

TABLE 11.5

Personality correlates of the four identity statuses

Personality dimension	Identity status			
	Achievement	Moratorium	Foreclosure	Diffusion
Sex-role orientation	Traditional or androgynous	Feminine	Traditional	Undifferentiated
Authoritarianism	Low	Low	High	Low
Prejudice	Low	Medium	High	Medium
Anxiety	Low	High	Low	High
Conformity to peers	Low	Intermediate	Low	High
Dependency	Autonomous	Highly autonomous	Highly dependent	Dependent
Self-esteem	High	High	Low	Low
Ethnic identity	Strong	Medium	Strong	Weak

Source: Based on data in Berzonsky (1983); Bourne (1978); Grotevant & Cooper (1985); Marcia (1980); and Waterman (1982).

Erikson to shape many other aspects of the growth of personality. Research findings have supported this prediction. Collectively, the empirical studies of correlates of the four identity statuses have included samples of young people in Australia (e.g. Moore & Rosenthal, 1993), New Zealand (e.g. Kroger & Haslett, 1991) and the United States (e.g. Grotevant & Cooper, 1985; Marcia, 1980). All in all, the results indicate that foreclosed adolescents tend to be conformist, stereotyped and conventional and to come from authoritarian families (see Chapter 12). Identity-achieved and moratorium adolescents tend to be open-minded and androgynous (see Chapter 8) and to come from families emphasising individuality and connectedness (Grotevant & Cooper, 1985). Identity-diffused adolescents often report parental lack of interest or rejection and score lower than other groups on a variety of measures of personal adjustment. Other contrasts are summarised in Table 11.5.

Cultural variations in personality and identity development

In multicultural societies such as Australia and New Zealand, adolescents who have links with cultures and ethnicities other than the dominant Anglo-Australian or Anglo-New Zealand (Pakeha) majority may be forced to confront an additional dimension to the identity crisis—the question of ethnic identity (Phinney, 1996). In striving to reconcile their minority-group and majority-group identifications, these adolescents face additional challenges to their overall patterns of identity growth and personality development.

Developing an ethnic identity

On the basis of extensive interviews with African-American, Mexican-American and Asian-American teenagers, Jean Phinney (2008) concluded that ethnic identity is a salient component of an overall resolution of

the identity crisis for minority-group teenagers. Most teens from mixed cultural backgrounds agreed that they had to find their own position on a continuum ranging from total, undiluted allegiance to their minority ethnicity to total repudiation of it. The latter resulted in unqualified identification with Anglo-American mainstream values. Yet when minority adolescents did manage to incorporate elements of their Asian, African or Mexican roots into blended identity choices, they were found to display higher levels of self-esteem than those who identified exclusively with either ethnic or mainstream Anglo-American culture (Phinney & Alipuria, 1990).

While there is added richness in a personality that contains multiple ethnic and cultural elements, resolving the identity crisis can be made more difficult by this additional burden of choice. Biased attitudes and discriminatory practices may also complicate the process of identity achievement for adolescents from minority-group ethnic backgrounds. On the basis of interviews conducted with adolescents in Melbourne, Jean Phinney and Doreen Rosenthal (1993) concluded:

Minority adolescents may have to confront issues of prejudice and discrimination, structural barriers which limit their aspirations and hinder their achievements, and other features of the mainstream society that differentiate them from the majority. If minority youth are to construct a strong, positive and stable self-identity, then they must be able to incorporate into that sense of self a positively valued ethnic identity. (p. 145)

Phinney (1996) discovered three stages in ethnic identity development (see Table 11.6). These may or may not coincide with identity choices being made concurrently in other areas of the adolescent's life, such as career, relationships or political beliefs. Ethnic identity development follows a progression similar to Erikson's model of identity achievement, with Stage 1 reflecting foreclosure on the ethnic identity issue. However, despite the existence of stages, it is not necessary for individuals to

TABLE 11.6

Stages of ethnic identity development

Stage	Definition	Description/example
Stage 1	Unexamined ethnic identity	Adheres without question to the values of the mainstream culture with no consideration of other options
Stage 2	Ethnic identity search	Active exploration of own ethnic origins and options, sometimes accompanied by superficial adherence (e.g. dress) to markers of the alternative culture
Stage 3	Achieved ethnic identity	A personally congenial blend of qualities from mainstream and minority ethnicity, founded on rigorous examination of ethnic values and options

progress developmentally through the complete sequence of ethnic identity stages in order to achieve psychological wellbeing.

According to Phinney (2000), some individuals with multicultural roots spend their entire lives comfortably at Stage 1 of the ethnic identity continuum. Those who do progress further may, despite more advanced development, still experience psychological distress. Social prejudice and economic disadvantage are often inextricably bound up with the position in society of certain ethnic minority groups. However, when these problems are surmounted, ethnic identity development can progress in the same way as for identity growth in general, with different personality patterns and identity statuses (see Table 11.5) emerging in different individuals. As Phinney (2000) explained:

As identity formation progresses, adolescents make choices within the constraints that exist in a particular social context. Identity research has shown that there are individual differences in the extent to which individuals explore and try out new possibilities (a moratorium) or accept the normative path as defined by the family and community (foreclosure). (p. 29)

Doreen Rosenthal and Shirley Feldman (1992) investigated the quality of the relationship between parents and 15- to 18-year-old Chinese-American and Chinese-Australian adolescents as a possible predictor of the adolescent's ease of developing a sense of ethnic identity. They found that whether the teenagers had grown up in the United States or in Australia made no difference; nor did how closely the parents monitored their adolescents' activities. But other aspects of these migrant Chinese parents' behaviour did exert an important influence on their adolescents' identity development. In particular, a strongly positive identification with Chinese culture was observed among adolescents whose parents were warm, supportive and affectionate and who promoted the adolescent's autonomy by encouraging independent decision making and open expression of dissenting points of view (see Chapter 12 for a discussion of parent-adolescent conflict). In other words, ethnic identification may have more to do with the quality of the emotional relationship between parent and child than with issues of ethnicity per se.

Ronald Taft (1985) studied the development of ethnic identity in a group of Western Australian children and adolescents whose parents had migrated to Australia from

Europe either before they were born or when they were young. He viewed ethnic identification as comprising six elements, as shown in Table 11.7.

To illustrate to yourself an example of the cultural competence dimension of Taft's model, you may wish to pause and take the quiz that appears in Box 11.11.

BOX 11.11

Activity suggestion

Test your multicultural IQ

Instructions: The quiz below involves culturally

specific knowledge similar to scales of *cultural competence* (Richardson, 1961; Taft, 1985) deemed to form a component of ethnic identity development by some theorists (see the text). Choose the *one* best answer for each item by marking choice (a), (b), (c) or (d).

- Skite** means (a) to brag (b) to skate on ice (c) to mine for gold (d) to hang-glide.
- To be crook** is (a) to break the law (b) to be a coward (c) to feel ill (d) to speak badly.
- Strides** are (a) fence posts (b) pig's trotters (c) gum boots (d) a pair of trousers.
- Dinkum** is (a) a starchy foodstuff extracted from the Australian native yam (b) a term of endearment for a baby (c) the genuine article (d) a musical instrument.
- To make a blue** means (a) to prepare a meal (b) to go sailing (c) to make a mistake (d) to give orders.
- Buckley's** is (a) a gold mine (b) a tall story (c) a type of kangaroo (d) no chance at all.
- A **bowser** is (a) a morally conservative person (b) a petrol pump (c) a breed of dog (d) a kitchen utensil.
- Dill** describes (a) a small stream (b) a three-legged stool (c) a dunce (d) a native bird.
- To have a lurk** means (a) to come up with a tricky scheme (b) to take a rest (c) to conceal oneself (d) to consume a meal.
- Which of the following differs from the other three? (a) puha (b) pipi (c) tuna (d) kina.
- The opposite of an enemy is (a) manu (b) hoa (c) toru (d) marae.
- A koha is (a) a fruit (b) a vegetable (c) a gift (d) a weapon.

Interpretation: Items (1) to (9) test knowledge of Australian slang and are based on Clifford (1968) and Richardson (1961). Items (10) to (12) test knowledge of New Zealand Maori culture and are taken from a 40-item quiz developed by Thomas (1988). (For the answers, see p. 384 at the end of this chapter.)

TABLE 11.7

Six elements of an Australian multicultural ethnic identity

Identity element	Description
Cultural competence	Sound awareness of mainstream and minority ethnic practices
Self-perceived identity balance	Answers to questions such as 'How Australian [Greek] do you feel?'
Feeling of belonging	Socialising mainly with mainstream friends versus the segregated ethnic subcommunity
Ethnic reference	The culture the person values and emulates the most
Citizenship	Australian citizenship taken out by those who must give back their birth citizenship is the strongest indicator
Social identity	Others' ratings of the person as seeming 'foreign' versus 'Australian'

Taft (1985) studied the relationship between ethnic identification, as defined by elements in Table 11.7, and the psychological adjustment of Australian-born teens of British, Polish, Italian, Greek and German parents. He found that boys from each of these ethnic groups scored higher than girls on all the criteria for Anglo-Australian identification, possibly because European-Australian parents tend to keep their daughters closer to home than their sons.

On the whole, however, these adolescents appeared to be developing well and were remarkably free of negative symptoms such as identity diffusion and psychological maladjustment. In line with Phinney's model (see Table 11.6), many appeared to have reached Stage 3, in which they were able to select components of each ethnic identity that best suited their own personalities, and reported unusually high levels of satisfaction with their identity choices. In fact, one study comparing Greek-Australian teenagers with Greek adolescents in Greece showed that those in Australia 'were better adjusted in that they had higher self-esteem and fewer life problems' (Taft, 1985, p. 371). Taft suggested that a secure identification with one culture facilitated the achievement of satisfactory identification with the other. As in Phinney and Rosenthal's (1993) Melbourne study, the quality of the relationship between parent and child was a major predictor of the successful achievement of a secure sense of ethnic identity. According to Taft:

Conflicts may, in certain groups, concern issues which are salient to particular cultures, such as restrictions on the social autonomy of Greek and Italian girls, but the evidence indicates that any such conflicts concern the parents' child-raising practices rather than differences in other values. (pp. 370–1)

When the teenager has roots of culture with a collectivistic orientation and strong social ties across generations, ethnic identification can ease some of the stormy stresses of mainstream adolescent identity development, as Box 11.12 illustrates.

Identity development in Aboriginal Australian adolescents

Historically, in Australian Aboriginal culture the process of achieving a sense of personal identity was traditionally very

different from the experiences of teenagers growing up in societies with a European tradition. In place of the decade or more of indecision that a typical European or Anglo-Australian adolescent now devotes to resolving the identity crisis, there was one brief event in traditional Aboriginal life: the pubertal initiation ceremony (see Chapter 10). Considered cross-culturally, the duration of an identity crisis provides no meaningful guide to the quality of the

BOX 11.12

A case in point

A charming age in Samoa

When Louise was 14, her parents migrated from California to New Zealand. En route to Auckland, their ship docked for a day in Samoa. Her father made the following entry in his diary:

22 June. *We arrived in Samoa, port of Pago Pago, last night. This morning we struggled down the ship's ladder, with too much assistance, and set out to the south along the edge of a long inlet from the wide harbour. We greeted and were greeted by men, women and children also walking, mostly towards the ship. We passed open-air markets and innumerable grocery and general merchandise stores, coconut palms, a banana tree laden with bananas, scores of different flowered trees and shrubs and houses built on piles with round thatched roofs. Louise wanted a souvenir so we stopped at a long thatch-roofed building lined with low tables displaying native crafts, mostly shell and seed jewellery. She was stand-offish at first, seeing no price tags and imagining the worst. But when we asked the price of a necklace and heard '50 cents' her fears were dispelled. Soon we were talking with a charming 13-year-old named Anne who was helping her mother at one of the tables. Louise bought a necklace from her mother. Our conversation continued and soon we were made a present of another necklace. Peg then bought one and before we left we were given another present. In the evening, after we had returned to the ship and were at sea again, Louise made some crayon sketches of her recollections. Her first thought was of the souvenir shop.*

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identity eventually achieved. In fact, Erik Erikson's own observations of the initiation rituals practised by North American Indians taught him to recognise 'the drama of puberty rites and the enormous existential experience a kid goes through'. He therefore concluded that, in a culture practising pubertal initiation, 'the transition may take a shorter time, but it may be terribly intense' (1983, p. 28).

However, for the contemporary Indigenous Australian teenager, the identity question may no longer be as simple as it was before European influences entered Australia. According to Western Australian anthropologists Catherine and Ronald Berndt (1964):

Children growing up in a traditional environment did not need to ask, 'Who am I? What am I here for? What is the meaning of life?' and so on. These questions were answered for them. Now the answers are less certain, even for children growing up on mission stations where indoctrination is most tenacious. As far as Aboriginal adults are concerned, the degree of control they can exercise over their children is diminishing rapidly. (p. 139)

John Money and his colleagues (Money et al., 1970) also noted problems in identity development among Aboriginal youth on Elcho Island in the Northern Territory. In 1970 this Aboriginal community continued to practise the traditional pubertal circumcision ceremony to initiate boys into tribal manhood. But Yolngu adolescents were also exposed to mainstream Anglo-Australian influences at their high school in Darwin, as well as through contact with missionaries and occasional tourists visiting their local community. This intensified the identity dilemma. According to Money and his colleagues (1970), these Indigenous adolescents were experiencing:

acutely and at first hand the incompatibility of what their fathers and tribal elders stood for, versus what their school teachers and others of the mission staff stood for. The adults were unable to work out a compromise. Those youths who were unable to take sides, completely rejecting either the Aboriginal old guard or the mission new, had no model on whom to develop their teenaged sense of masculine identity. (p. 396)

Money's observation of profound uncertainty and occasional delinquent acts by these boys is consistent with Erikson's (1968) notion of an increased risk of identity diffusion when a young person in a rapidly changing culture strives to integrate two essentially incompatible ('traditional' versus 'modern') sets of ideals. As Money went on to explain:

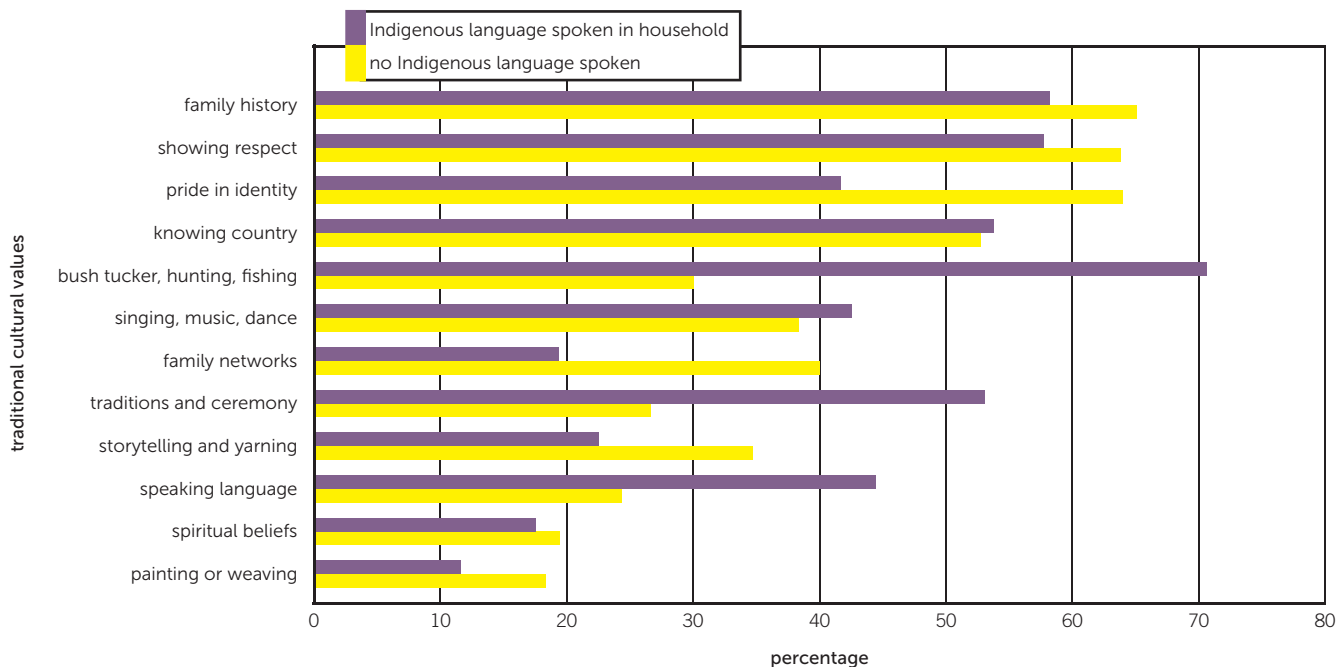
The elders resisted modernization and the yielding up of their ancient traditions. In doing so they abdicated their responsibilities to their young people, who could not identify with the programme of traditional ways of behaving that the old men wished to perpetuate. Simultaneously, the young people, having no mandate from their elders, could not identify with the programme of modernization and Christianization as sponsored by the mission. Their solution was to escape their dilemma by putting together a programme of their own. (p. 396)

The benefits of an Indigenous Australian ethnic identity

These findings from the 1970s highlight some of the special challenges for Indigenous youth of the process of identity growth. At the same time, however, there are

FIGURE 11.13

Indigenous Australians' identification with traditional cultural values as a function of family language use



added benefits to be gained by Indigenous Australian adolescents who manage to incorporate elements of traditional Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander culture into their budding identities. Values that are fundamental to life in a traditional Indigenous community, including respect for elders and for the knowledge distilled through generations of long-enduring and deeply respected cultural and ceremonial practices, can supply stability and facilitate identification with traditional values. Participation in a ceremonial rite of passage (see Boxes 10.3 and 11.7) can also assist with identity crisis resolution. The sequence of culturally honoured practices surrounding the ceremonial passage to adulthood (see Chapter 10) offers clear guidance as to what a mature identity should consist of. At the same time, further initiation rites throughout adulthood into more advanced levels of elder status and deeper levels of cultural and spiritual knowledge also supply an optimistic model of the lifespan as a steady ascent towards wisdom and integrity (see Chapter 1).

Another advantage of traditional Aboriginal culture's model of a lifelong sequence of age-graded ceremonies and religious pubertal rites can be the opportunity to gain a mature identity suddenly via initiation, once youthful 'wild oats' have been sown, in contrast to the protracted identity crises of adolescents growing up in mainstream Anglo-Australian culture.

Identification with Aboriginal Australian culture and the incorporation of Aboriginality into a fully resolved ethnic identity are both more common among Indigenous people who live in remote traditional communities than among those living in cities, suburbs and large country towns. Nevertheless, even for Indigenous Australians in general, identification with aspects of Aboriginal culture is still very strong, as Figure 11.14 illustrates. This is the more impressive in the light of the unusual pressures against Indigenous identification that operated for the population of Indigenous Australians who contributed the data to Figure 11.14 (ABS, 2004). In fact, 8 percent of these adults were themselves members of the Stolen Generation and a further 36 percent had a close relative (e.g. a parent or a child) who was. In other words, during a sad chapter in Australia's history, these Indigenous adults had been exposed to the cultural identity stressor of forcible removal of children from their Indigenous families to be reared by white Australians in mission schools and other settings as a deliberate government policy to force assimilation into the mainstream. Despite this, the vast majority continue to identify with cultural ceremonies, the importance of the traditional homelands and the role of elders as community leaders (see Figure 11.14).

Language plays a crucial role in the development of an ethnic identity. For Indigenous Australian children, opportunities and encouragement to master an Indigenous language at home or at school vary by place of residence. In remote traditional communities, bilingual language input is more readily available than in cities and large rural population centres (see Chapters 6 and 7). The importance that parents and other adults place on learning Indigenous

languages fluently is greater in remote regions where more than 60 percent of parents would like to see their child study an Indigenous language in school (LSIC, 2012). Furthermore, a significant link was discovered between the family's speaking of an Indigenous language and pride in ethnic identity as Indigenous. More traditional cultural values were incorporated into the personal identities of adults who spoke Indigenous languages at home. They also had significantly greater pride in being Indigenous, as Figure 11.14 shows.

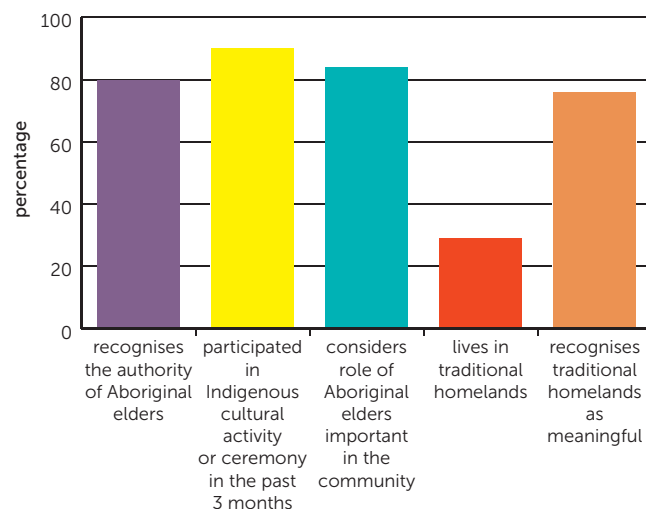
Yvonne Clark (2000) studied Indigenous Australians' identity development from a lifespan perspective. She found that Aboriginal identity is strong and a source of pride, not only for those adhering to a traditional lifestyle in remote communities but also for many Indigenous Australians who live in cities and country towns. As she explained:

When one meets with another Aboriginal person, one of the first things that is negotiated in the relationship is one's identity as an Aboriginal person. Questions and conversations revolve around where one's clan group is from, who one's people and relations are, one's links with and acceptance from that community, whom one might know in the broader Aboriginal community and with whom one mixes. (p. 151)

Clark argued that such discussions served to reaffirm identity while giving it a social meaning.

Clark also interviewed a group of seven Aboriginal adults aged 30 to 50 who, as members of the Stolen Generation, had been separated from their biological families during infancy or childhood and reared in foster homes. She found that identity development was extraordinarily difficult for most of these men and women,

FIGURE 11.14 Cultural identification by Indigenous Australians (in all places of residence combined) over age 15



Source: Based on data in Australian Bureau of Statistics Cat. No. 4714.0 (2004).

not only because of their early loss of contact with Aboriginal culture, but also because of the deceit and secrecy that had often surrounded their background and roots throughout their growing up. While most had come to terms with this by the time they were interviewed, their identity growth was still continuing. Overall, however, Clark concluded that ‘despite the fluid and sometimes shifting identities that participants drew upon, Aboriginality was a core identity’ (p. 156).

In general, for all Aboriginal Australians, the outlook for identity growth is highly positive, according to Clark. As she explained: ‘We live as Aboriginal people and actively construct our identity around this core and salient part of ourselves’ (p. 157).

Identity development in New Zealand Maori adolescents

In a pioneering exploration of ethnic identity development in Maori New Zealand adolescents, David Thomas (1988) developed a test of Maori knowledge (see Box 11.11). When he administered the test to a group of New Zealand adolescents aged 11 to 16, he found no difference between Maori and Pakeha (Anglo) teenagers who lived in urban Hamilton; both groups did relatively badly, with an average of less than one in four items correct. But Maori teenagers from rural schools in small country towns possessing a Maori *pa* (settlement) did much better. Their average scores were more than double those of the urban Maoris. Thomas also found that the extent to which individual adolescents of Maori background identified with Maori culture and described themselves as ‘all’ or ‘mostly’ Maori, rather than Pakeha, positively predicted their scores in the quiz. Thus, cultural knowledge and ethnic identification appear to go hand in hand.

In an earlier comparison of the four identity statuses (see pages 375–6) between Maori and Pakeha high school students in New Zealand, James Chapman and John Nicholls (1976) found that Maori teenagers were disproportionately more likely to experience the most problematic of the status outcomes, identity diffusion, than mainstream New Zealand teenagers were. However, this study was conducted during the 1970s at a time when Maori culture and language were less accessible to children and adolescents growing up than they are today.

Carla Ann Houkamau (2010) studied how cohort contrasts in the place of Maori culture, language and values in New Zealand society between 1970 and today have shaped identity development for Maori women. She noted that during the 1970s the prevailing view held by Maori and Pakeha New Zealanders alike was that the Maori should assimilate into the mainstream culture. Consequently ‘the education system did not endorse Maori culture and language and negative views around Maori people and culture were commonplace’ (p. 183). As a result, many Maori New Zealanders forged an ethnic identity that failed to incorporate such positive elements of Maori culture as respect for elders, warmth, generosity and a strong and

supportive focus on family and community. The excerpts in Box 11.13 from Houkamau’s interviews with two Maori women from Generation X (born in the 1970s) illustrate the consequences for identity development as a whole.

A cohort-historical change (see Chapter 2) for Maori children born after 1985 (the Millennial Generation) led to a striking change in the ethnic identity development of this younger Maori generation. Maori language was incorporated into the school curriculum along with a positive educational focus on Maori history and culture:

BOX 11.13

A case in point

Identity in Maori women in New Zealand

Carla Houkamau (2010) discovered a contrast in ethnic identity development for Maori women in New Zealand who had been born in the assimilationist 1970s as contrasted with those younger women from the Millennial Generation who were born after Maori cultural renaissance of the 1980s that gave rise to ‘early exposure to affirmative ideologies’ (p. 179) regarding Maori language, culture and rights to full equality with Pakeha New Zealanders.

Generation X women (born in the 1970s)

One Generation X woman reflected on her childhood identity as follows:

I couldn’t accept myself being Maori because we were teased at school so I used to hang out with Pakeha. The Maori children at school those days they were really scruffy and you know we used to get teased a lot. And then you had all these well-dressed Pakeha so I used to just model them. I found it really hard like to feel good about being Maori like the work place and Maori are always being put down. (p. 190)

Another looked back on her adolescence as follows:

I look back and I had a lot of pain and grief associated with my past. It makes me so angry now when I think on how much I missed out on with my Maori side. I didn’t even know any better either, which makes it worse. I think that I missed out on so much because I wasn’t connected to my Maori identity. All I was taught about being Maori was negative and I didn’t have any other way to think about it. (p. 190)

Millennials (Generation Y: born after 1985)

Maori women born after 1985 into the Millennial Generation (see Chapter 2) reported a stronger sense of Maori ethnic identity, as illustrated in this young woman’s experience:

For the first four years of my life I was immersed in Maori—you had to listen to it, it was the only form of language that was spoken so, you know, you fully immersed in it and being Maori ... so I suppose you could say I definitely know who I was and I have always felt very comfortable with that side of myself—whereas I knew who I was and where we fitted into things as a Maori person. (p. 190)