora, together with the ethnic social ties which adolescents maintain with their loved ones in their country of origin (Republic of Moldova). In the same context, language is one of the basic markers in the formation and preservation of ethnic identity, and an important support in the process of enculturation. In terms of peer relations, diaspora adolescents strive to maintain their ethnic group membership. Moreover, social networks are extremely important, which make their contribution by facilitating the preservation of family ties and ethnic identity.

The solution of this important scientific problem of our research, relates to the dimension of valuing ethnic identity in immigrant adolescents, in order to anticipate the difficulties of negotiating ethnic components, by creating the premises for an effective interaction, crystallized in relation to the integration policies in the host country. This was achieved by assessing the axiological area, the structure of ethnic identity and the sense of belonging to one's own group, as well as by determining the social image of the person representing the group of origin, along with the adaptation and integration profile of Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy, which was explored in depth. A comprehensive framework on the development and formation of ethnic identity in an ethnocultural context different from that of the Republic of Moldova was created by all of these factors.

Scientific novelty and originality of the obtained results. The scientific framework which we built on the issue of diaspora shows a significant extension of ethnic identity dimensions, which is a sign of novelty for us. Thus, for the first time, in the Republic of Moldova, a theoretical-experimental study was conducted on the complex nature of the ethnic identity of Moldovan adolescents (second generation) in an intercultural context, from the perspective of social psychology. In this sense, as a result of the investigation, differences and similarities were identified with reference to their ethnic identity. The decisive influence of the family, educational institutions and social networks on the integration process (as being the most optimal) has been demonstrated, where ethnic identity is the basis of their self-identification. As a consequence, the approaches we followed led to delimitations and clarifications, which allowed us to determine the multitude of factors and their influence on the construction of ethnic identity in Moldovan adolescents, as well as to clearly delimit the particularities of ethnic identity.

The investigation's theoretical significance is highlighted by the involvement of anthropological, sociological and psychosociological sciences in addressing the ethnic identity of immigrant adolescents by: understanding the dilemmas related to the concepts of ethnic identity; the complex genesis of ethnic identity in the context of migration along with the contradictions involved in this process; and revealing the role of ethnic identity as a resource for adaptation and integration of adolescents in the intercultural environment.

The applicative value of the research results from: applying knowledge about ethnic identity in the context of the diaspora, designing training and development programs for children and adolescents from multinational institutions; preparing multicultural education programs; the use of

potential results in forecasting the adaptation processes of immigrant adolescents, as well as the development of intervention programs for diaspora specialists, aimed at immigrant children, in order to raise awareness about the native country.

The approval and implementation of the scientific results of the given research was carried out by their dissemination, both at theoretical and practical level, within the subjects of the discipline *Psychology of large social groups* and *Ethnopsychology*, part of the curriculum of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education, at the International Free University of Moldova.

Some of the theoretical and practical results were presented and discussed during national and international scientific events, the most important of them being:

„Promoting social values in the context of European integration” International Conference, USEM, 2018; „Valorization of the ethnocultural heritage in the education of the young generation and civil society”, Scientific Conference, 4th Edition, ASM, 2019; „Contemporary concerns of socio-human sciences” International Conference, 10th edition, ULIM, 2019; „Problems of Socio-Humanistic Sciences and Modernization of Education” International Scientific Conference, UPSC, 2020; „Education: a primordial factor in the development of society” International Scientific Conference, IŞE, 2020; „Psychosocial assistance in the context of new realities in times of pandemic” National Scientific Conference, UPSC: „Ion Creangă”, 2021; „Contemporary Concerns of Socio-Human Sciences” International Scientific Conference, 12th Edition, ULIM, 2022; „Contemporary Concerns of Socio-Human Sciences”, International Scientific Conference, 13th edition, ULIM, 2023; International Symposium on Ethnology: „Ethnic Traditions and Processes”. 4th Edition, AŞM, 2023.

The conclusions of theoretical investigations and the results of practical research were presented in 45 scientific papers: communications at National and International Conferences (27); articles in scientific journals (20).

However, our research has some **limitations** in terms of the results we obtained.

In this context, we mention the representative nature of the research group, which could be broader, within a larger sample which would include participants from other generations of Moldovans, who have self-actualized and climbed the social ladder, in order to identify the mechanisms which underpinned their social ascent, which would also generate and illustrate other perspectives of ethnic identity formation or development in the case of migration. Another limitation is the insufficient knowledge of the social experience of diaspora adolescents in their country of origin (whether they were psychologically prepared to move to live in another country; whether they knew the country of departure prior to the emigration process (e.g. on vacation); how their parents justified their decision to take them with them; what were the reasons which led their parents to choose the migration path and whether these have changed over time; what were their parents' attitudes towards migrants before they left for a foreign country and how these were subsequently transformed by the immigrant experience.

Based on the results of the PhD thesis research, we propose the following **practical recommendations**:

1. Using the recorded results in the development/organization of personal development training activities related to the dimension of valorization of ethnic identity among diaspora adolescents in order to achieve personal goals. The activities, in the form of workshops, can take place in multinational centres, where the focus will be on socialization and communication. They can create a space for psychological support in the process of adaptation and integration, by reframing the migration experience and sharing daily desires or difficulties (focused on emotional growth, the ability to decide, to create, to learn in different life situations, in an authentic and autonomous way);

2. Exploring the issues arising from the research findings in order to create intercultural in-service intercultural training programs for intercultural mediators, teachers in pre-university/university education, in the field of multicultural education, with the aim of enriching and developing social relational skills, preventing ethnic intolerance, encouraging interethnic dialogue, recognizing diversity as uniqueness, increasing contact between cultures, as well as reinterpreting difference through supportive practices, etc.;

3. Application of the research data in the creation of informative social platforms in order to prepare a democratic society, characterized by a new type of civilization, modern, predisposed and open to cultural diversity, as the knowledge of other people's culture is an important sensitizing resource to see the beauty of this world as a resource for resilience and easy social integration.

Future research directions. The ethnic identity of adolescents in the diaspora presents a conglomerate of issues, which requires a vast, multidimensional space of investigation and more in-depth scientific approaches. Taking into consideration the limitations of the research, in terms of representativeness of the research group, further studies will be oriented towards a larger sample, which will include first, second and third generation Moldovan immigrants in Italy. Thus, we aim to investigate comparatively how different factors (background, age, status and length of stay) can influence the components of ethnic identity, by identifying those mechanisms adopted to overcome the disadvantaged social condition. Another research direction would be the study on the social representation of Italy *versus* the social representation of the Republic of Moldova and the possible effects of migration on it, with repercussions on ethnic identity in children from the diaspora. In the same vein, another subject of future research would be a comparative study between Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy and native Italian adolescents, with reference to ethnic stereotypes, ethnic identity structure, sense of belonging and ethnic consciousness, where we intend to identify the influence of cultural, social and economic capital on the mentioned variables. Similarly, out of scientific curiosity, we would carry out a research with reference to the particularities of ethnic identity in adolescents from multicultural families (with a parent of Moldovan nationality), in order to capture other facets of ethnic identity. At the same time, further studies would be done on: the influence of diaspora social networks (*online* communities) on the processes of adaptation, inclusion and integration of immigrant adolescents, with impact on the process of development/formation of ethnic identity; the acculturation dissonance between parents and children, which can generate different dynamics within the family; the future prospects of parents, by identifying their intentions (family and cultural ties, personal satisfaction, involvement in the development of the native country, etc.), as well as dialog strategies between the diaspora and the population remaining in the Republic of Moldova as a vital element for maintaining links and collaboration for the benefit of the community (in order to reduce tensions generated by different perceptions of certain realities in the country, political differences, perceived inequalities in relation to certain privileges, etc.).

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V. LIST OF PUBLISHED SCIENTIFIC WORKS

1. Articles in scientific journals

1.1. in journals from other databases accepted by ANACEC (The National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research) (with indication of the database)

1. ROȘCA, T. Axiological ideals and preferences. Comparative cross-cultural study. In: *Journal of romanian literary studies*, nr. 34, 2023, p. 815-825. ISSN 2248-3004. Indexată în bazele de date: CEEOL, Global Impact Factor, Google Academic, SSRN, BDD, OCLC, SJFactor. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/journal-detail?id=1076>
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1. ROȘCA, T. Procesul formării identității etnice la adolescenții imigranți. În: *Vector european*, nr. 2, 2018, p. 131-135. Categoria C. ISSN 2345-1106/ISSNe 2587-358X. Indexată în bazele de date: Crossref, ROAD, Library.ru, Central and Eastern European Online Library. https://ibn.idsi.md/ro/vizualizare_articol/78999
2. ROȘCA, T. Dinamica componentelor identității sociale în psihologia modernă. În: *Vector european*, nr. 1, 2019, p. 316-344. Categoria C. ISSN 2345-1106/ISSNe 2587-358X. Indexată în bazele de date: Crossref, ROAD, Library.ru, Central and Eastern European Online Library. https://ibn.idsi.md/ro/vizualizare_articol/79272
3. ROȘCA, T. Rolul structurilor complexe de categorizare în construcția identității sociale. În: *Vector european*, nr. 3, 2019, p. 153-160. Categoria C. ISSN 2345-1106/ISSNe 2587-358X. Indexată în bazele de date: Crossref, ROAD, Library.ru, Central and Eastern European Online Library. https://ibn.idsi.md/ro/vizualizare_articol/93426
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14. ROȘCA, T., TANASIEV, D. Itinerarul adolescenței între aspectele psihologice legate de reîntregirea familiei imigrante din Italia. În: Vector european, nr. 1, 2023, p. 128-134; Categoria B. ISSN 2345-1106/ISSNe 2587-358X. Indexată în bazele de date: Crossref, ROAD, Library.ru, Central and Eastern European Online Library. https://ibn.idsi.md/ro/vizualizare_articol/179246
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2. Articles in the work of scientific conferences and other scientific events included in the Register of materials published on the basis of scientific events organized in the Republic of Moldova

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5. ROȘCA, T., CAUNENCO, I. Particularități ale integrării psihosociale: focus pe condiția adolescenților imigranți moldoveni din Italia. În: Materialele Conferinței Științifice Internaționale: „Probleme ale Științelor Socioumanistice și Modernizării Învățământului”, Vol. 1, UPSC: „Ion Creangă”, 2020, p. 323-334. ISBN 978-9975-46-450-5. https://ibn.idsi.md/ro/vizualizare_articol/117105
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7. ROȘCA, T. Aspecte ale bilingvismului ca modalitate de integrare în cazul copiilor imigranți. În: Materialele Conferinței științifice cu participare internațională: „Integrare prin cercetare și inovare”, Vol. 1, USM, 2020, p. 101-104. ISBN 978-9975-152-53-2. https://ibn.idsi.md/ro/vizualizare_articol/115560
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12. ROȘCA, T. Aspecte psihologice ale religiei: între aderarea la valorile sacralului și secularizare. Cazul adolescenților imigranți moldoveni din Italia. În: Materialele Conferinței Internaționale: „Promovarea valorilor social-economice în contextul integrării europene”, USEM, 2021, p. 65-71. ISBN 978-9975-3527-2-7. https://ibn.idsi.md/ro/vizualizare_articol/155358
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16. ROȘCA, T. Amprenta psihologică a modei asupra proceselor de incluziune și excludere socială Cazul adolescenților imigranți moldoveni din Italia. În: Materialele Conferinței Științifice cu participare Internațională: „Dezvoltarea Personală și Integrarea Socială a actorilor educaționali” UPSC: „Ion Creangă”, 2022, p. 229-238. E-ISBN 978-9975-46-669-1. https://ibn.idsi.md/ro/vizualizare_articol/179726
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VI. ADNOTARE

la teza de doctor în psihologie a dnei Roșca, Tatiana „Particularitățile identității etnice ale adolescenților moldoveni din diasporă”, Universitatea Liberă Internațională din Moldova, Chișinău, 2024

Structura tezei. Teza conține: *Introducere, trei Capitole, Concluzii generale și recomandări, Bibliografie* (303 titluri) și 11 *Anexe*. Volumul tezei este de 175 pagini text de bază, 36 figuri și 24 tabele. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 47 lucrări științifice.

Cuvinte-cheie: diaspora, identitate etnică, adolescenți moldoveni imigranți în Italia, incluziune socială, adaptare socioculturală, strategii de integrare, componente etnoidentitare, percepție stereotipizată, dimensiune axiologică, sentiment de apartenență, aculturație.

Domeniul de studiu: psihologie

Scopul cercetării constă în delimitarea factorilor participativi în constituirea și menținerea identității etnice la adolescenți, care ar contura specificitatea trăsăturilor acestora în contextul migrației.

Obiectivele lucrării: analiza și sistematizarea abordărilor teoretico-practice despre problematica identității etnice cu focus pe condiția migrației; stabilirea unui plan anticipativ al factorilor care influențează construcția identității etnice la adolescenți; identificarea factorilor determinanți care participă la definitivarea alegerii etnoidentitare la adolescenți și al raportului dintre aceștia; conceperea conținutului interviului semistructurat și realizarea *focus grupurilor* pentru a identifica practicile de adaptare și integrare ale adolescenților din diasporă în țara-gazdă; elaborarea recomandărilor în vederea dezvoltării unei identități etnice pozitive la adolescenți.

Noutatea și originalitatea științifică. Noutatea cercetării este subliniată de faptul că aceasta extinde dimensiunile identității etnice în contextul științific specific diasporei. În Republica Moldova, în premieră, a fost realizat un studiu teoretico-experimental cu referire la natura complexă a identității etnice a adolescenților moldoveni (cea de-a doua generație), într-un context intercultural, din perspectiva psihologiei sociale. În acest sens, în urma investigației, au fost identificate diferențe și similitudini cu referire la identitatea lor etnică. A fost demonstrată influența decisivă a familiei, al instituțiilor de învățământ și al rețelelor de socializare asupra procesului de integrare (ca fiind cel mai optim), unde identitatea etnică reprezintă baza auto-identificării lor. Drept consecință, demersurile întreprinse au condus la clarificări care au permis determinarea multitudinii de factori și influența acestora asupra construcției etnoidentitare la adolescenții moldoveni, precum și o delimitare clară a particularităților identității etnice.

Rezultatele obținute, care contribuie la soluționarea unei probleme științifice importante, vizează dimensiunea valorificării identității etnice la adolescenții imigranți, în scopul anticipării dificultăților de negociere a componentelor etnice, prin crearea premiselor unei interacțiuni eficiente, cristalizată în relația cu politicile de integrare din țara-gazdă. Acest lucru a fost realizat prin evaluarea ariei axiologice, a structurii identității etnice și a sentimentului de apartenență la propriul grup, precum și prin determinarea imaginii sociale a reprezentantului grupului de origine, împreună cu profilul de adaptare și integrare a adolescenților moldoveni imigranți din Italia, sondat în profunzime. Toate acestea au contribuit la elaborarea unui cadru cuprinzător privind parcursul de dezvoltare și formare a identității etnice într-un context etnocultural diferit de cel al Republicii Moldova.

Semnificația teoretică a investigației se conturează la interferența științelor antropologice, sociologice și psihosociologice în abordarea identității etnice la adolescenții imigranți prin: înțelegerea dilemelor legate de conceptele corelate identității etnice; geneza complexă a identității etnice în contextul migrației și contradicțiile implicate în acest proces; evidențierea rolului identității etnice ca resursă de adaptare și integrare a adolescenților în mediul intercultural.

Valoarea aplicativă a cercetării rezultă din: aplicarea cunoștințelor despre identitatea etnică în contextul diasporei, proiectarea unor programe de instruire și dezvoltare pentru copiii și adolescenții din instituții multinaționale; întocmirea programelor de educație multiculturală; utilizarea potențialelor rezultate în prognozarea proceselor de adaptare a adolescenților imigranți, precum și dezvoltarea programelor de intervenție pentru specialiștii din diasporă, destinate copiilor imigranți, cu scopul de a crește gradul de conștientizare în ceea ce privește țara natală.

Implementarea rezultatelor științifice. Rezultatele obținute în urma cercetării, au fost valorificate prin diseminarea acestora, atât la nivel teoretic, cât și practic, în cadrul tematicilor disciplinei *Psihologia grupurilor sociale mari și Etnopsihologie*, parte a planului de învățământ al Facultății Științe Sociale și ale Educației, Universitatea Liberă Internațională din Moldova și prezentate în cadrul a 47 lucrări științifice, publicate în 20 reviste de specialitate și în 27 volume ale materialelor conferințelor naționale și internaționale.

VII. ANNOTATION

to the PhD thesis in psychology of Ms. Roșca, Tatiana „Peculiarities of ethnic identity among Moldovan adolescents in the diaspora”, Free International University of Moldova, Chișinău, 2024

Thesis structure. The thesis contains: *Introduction, three Chapters, General conclusions and recommendations, Bibliography* (303 titles) and 11 *Appendices*. The volume of the thesis consists of 175 pages of basic text, 36 figures and 24 tables. The research findings are published in 47 scientific papers.

Keywords: diaspora, ethnic identity, Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy, social inclusion, socio-cultural adaptation, integration strategy, ethnic identity components, stereotyped perception, axiological dimension, sense of belonging, acculturation.

Field of study: psychology

The aim of the research is to define the participatory factors which contribute to the constitution and preservation of ethnic identity in adolescents, highlighting the specificity of its features in the context of migration.

Research objectives: to analyze and systematize the theoretical and practical approaches on ethnic identity issues with a focus on the migration condition; to establish an anticipatory plan of the factors which influence the construction of ethnic identity in adolescents; to identify the determining factors which participate in the definition of ethnic identity choice in adolescents and the relationship between them; to design the content of the semi-structured interview and to conduct focus groups in order to identify the adaptation and integration practices of adolescents from the diaspora in the host country; and to develop recommendations for the development of a positive ethnic identity in adolescents.

Scientific novelty and originality. The novelty of the research is underlined by the fact that it expands the dimensions of ethnic identity in the specific scientific context of diaspora. A theoretical-experimental study on the complex ethnic identity of Moldovan adolescents (the second generation) was conducted in the Republic of Moldova for the first time, using social psychology as a perspective. In this way, the steps which were taken led to clarifications which allowed us to determine the multitude of factors and their influence on the construction of ethnic identity in Moldovan adolescents, as well as a lucid delimitation of the particularities of ethnic identity. In this sense, following the investigation, differences and similarities were identified with reference to their ethnic identity. The decisive influence of the family, educational institutions and social networks on the integration process was demonstrated (as the most optimal), where the ethnic identity is the basis of their self-identification. As a consequence, the steps undertaken led to clarifications that allowed the determination of the multitude of factors and their influence on the construction of ethnic identity among Moldovan adolescents, as well as a clear delimitation of the particularities of ethnic identity.

The results we obtained, which contribute to the solution of an important scientific problem, relate to the dimension of valuing ethnic identity in immigrant adolescents, in order to anticipate the difficulties of negotiating ethnic components, by creating the premises for an effective interaction, crystallized in relation to the integration policies in the host country. This was achieved by assessing the axiological area, the structure of ethnic identity and the sense of belonging to one's own group, as well as by determining the social image of the person representing the group of origin, along with the adaptation and integration profile of Moldovan immigrant adolescents in Italy, which was explored in depth. A comprehensive framework on the development and formation of ethnic identity in an ethnocultural context different from that of the Republic of Moldova was created by all of these factors.

The investigation's theoretical significance is highlighted by the involvement of anthropological, sociological and psychosociological sciences in addressing the ethnic identity of immigrant adolescents by: understanding the dilemmas related to the concepts of ethnic identity; the complex genesis of ethnic identity in the context of migration along with the contradictions involved in this process; and revealing the role of ethnic identity as a resource for adaptation and integration of adolescents in the intercultural environment.

The applicative value of the research results from: applying knowledge about ethnic identity in the context of the diaspora, designing training and development programs for children and adolescents from multinational institutions; preparing multicultural education programs; the use of potential results in forecasting the adaptation processes of immigrant adolescents, as well as the development of intervention programs for diaspora specialists, aimed at immigrant children, in order to raise awareness about the native country.

Implementation of the scientific results. The results obtained as a result of the research were valued by disseminating them, both theoretically and practically, within the subjects of the discipline *Psychology of large social groups* and *Ethnopsychology*, part of the curriculum of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education, at the International Free University of Moldova and presented in 47 scientific papers, published in 20 scientific journals and in 27 volumes at national and international conferences.

ROȘCA TATIANA

**PECULIARITIES OF ETHNIC IDENTITY AMONG MOLDOVAN ADOLESCENTS IN
THE DIASPORA**

SPECIALTY: 511.03 - SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

ABSTRACT
of the PhD thesis in psychology

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