Moroccan-Dutch adolescents' emotional functioning : in between cultures?

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Guilt, Shame, and Anger in Monocultural and Bicultural Adolescents

This study examined shame, guilt, and the related anger from a cultural perspective. Adolescents (age 12-18) from two monocultural (Dutch and Moroccan) and one bicultural group (Moroccan-Dutch) indicated how ashamed, guilty, and/or angry they would feel in hypothetical situations eliciting negative self-evaluations. In line with Dutch and Moroccan cultural models, Dutch adolescents reported more guilt than their Moroccan peers, whereas Moroccan adolescents reported more shame. Moreover, consistent with a functionalistic perspective of emotions, guilt predicted fewer self-reported behavioral problems for the Dutch group. Conversely, for the Moroccan group, shame predicted fewer behavioral problems at trend level. Crucially, Moroccan-Dutch adolescents' emotion patterns showed more similarities with those of the Dutch than of the Moroccan group. We argue that regarding the complex cultural position faced by bicultural adolescents, the dominant culture has a significant influence on how they perceive social situations, which lead to emotion experiences.

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Introduction

From a functionalistic perspective, all emotions serve an important purpose in people's daily lives. Yet, emotion experiences and expressions are influenced by individuals' cultural background, resulting in cross-cultural differences. Anthropologists initiated the interest in this phenomenon more than half a century ago and distinguished between Eastern and Western cultures as 'shame and guilt cultures' respectively (Benedict, 1946; Mead, 1937). Although cultural differences in shame and guilt have indeed been observed between monocultural groups in several cross-cultural studies, it is less known to what extent emotion patterns of bicultural adolescents reflect emotion patterns that are observed within the culture of their parents or within the culture of the country they grow up in. In other words, are bicultural adolescents' emotion patterns in between cultures or are they a reflection of either the parental or dominant culture? The aim of the present study was to examine the extent to which Moroccan-Dutch adolescents acknowledge feelings of shame, guilt, and the related anger, in daily situations by comparing them with their Dutch peers living in the Netherlands and with their Moroccan peers living in Morocco. In order to shed light on the functionality of these emotions for all three cultural groups, the relations with symptoms of psychopathology were explored.

Shame, guilt, and anger

Shame and guilt are referred to as social emotions because they both arise out of a reflection of the self from the viewpoint of others (Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007). Although shame and guilt are positively related and often used interchangeably, the emotions are distinguishable in several ways (Izard, 1991; Tangney & Dearing, 2002). First, guilt is differentiated from shame in terms of how people attribute their transgression. When feeling guilty people attribute their transgression to their specific behavior (I can't believe I did *that*), whereas shame is elicited when people negatively attribute their actions to their entire self (I can't believe *I* did that) (e.g., Ferguson & Stegge, 1995; Lewis, 1971; Tangney, 1995). Consequently, shame is considered to have more negative effects on one's self-concepts and self-esteem.

Second, these differences in attribution are associated with differences in action tendencies. When feeling guilty, one seeks internal control over the consequences, for example, by showing remorse or repairing the wrongdoing. By these actions one shows responsibility for the wrongful act. Shame however is associated with perceiving situations as uncontrollable and therefore with a sense of shrinking and being small, promoting passive behaviors,

such as withdrawal and avoidance (e.g., Lewis, 1971; Tangney, et al., 2007; Wallbott & Scherer, 1995).

Third, scholars argue that guilt and shame differ in whether the transgression is negatively evaluated by *oneself* or by real or imagined *others* (e.g., Smith, Webster, Parrott, & Eyre, 2002). A guilty person is internally-oriented, where one's behavior or appearance that caused someone harm is perceived negatively according to the own standards. An ashamed person, however, is externally-orientated where one evaluates his or her behavior as a violation or fear of not living up to community standards for proper behavior (e.g., Olthof, Schouten, Kuipers, Stegge, & Jennekens-Schinkel, 2000; Tangney et al., 2007).

Fourth, shame and guilt are related to anger in different ways. Higher levels of shame, but lower levels of guilt are associated with anger towards others (anger out). Yet, in both cases anger-out reactions have a self-defensive motive and are likely to be associated with externalizing problems. Regarding shame, blaming others helps to protect one's self-esteem in the eyes of others (Bear, Uribe-Zarain, Manning, & Shiomi, 2009; Bennet, Sullivan, & Lewis, 2005; Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Tangney, Wagner, Fletcher, & Gramzow, 1992). Regarding guilt, blaming others helps in feeling less responsible or in minimizing one's own contribution (e.g., Tangney et al., 2007).

Shame and guilt could also both be associated with feelings of anger towards oneself (anger-in) as a result of self-blame (e.g., Ferguson, Stegge, Miller, & Olsen, 1999; Harper & Arias, 2004). That is, an ashamed person feels that (s)he cannot live up to other people's standards and expectations due to a flawed or 'bad' self, resulting in self-criticism and in even more severe cases in self-punitive actions. In a similar vein, a guilty person blames his or her own behavior, which might, when accompanied by helplessness, contribute to internalizing problems (Peterson, Schwartz, & Seligman, 1981).

Shame and guilt from a cultural perspective

Although shame and guilt appear to be present in every culture, the meaning, valence, experience, and expressions of emotions, including shame and guilt, are embedded in socio-cultural models. These models are normative frameworks that "constitute a person's reality, because they focus attention, they guide perception, they lend meaning, and they imbue emotional value" (Mesquita & Albert, 2007, p. 488). Consequently, shame and guilt may differentially influence individuals' social and psychological functioning in varying cultures.

Most cross-cultural research concerning social emotions has focused on shame, showing the functionality of shame in collectivistic-oriented cultures, compared to the dysfunctionality in individualistic-oriented cultures. Shame is considered a painful

emotion in light of Western cultural models, since it is directed to the shortcomings of the highly valued independence and uniqueness of the self (Fischer, Manstead, Rodriguez Mosquera, 1999; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Showing shame or even acknowledging feeling shame is associated with humiliation and weakness of an individual, for it emphasizes the failure of the self in the eyes of others. Consequently, shame has been related to psychological problems among Western populations, especially with respect to internalizing problems (for review see Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Studies show that shame-proneness is related to low self-esteem and to higher levels of depression and (social) anxiety (Andrews, 1995; Ghatavi, Nicolson, MacDonald, Osher, & Levitt, 2002; Gilbert, 2000). Particularly, shame and social anxiety share some specific similarities. For example, like shame-prone individuals, people with social anxiety have the tendency to perceive being negatively evaluated by others and consequently have the tendency to show withdrawal behaviors (Tangney, 1992; 1995).

Compared to individualistic-oriented cultures, feeling shame has fewer negative effects on self-esteem and relationships and is more related to smiling and laughing in collectivistic-oriented cultures (Wallbott & Scherer, 1997). In these cultures where maintaining harmonious relationships and respecting the social hierarchy are central concerns, shame motivates behaviors that stress social conformity, interdependence, social harmony, and respect for the social hierarchy in order to avoid social repercussions and being rejected by others (Mesquita & Karasawa, 2002). Consequently, inhibition of antisocial behavior is motivated by the awareness of negative evaluations by others (Bedford & Hwang, 2003). In Morocco, for example, shame has positive associations with humility and modesty (Abu-Lughod, 1986). Moreover, in Moroccan childrearing, shame plays a more important role. For instance, sentences such as "*hshuma 'alik"* ("you ought to be ashamed") are often used (Hermans, 1999). Studies show that children from collectivistic-oriented cultures understand the meaning of shame earlier in their development than their peers from individualistic-oriented cultures and that shame is more frequently elicited and felt among both children and adults from collectivistic-oriented cultures (e.g., Anolli & Pascucci, 2005; Bear et al., 2009; Fung, 1999; Ridgeway, Waters, & Kuczaj, 1985; Rodriguez Mosquera, Manstead, & Fischer, 2002).

In individualistic-oriented cultures, guilt, not shame, motivates displays of social behavior that benefit the interpersonal relationship (e.g., Baumeister, Stillwell, Heatherton, 1994; Ferguson & Stegge, 1995; Tangney, 1992). By showing guilt, by confessing and showing remorse or reparative behavior, transgressions of one's own personal standards are underlined

and one shows responsibility for one's actions, which are key characteristics of Western cultural models. In these models, the individualistic-orientation is reflected in the belief that a person has the right to maximum freedom and the responsibility for obtaining those goals (Bedford & Hwang, 2003). In turn, individuals are held responsible for their own behavior. Research among Western populations has shown that guilt-proneness is related to more socially and academically skilled behavior and to less antisocial behavior, risky behavior, and delinquency (Stuewig & McCloskey, 2005; Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Tibbetts, 2003).

In collectivistic-oriented cultures, such as the Moroccan, guilt and its expression, is less functional than in individualistic-oriented cultures. In these cultures where standards, concerns, opinions, and honor of members of one's group are more valued than personal needs and concerns (Bagozzi, Verbeke, & Gavino, 2003; Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998; Kim & Markus, 1999), the self and its actions are tightly related to others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Given the tightness between the self and in-group members, showing remorse emphasizes the wrongful act by the individual, which sheds negative light on the group honor (Hermans, 1999). In the current study we examined the cultural differentiation in functionality of guilt in terms of psychological functioning.

The present study

The aim of this study was to examine 1) adolescents' acknowledgements of the social emotions of shame and guilt in the context of social situations that are expected to evoke negative self-evaluations, and the related anger experiences, and 2) the extent to which experiences of these emotions are related to symptoms of psychopathology (social anxiety and behavioral problems) in two culturally distinct monocultural groups, i.e. Dutch and Moroccan adolescents. Moreover, we wanted to explore the extent to which emotion patterns of the adolescents from the parental culture are persistent in a bicultural sample, i.e. Moroccan-Dutch adolescents.

Moroccan-Dutch adolescents belong to one of the largest bicultural groups in the Netherlands (Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics, 2010). Since their psychological functioning, especially concerning externalizing problems, is often highlighted in Dutch research and media, it may be important to shed light on their emotional functioning. Moroccan-Dutch adolescents' emotional functioning is influenced by both the parental Moroccan culture at home as the dominant Dutch culture outside the home, which might bring along contradictory signals about appropriate and desirable emotion experiences and expressions. Given the importance of parental socialization in children's emotional development (e.g., Eisenberg, Cumberland, & Spinrad, 1998), the

question arises whether Moroccan-Dutch adolescents' emotion experiences are in accordance with a Moroccan cultural model or whether their emotion experiences are more in line with what could be expected from the Dutch cultural model.

Based on the cross-cultural differences concerning shame and guilt in earlier studies comparing individualistic and collectivistic groups, we expected that Dutch adolescents would report more guilt and less shame in situations that include failures or transgressions than their Moroccan peers living in Morocco. Regarding the relation of shame and guilt with psychological problems (social anxiety and behavioral problems), we expected no cultural differences of shame with social anxiety. In both groups, shame was expected to predict higher levels of social anxiety, due to their similar characteristics. However, we expected that only for the Moroccan group would shame predict fewer behavioral problems, because shame is more likely to function as an internal moral emotion against anti-social behavior in the Moroccan than in the Dutch culture. Furthermore, guilt was expected to predict fewer behavioral problems, especially for the Dutch group. Additionally, we examined the relations between anger and psychological difficulties cross-culturally in order to explore whether adolescents' anger in the presented situations would be directed toward themselves (anger-in) or toward others (anger-out). No specific hypotheses were formulated beforehand.

Given the innovative and exploratory nature of comparing bicultural adolescents' emotion experiences with those of monocultural peers from the parental as well as the dominant culture, we did not formulate specific hypotheses concerning the Moroccan-Dutch adolescents' shame and guilt patterns and salience for their psychological functioning. Generally one might expect that Moroccan-Dutch adolescents' emotion patterns fall in between typical Dutch and typical Moroccan patterns. On the one hand one could expect more similarities with the Moroccan than the Dutch peers, due to the importance of parental socialisation in shame and guilt (e.g., Cole, Tamang, & Shrestha, 2006). On the other hand, one might expect more similarities in emotion patterns with the Dutch than the Moroccan peers, because Moroccan-Dutch adolescents' shame and guilt experiences in Dutch contexts may often be elicited by the reflection of the self from the viewpoint of Dutch people.

Although it was not our primary focus, we took gender as an influential factor into account in all our analyses. As situations eliciting negative emotions are likely to be evaluated differently as a function of culture, previous studies indicate gender differences in shame, guilt, and anger experiences due to gender roles within a society. Overall, women are more likely to report feelings of shame and guilt than males, especially in a scenario paradigm (e.g., Ferguson, Eyre, & Ashbaker, 2000), whereas males are

more likely than females to acknowledge feelings of anger (Fivush, Brotman, Buckner, & Goodman, 2000). In the present study we expected that these differences would be revealed for all three cultural groups.

Method

Participants

A total of 637 adolescents between 12 and 18 years old participated in this study. Of these, 306 Dutch adolescents (160 boys; mean age=14.6 years, *SD*=18 months) and 209 Moroccan-Dutch adolescents (93 boys; mean age=14.6 years, *SD*=15 months) were recruited through their schools located in the Randstad, the highly urbanized and industrialized part of the Netherlands with the highest concentration of people of Moroccan origin. These youngsters received schooling at preparatory secondary vocational or intermediate level.

Both parents of the Dutch adolescents were born in the Netherlands. The majority of the Dutch adolescents reported not being religious (62%) and only speaking Dutch at home (97%). The Moroccan-Dutch adolescents had at least one parent who was born in Morocco, but the adolescents themselves were born in the Netherlands, or had immigrated to the Netherlands before the age of 6. Although in more than half of the families (53%) two languages were spoken (Dutch and Arabic or Berber) and 21% of the adolescents reported speaking only Arabic or Berber at home, all Moroccan-Dutch adolescents were fluent in Dutch. All Moroccan-Dutch adolescents reported being Muslim.

Since the majority of the Moroccan-Dutch population finds its origin in the North of Morocco, specifically in the Rif area (Benali & Obdeijn, 2005), we recruited 122 Moroccan adolescents (61 boys; mean age=14 years, 10 months, *SD*=17 months) through schools in two cities in the North of Morocco: Al Hoceima and Tetouan. Because the secondary school system in Morocco has mixed educational levels, the specific academic levels of the adolescents could not be determined. All Moroccan adolescents and their parents were born in Morocco, reported to be Muslim and to speak Arabic or Berber at home. The three cultural groups did not differ in age ($F(2, 632)=2.56$, $p=.08$).

Materials

Translation. The Strengths Difficulties Questionnaire had already been translated and validated for previous studies among Arabic samples (e.g., Alyahri & Goodman, 2006; Thabet, Stretch, & Vostanis, 2000). The other questionnaires that were administered in Morocco in this study were validated by back-translation, as suggested by Brislin, Lonner, and Thorndike (1973). For the

translation, two bilingual translators translated the questionnaires from Dutch into Arabic and two other bilingual translators translated it back, of whom one has a PhD in Arabic language and teaches Arabic language at Leiden University, into Dutch. Differences in the original and back-translated versions were discussed and resolved through joint agreement.

Shame, guilt, and anger. Adolescents' self-reported guilt, shame, and anger were assessed by means of 12 short hypothetical vignettes, which described negative emotion-eliciting situations. With permission of the authors we adapted and shortened the vignettes used by Olthof and colleagues (2000), who showed that children as young as 9 years differentiate between situations that elicit shame and guilt and between judgments of shame and guilt experiences. Based on these results we not did expect adolescents to have problems with the understanding of shame and guilt. Example vignettes are 'You didn't do your homework. A classmate worked very hard. You receive the highest mark.' and 'You want to go home quickly. The little girl from next door drops her marbles. You do not help her, because you are in a hurry'. After each vignette participants were asked how guilty, ashamed, and angry they would expect to feel in this order (0=*not*; 1=*a little*, 2=*a lot*). Most internal consistencies for each cultural group were satisfactory (Table 1).

Table 1
Psychometric Properties of the Social Vignettes, SDQ, and SAS-A for Each Cultural Group

		Dutch		Moroccan		Moroccan-Dutch	
Scales (range)	No. of items	α	*M* (*SD*)	α	*M* (*SD*)	α	*M* (*SD*)
Shame (0-2)	12	.82	0.72 (0.38)	.68	1.27 (0.33)	.78	0.77 (0.39)
Guilt (0-2)	12	.76	0.74 (0.33)	.70	1.12 (0.34)	.75	0.73 (0.34)
Anger (0-2)	12	.72	0.37 (0.28)	.79	0.83 (0.41)	.69	0.42 (0.30)
Behavioral problems (0-2)	15	.65	0.44 (0.24)	.44	0.55 (0.21)	.59	0.46 (0.24)
Social Anxiety (0-2)	22	.92	2.05 (0.63)	.76	2.66 (0.55)	.93	1.87 (0.73)

Social Anxiety. The *Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents* (SAS-A) (La Greca & Lopez, 1998) is a modified version of the Social

Anxiety Scale for Children—Revised (SASC-R). A Dutch and Arabic version of the questionnaire was used for this study (Dutch translation for the Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch adolescents by Dekking, 1983). The questionnaire consists of 22 items on which adolescents are asked to rate on a 5-point scale to what extent they agree with the statements (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *all the time*). An example of an item is: 'I worry that other kids don't like me'. Table 1 illustrates good internal consistencies of the scale for each cultural group.

Behavioral problems. Behavioral problems were assessed using the *Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire* (SDQ; Goodman, 2001; Dutch translation for the Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch adolescents by Van Widenfelt, Goedhart, Treffers, & Goodman, 2003; Arabic translation for the Moroccan adolescents retrieved from sdqinfo.com). We used the total of three subscales to determine adolescents' externalizing problems: behavioral problems, peer problems, and pro-social behavior (reversed). Participants are asked to rate on a three-point scale (0= *not true*, 1= *little true*, 2=*true*) the degree to which the items best describe them. The internal consistency is presented in Table 1.

Procedure

The questionnaires were administered in both countries in class during school hours along with other questionnaires that are excluded in this study. Prior to the assessment, the aims of the study were explained and adolescents were assured that the participation was voluntary and anonymous. Completing the questionnaires took approximately 30 minutes. In the Netherlands parental permission was obtained for adolescents younger than 16 years. In Morocco official governmental permission was obtained to conduct the study at the selected schools.

Results

Shame, guilt, and anger

First, we calculated the mean scores for each emotion across all 12 vignettes. These self-reported shame, guilt, and anger experiences were compared between the three cultural groups by a 3 (cultural group: Dutch, Moroccan, Moroccan-Dutch) x 2 (gender) x 3 (emotion: shame, guilt, anger) ANCOVA, with age as a covariate. The analysis reveals a main effect of cultural group, $F(2,628) = 131.62$, $p < .001$, *partial* $\eta^2 = .30$, indicating that Moroccan adolescents were more likely to acknowledge the emotions than the other two groups. Cross-cultural researchers note, however, that these differences might not reflect actual cultural differences, but could be due to cultural differences in response tendency when filling out questionnaires (e.g., Leung &

Bond, 1989). In order to improve comparability between cultural groups, authors have recommended using relative scores rather than raw scores in analysis of variance (e.g., Leung, Bond, Carment, Krishnan, & Liesbrand, 1990). Therefore, we computed relative scores on the questionnaire for each participant by subtracting his or her mean score of shame, guilt, and anger from his or her raw scores of each emotion.[1] These relative scores were used in a 3 (cultural group) x 2 (gender) x 3 (emotion) ANCOVA, with age as a covariate.

The analysis revealed a main effect of emotion, $F(2,627) = 11.06$, $p < .001$, *partial* $\eta^2 = .03$, indicating that adolescents were most likely to acknowledge shame and least likely to acknowledge anger (Table 2). This effect was however qualified by a Cultural Group x Emotion interaction, $F(4,1256) = 7.99$, $p < .001$, *partial* $\eta^2 = .03$. As can be seen from the Table, Dutch adolescents reported more guilt than their Moroccan peers, whereas the Moroccan adolescents reported more shame than their Dutch peers. Although the Dutch group equally reported guilt and shame, Moroccan adolescents reported more shame than guilt. Notably, the Moroccan-Dutch group did not differ from the Dutch group in their reported shame experience, but they did report less shame than their Moroccan peers. Moreover, Moroccan-Dutch adolescents reported less guilt than their Dutch peers. Similar to their Moroccan peers, within group analysis reveals that Moroccan-Dutch adolescents reported more shame than guilt.

As expected, the Gender x Emotion interaction, $F(2,627) = 6.32$, $p < .05$, *partial* $\eta^2 = .02$, reveals that girls reported more shame than boys (*Mean* (*SD*)= .16 (.19) and .11 (.20), respectively), whereas boys reported more anger than girls (*Mean* (*SD*)= -.20 (.23) and -.27 (.23), respectively). Boys and girls did not differ in their guilt experiences (Mean (SD)= .10 (.17) and .10 (.17), respectively).

Table 2

Shame and Guilt Acknowledgment in Three Cultural Groups (Min= -1.33; Max= 1.33)

	Dutch	Moroccan	Moroccan-Dutch	Total
Guilt	0.13 (0.16)	0.05 (0.19)	0.09 (0.18)	0.10 (0.17)
Shame	0.11 (0.18)	0.20 (0.24)	0.13 (0.19)	0.14 (0.20)
Anger	-0.24 (0.21)	-0.25 (0.28)	-0.22 (0.24)	-0.23 (0.23)

[1] For example, if a participant's raw scale scores were 1.50, 1.67, and .08, they were transformed into .42, .58, and -1.00 respectively by subtracting the mean score of 1.08.

Emotion experiences and psychological difficulties

Table 3 presents Pearson correlations between adolescents' raw self-reported emotion and psychological difficulties scores for each cultural group. First, when correlations were significant, it was in the same direction for all three cultural groups. Guilt with shame; and guilt with anger was significant for all three groups. Additionally, anger and shame were positively related to social anxiety, and shame, not anger was negatively related to behavioral problems. Guilt was also related to higher levels of social anxiety and fewer behavioral problems, but only in the Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch group.

Table 3

Pearson Correlations Between Emotion Acknowledgment and Psychological Difficulties as a Function of Cultural Group

	Shame	Guilt	Anger	Social Anxiety
Dutch (n=307)				
Guilt	.74***			
Anger	.45***	.44***		
Social Anxiety	.41***	.27***	.21***	
Behavioral Problems	-.12*	-.22***	-.02	.23***
Moroccan (n=122)				
Guilt	.53***			
Anger	.15	.43***		
Social Anxiety	.24	.13	.19*	
Behavioral Problems	-.22***	-.15	-.05	.15
Moroccan-Dutch (n=209)				
Guilt	.72***			
Anger	.39***	.33***		
Social Anxiety	.28***	.14*	.24***	
Behavioral Problems	-.25***	-.31***	-.01	.18*

* p<.05; *** p<.001

The next step is to examine the unique contributions of shame, guilt, and anger on adolescents' social anxiety and behavioral problems for each cultural group. The regression analyses with social anxiety as dependent variable show a unique contribution of gender for the Dutch group, indicating that Dutch girls reported higher levels of social anxiety than Dutch boys. As illustrated in Table 4, a unique positive contribution of shame to the prediction of social anxiety was found for all three cultural groups. Additionally, only for the Moroccan-Dutch group was anger also uniquely associated with higher levels of social anxiety. This relation was found at trend level for the Moroccan group.

Table 4
Regression Analyses for Shame, Guilt, and Anger on Social Anxiety as a Function of Cultural Group

	Dutch			Moroccan			Moroccan-Dutch		
Variable	R^2_{adj}	*β*	*p*	R^2_{adj}	*β*	*p*	R^2_{adj}	*β*	*p*
	18.1%			7.9%			9.7%		
Gender		.18	.002		.04	.632		-.08	.253
Age		-.00	.935		-.16	.065		.07	.289
Emotions									
Shame		.41	.000		.26	.013		.30	.001
Guilt		-.09	.254		-.08	.504		-.15	.126
Anger		-.06	.292		.18	.068		.16	.032

The regression analyses with behavioral problems as the dependent variable found an independent effect for gender for the Moroccan-Dutch group, indicating that being a Moroccan-Dutch boy is related to higher behavioral problems scores (Table 5). In addition, a unique negative contribution of guilt to the prediction of behavioral problems was found for the Dutch and the Moroccan-Dutch group, but not for the Moroccan group. For this latter group however, shame was negatively associated with behavioral problems at trend level.

Table 5
Regression Analyses for Shame, Guilt, and Anger on Behavioral Problems as a Function of Cultural Group

	Dutch			Moroccan			Moroccan-Dutch		
Variable	R^2_{adj}	*β*	*p*	R^2_{adj}	*β*	*p*	R^2_{adj}	*β*	*p*
	5.2%			3.7%			22.3%		
Gender		-.10	.078		-.02	.841		-.37	.000
Age		-.06	.327		-.15	.090		-.01	.839
Emotions									
Shame		.08	.343		-.20	.069		-.02	.806
Guilt		-.30	.000		.04	.721		-.29	.001
Anger		.08	.231		-.01	.933		.09	.183

Discussion

In the present study we examined the extent to which adolescents acknowledge shame, guilt, and the related anger experiences, and the role these acknowledgments have on adolescents' internalizing and externalizing problems. In doing so, our aim was to shed light on cultural differences, and in particular on bicultural adolescents' emotion acknowledgment in comparison with their peers from both the parental and the dominant culture. Our results show that although cultural differences between the monocultural adolescents were evident, bicultural adolescents' emotion patterns show more similarities with their peers from the dominant culture than with peers from the parental culture. These outcomes suggest that bicultural adolescents' situational perceptions that lead to emotional outcomes are probably influenced by the culture of the country they grow up in or by the cultural situation they find themselves in.

Cultural differences between monocultural adolescents' emotion acknowledgements

In line with Dutch and Moroccan cultural models, the Dutch group reported more guilt than the Moroccan group, whereas Moroccan adolescents reported more shame. And indeed, in a Dutch culture where the independence and uniqueness of the self is highly valued (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), one is more likely to focus on transgressions of personal standards than in a Moroccan culture where the self in relation to others is more important. Consequently, Dutch people might be more motivated to show responsibility for one's behavior in order to reduce one's negative guilty feelings and to have a positive self-image again.

In Moroccan culture, in contrast, transgressions of an individual are likely to be more focused on group norms, what others might think of them, and on how one's behavior might damage one's social reputation. This result is consistent with Moroccan emotion socialization where the importance of shame is both directly and indirectly emphasized (Hermans, 1999). Compared to guilt experiences, Moroccan adolescents reported more shame. Consistent with our expectations, it appears that when they themselves transgress, Moroccan adolescents focus more on what others might think of them rather than on how their transgression conflicts with their own norms. This result corresponds with an earlier study showing that Moroccan-Dutch individuals' shame after an insult is related toward active behavior in order to reinstate one's social image and reputation, whereas Dutch individuals' shame was related to withdrawal behaviors (Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2002). Our study contributes to existing literature suggesting that shame, more strongly than guilt, guides social appropriate behaviors in collectivistic-oriented

cultures (Mesquita & Karasawa, 2002). Shame, not guilt, was positively related to Moroccan adolescents' psychological functioning, as it predicted fewer externalizing behavior at trend level. The desirability and rituals of shame experiences and responses in collectivistic-oriented cultures may clarify communication in social relationships, decreasing feelings of fear and uncertainty.

Although shame has been suggested to be an undesirable emotion in individualistic-oriented cultures, because it emphasizes weaknesses of one's character, our results show that the Dutch adolescents equally reported shame and guilt experiences. Nevertheless, the functionality of guilt above shame in terms of psychological functioning within the Dutch group was evident. Where guilt was associated with fewer externalizing problems, shame was related to higher levels of social anxiety. In contrast to collectivistic-oriented cultures, guilt instead of shame seems to guide individuals' socially appropriate behavior.

Bicultural adolescents' emotion experiences

Are patterns and importance of shame and guilt experiences as seen in the parental culture persistent when adolescents are influenced by a second, contradicting culture? Given the increasing numbers of bicultural adolescents growing up in Western Europe, it is important to gain insight into these youngsters' emotional functioning. Overall, we found that Moroccan-Dutch adolescents' emotion experiences and their relations to psychological functioning showed more similarities to those of their Dutch peers than to those of their Moroccan peers. Similar to the Dutch group, Moroccan-Dutch adolescents reported less shame than their Moroccan peers. Also similar to their Dutch peers, guilt was associated with fewer externalizing problems. Based on these similarities it seems that the Dutch culture and/or the Dutch context plays a significant role in Moroccan-Dutch adolescents' emotional processes, perhaps on the evaluative cognitive level that influences which emotions are elicited in a certain situation or at a meta-cognitive level where Moroccan-Dutch adolescents are aware of which emotion is expected in a Dutch cultural setting. Nevertheless, the associations between the acknowledgment of the specific emotions and their self-reported psychological functioning were largely similar to those of their Dutch counterparts.

However, intriguing differences between the Moroccan-Dutch and Dutch group were also identified. First, in contrast to their Dutch peers, but similar to their Moroccan peers, Moroccan-Dutch adolescents reported more shame than guilt. It is likely that the importance of shame is emphasized in Moroccan-Dutch childrearing by their parents who were born and raised in Morocco. More specifically, at home, where in-group harmony,

respect for parents, and a positive social reputation is assumed to be highly valued, it is likely that consideration of group concerns above one's own is emphasized in child-rearing practices. Second, Moroccan-Dutch adolescents reported less guilt than their Dutch peers. This implies that although both monocultural groups reported relatively high levels of an emotion that was associated to fewer problem behaviors, Moroccan-Dutch adolescents failed to report a similar extent of the problem-reducing guilt. Although much more research is needed, this emotion experience pattern might be a possible explanation of why parents and teachers report more behavioral problems among Moroccan-Dutch than among Dutch adolescents (Stevens, et al., 2003).

As discussed in the introduction, shame and guilt could both be related to anger toward others or toward oneself. The positive relations between anger on the one hand and shame, guilt, and social anxiety on the other hand, plus the lack of anger contribution to externalizing problems, suggest we measured anger toward oneself (anger-in) rather than anger toward others (anger-out) in our study. Only for the Moroccan-Dutch group, and for the Moroccan group at trend level, did anger contribute to higher levels of social anxiety when controlling for shame and guilt experiences. We can only speculate about possible reasons underlying this result. In line of collectivistic cultural models, Moroccan and Moroccan-Dutch adolescents might be more cautious about how they appear to others. Insecurities about appearances within interpersonal relationships might especially be elicited when feeling an emotion, such as anger, that could negatively affect the relationship. Even though the anger is directed toward oneself, these adolescents might seek approval for this emotion experience. The importance of others in adolescents' emotional and psychological functioning across cultures remains an area for future research to explore.

Gender differences

In addition to cultural group differences, we found that across all cultural groups, girls reported more shame than boys, whereas boys reported more anger. Previous studies among both adults and children have indeed shown that females exhibit shame more often than males, especially when using a scenario paradigm (e.g., Benetti-McQuoid & Bursik, 2005; Ferguson et al., 2000). Scholars suggest that these differences can be explained by socialization differences, where girls are more likely to receive negative evaluations by teachers and parents (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). This might contribute to the fact that females are more likely than males to attribute failures to their global selves rather than to their specific actions. In contrast, anger is considered a more appropriate emotion for boys than girls (e.g., Fivush et al., 2000). From an early age onward, anger is given more positive

attention in boys' than girls' socialization (e.g., Cole, Teti, & Zahn-Waxler, 2003). Consequently, although anger in the present study seems to be directed to oneself, boys might be more comfortable than girls about reporting feelings of anger.

Regarding gender differences in symptoms of psychopathology, our findings show that Dutch girls reported higher levels of social anxiety than Dutch boys. Furthermore, we found that Moroccan-Dutch boys reported more behavioral problems than Moroccan-Dutch girls. Although both of these gender differences are in line with previous research in diverse cultural groups (Crijnen, Achenbach, & Verhulst, 1997), it would be interesting to explore why the gender differences were only revealed for one cultural group.

Conclusions and future directions

Although bicultural adolescents tend to experience feelings of discrimination toward their ethnic group by the ethnic majority (e.g., Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006) and even though they are likely to highly identify with their culture of origin (e.g., Verkuyten, 2003), their patterns of emotion experiences and the effects on psychological functioning are more similar to their peers from the dominant than from the parental culture. Theoretically, this is an interesting outcome, implying that bicultural youngsters' emotions automatically develop within the cultural context in which they grow up, even if they cognitively or emotionally identify with the parental group. This is in line with earlier studies revealing that bicultural individuals' implicit attitudes depend on the cultural context they find themselves in (e.g., Verkuyten & Pouliasi, 2006). Future research should examine whether bicultural individuals also switch their emotion experiences and expressions in accordance with the distinct cultural environments.

Our initial conclusions concerning bicultural adolescents' emotional functioning suggest that there is an opportunity for further research. Firstly, it is unclear whether the observed differences and similarities between the bicultural and monocultural groups would apply in culture-specific situations. In our study we included daily situations mainly outside the family setting and without specific Dutch cues. Systematically comparing situations eliciting shame and guilt in a Moroccan context (at home) and Dutch context (outside the home) could help to determine the extent to which bicultural adolescents' emotion experiences switch between cultural contexts according to Moroccan and Dutch cultural models respectively. Another related question is the extent to which bicultural individuals adapt their emotion expressions to the cultural context. With respect to concepts such as integration, the impact of how one expresses emotions in cultural contexts is of primary importance.

Secondly, although our study design, by including two monocultural groups, indicates that cultural background influences bicultural adolescents' emotion experiences, more research is needed to fully understand the processes underlying bicultural adolescents' emotional functioning compared to those of their monocultural peers. It is, for example, unclear whether and if so, which aspects of the Moroccan and Dutch culture account for the differences found. On the one hand, one could systemically examine the causal influence of cultural mindsets, either focused on the self as being separate from others, or on the self as being connected to others, on emotion acknowledgments in certain situations. On the other hand, one could take into account specific factors relevant to the bicultural group that might explain individual differences, such as adolescents' acculturation patterns and identification with the parental and dominant culture, and parents' attitudes to the dominant culture. Additionally, a longitudinal research design could give insight into whether bicultural adolescents' emotion experiences become increasingly similar to those of their monocultural peers in the dominant culture.

Third, using questionnaires in cross-cultural studies is not without difficulties. For example, the Moroccan adolescents in our study were not used to filling out questionnaires about their subjective emotion experiences, compared to the groups living in the Netherlands. Furthermore, language and translation equivalence cannot be fully guaranteed; interpretation differences due to variable cultural perspectives could play a role in responding to the questionnaire. These difficulties might explain the somewhat lower internal consistencies of the Moroccan group. On the other hand, it was evident that the Moroccan adolescents filled out the questionnaires seriously and enjoyed doing so. Moreover, most relations between the variables were similar across all groups, reflecting the validity of the questionnaires.

Finally, although theoretically there is ground to assume that feelings influence psychological functioning, the correlational nature of our data do not allow for causal interpretation. Longitudinal studies measuring proneness for experiencing social emotions over time in the prediction of psychopathological symptoms could shed more light on the findings.