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How do Moroccan-Dutch parents (re)construct their parenting practices? Post-migration parenthood as a social site for learning and identity



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ABSTRACT

In this paper we investigate how mothers and fathers living in culturally heterogeneous contexts learn about the practice of parenting. By applying a communities of practice perspective (Wenger, 1998; 2010) on the (re)construction of parenting practice postmigration, this study highlights the under-examined processes of social negotiation over meaning making and identity formation underlying cultural transformations within the family context. Using a discourse analytical approach embedded in an ethnographically inspired methodology, we include 1) in-depth social network interview data with 23 Moroccan-Dutch parents and 2) observational data of bottom-up parenting programme sessions taking place at participants' neighborhood-based migrant organizations. Analyses revealed how a social learning dynamic is at work when parents experience clashes at boundaries of cultural meanings. Navigating and negotiating multiple cultural frameworks in interaction with others, parents use and adopt renewed senses of belonging to claim direction in this cultural heterogeneity. As such, they re-interpret meanings in social learning interactions with others and create space to (re)construct parenting practices situated in their urban postmigration residence. This analysis exemplifies how applying a sociocultural learning approach to parenting postmigration reconsiders our understanding of parenthood as a social learning site on which renewed communities and 'glocalized' practices emerge.

1. Introduction

In this paper we bring together social learning, parenting and migration studies to investigate how mothers and fathers living in culturally heterogeneous contexts learn and (re)construct parenting practices. Grounding ourselves in the sociocultural tradition of Vygotsky (1978) and interpreters such as Wertsch (1991), Cole (1996) and Rogoff (2003), amongst others, we aim to show how parents' daily social interactions serve as sites for learning about the practice of child care. So far, parenting is predominantly studied in an instrumental way related to child development (Cottam & Espie, 2014; Gillies, 2005; Weille, 2011), investigating how parental behavior and family relationships affect children's physical (Surkan, Kennedy, Hurly, & Black, 2011), socioemotional (Sheffield Morris, Silk, Steinberg, Myers, & Robinson, 2007), and academic functioning (Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007). Instead, in this study we focus on people's learning experience as a parent, understood from a 'communities of practice' perspective (Wenger, 2010, 1998), combined with perspectives from migration studies. In particular, we present a study investigating the social learning

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processes of Moroccan-Dutch parents in informal as well as formalized social learning spaces in their urban postmigration residence.

A strand of study has taken interest in parenthood as an important platform for adult learning. By understanding challenges parents experience as “powerful opportunities for learning” (Marienau & Segal, 2006; p. 768), researchers argue that questions and insecurities in parenting can serve as preconditions for learning (Demick, 2006; Hoek, 2007; van der Pas, 2003). This learning may stretch even beyond the domain of child care with respect to existential, emotional, social and material meaning (Ho, 2017; Weille, 2011). Most of these studies approach parental learning from an individual perspective and consider it as happening through reflection on personal experiences and actions. However, some studies also point to the relevance of social circumstances. For instance, Hoek (2007) urges researchers, policy makers and practitioners to redirect their view on parents such that parents are recognized as ‘learning agents’ in their own informal social contexts. In addition, studies by Du Bois-Reymond (2009), Euteneuer and Uhlendorff (2014) and Andresen, Fegter, Iranee, and Bütow (2016) serve as such examples, by investigating how modernity in terms of urbanization and digitalization challenges young parenthood as a space in which people negotiate interests and (re)construct family concepts. Although these studies leave us with the interesting suggestion that parenthood can be an important platform for learning situated in people’s encounters with wider social conditions, little is known about the exact social learning processes underlying parents’ (re)construction of practices.

Both social learning theory and migration studies offer promising conceptualizations that enable us insight into informal social processes happening in everyday family lives. Departing from a sociocultural perspective, we understand learning and human development as an interdependent process by which people shape their social surroundings, as well as themselves, through their actions. This notion of learning as taking place between individuals and the social world embedded in their semiotic, cultural and historical interaction (Wertsch, 1991), draws our attention to the collective dimension of learning, as knowledge is co-created. Specifically, we draw upon Wenger’s (2010) elaboration of learning as a practice-oriented meaning making process intertwined with peoples’ identity and sense of belonging in their everyday lives. As the meaning of practices and people’s sense of belonging become contested postmigration, his social learning theory may provide an interesting angle to study how people come to new understandings and learn through social interactions. So far, the communities of practice perspective has neither been applied to the learning of parents, nor has it been situated postmigration. Furthermore, migration as a context for learning, and specifically learning taking place within informal urban social spaces, seems to be an underexposed area in the sociocultural learning field in general. However, as increased mobility, globalization and new technologies lead people and communities to engage with one another across geographical and virtual boundaries, recent conceptualizations in migration studies may be of particular interest to elaborate our understanding of social learning in such setting.

In our aim to explore this theoretical cross-pollination and disentangle social learning processes underlying (re)constructions in parenting practices postmigration, we elaborate on the above in the following theoretical framework. First, we present Wenger’s social learning theory to describe how social negotiations over meaning and identity can lever social learning. Second, we look into parenting in migration by discussing concepts of culture, belonging and cultural transformation in order to understand the particularities of parenting postmigration.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Learning in communities of practice: a practice-oriented negotiation over meaning and identity

Embedded in social learning theory, Wenger’s communities of practice perspective (2010) departs from the understanding that knowledge is something that is shared and constructed in people’s daily social interactions. He proposes that people engaging in the same practice and having a shared interest to learn about it, form a community of practice. Studies that have applied this perspective on the learning of teachers (Cowan & Menchaca, 2014), social workers (Smith, 2016) and farmers (Anh Tran, James, & Pittcock, 2018) show how people come to new understandings through their shared engagement in the practice, as they constantly exchange and negotiate with one another what that practice means to them. In line with sociocultural notions of learning, this negotiation over meaning is characterized by dual ‘realignment’: a person and his/her social surroundings reject and/or take over one another’s competencies and their meanings (Wenger, 2010). As a learning outcome, new meanings and practices evolve in a continuous manner. In Wenger’s (2010) view, engaging in a practice and becoming competent in it is highly intertwined with people’s identification with that practice and with others involved in the same activity. It is through identification that we place and orient ourselves and our practices in the social world, giving meaning to where and to whom our practices, and consequently ourselves, belong (Wenger, 2010). Engaging in a practice and learning something new is therefore a process of meaning making in one’s personal life.

Parenting as child socializing practice can be understood as purposeful activity, as parents intend to care for new generations as well as introduce them in their family, communities and society at large (Grusec & Hastings, 2008; Rogoff, 2003). As family practice it is informal in nature and becomes inseparable of many daily activities of care givers (Du Bois-Reymond, 2009). The communities of practice perspective offers us a particularly useful analytical lens to study the learning of parents postmigration, because of its emphasis on social meaning making and identity formation in learning (Wenger, 2010), both of which are under pressure in contexts of high diversity. Furthermore, by studying how changes in understanding are interdependently “situated within wider social units” (Reed et al., 2010), a sociocultural learning perspective enables us to study the collective dimensions of learning in addition to individual learning. As such, we use a relational approach to understand how people come to new understandings and (re)construct parenting practices through their social ties, offering us insight into social dynamics of learning in urban postmigration settings.

2.2. Parenting in migration: concepts of culture, belonging and cultural transformation

Aspiring to capture the social complexity of postmigration contexts, we draw upon recent academic discussions within migration studies to define our understanding of culture, belonging and cultural transformation. Scholars increasingly emphasize the interconnectivity of multiple cultures and contexts in migrants' lives (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004) and the fact that they have become 'hypermobile' through these connections (Diminescu, 2008). Diminescu (2008) argues "to consider the migrant in all his modes of mobility (physical, imaginary, virtual) (...)" (p. 570). As such, traditional notions of institutional borders as markers for cultural belonging are diminished and many have argued for a vision on culture as 'deterritorialized' (see e.g. Hermans & Kempen, 1998; Papastergiadis, 2000). Drawing upon these notions of mobility and deterritorialization, we adopt a perspective on culture as being fluid, dynamic and in continuous transformation in close relation to the particular people and contexts involved, instead of being bound to a particular 'root' or 'ground' (Bhatia & Ram, 2001; Chirkov, 2009; Tardiff-Williams & Fisher, 2009). These conceptualizations lead us to recognize migrants' belonging as involving multiple communities within and across national borders and in diverse 'modes' simultaneously.

Not intending to reject the location-bound origin of culture, this understanding shifts our analytical focus to "those moments or processes where cultural differences are articulated rather than when and where they were initially formed", (De Haan & Leander, 2011; p. 323). Some studies have taken particular interest in postmigration parents' (re)constructions taking place in and through social interactions, such as in informal social networks. Research by Du Bois-Reymond (2009) highlights differences between native and migrant families in their use of social relations as learning resources. de Haan, de Winter, Koeman, Hofland, and van Verseveld (2013) show how Moroccan-Dutch mothers use their networks to gather information about 'Dutch' practices as well as to discuss 'Moroccan' ways of parenting. Hermans and Kempen have used the term 'glocalisation' (1998; after Robertson, 1995), in order to capture how these (re)constructions in practices at the boundaries of cultural meanings are both global and local. They write: "(...) in an era of increasing globalization in which the global and the local continuously interpenetrate, cultures increasingly develop as interconnected parts of the world." (p. 1115). Using a relational approach to disentangle how postmigration parents come to new meanings in interaction with others connects to this perspective of hypermobile cultures in which multiple frames of reference meet within and between people.

3. Method

3.1. Study background

In this paper we study the learning of Moroccan-Dutch mothers and fathers as they engage in parenting communities of practice at neighborhood-based migrant organizations located in the urban context of Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Empirical data presented here are derived from a 2013–2017 research project investigating how Moroccan-Dutch parents define parenting practices in informal as well as formalized social learning spaces (see for a detailed account van Beurden, De Haan & Jongmans (2018)). For this paper's purpose, we study learning that is defined as happening in participants' social interactions, both in everyday spontaneous exchanges within informal social networks as well as in a formalized setting through participation in bottom-up parenting programme Youth of Today! (YoT) executed at local migrant organizations. As for this second setting, we focus on the learning that is initiated by participants as they engage with their social ties, even if they do so in a training format. As researchers we have neither been involved in the YoT- programme design nor its implementation. We limit ourselves to the analysis of parents' social interactions, because we are mainly interested in social learning dynamics that involve meaning making and identity formation as they take place in informal and formalized spaces. As such, we do not intend to evaluate the programmes educational function, techniques used nor its outcomes in this paper.

Rotterdam is the Netherlands' second largest urban region (ca. 630.000 inhabitants in 2016; CBS, 2018a) and counts over 170 different nationalities. Moroccan descendants cover 7% of the urban population. The Moroccan-Dutch community has its history in labour migration since the 1960's (Van van Praag, 2006) and counts ca. 390.000 people in total in 2017 (CBS, 2018b). Besides its several established generations, a small immigration flow from Morocco continues, mostly for reasons of family reunion and formation. The community is characterized by two ethnic groups (Arabic and Amazigh) of which the great majority practices Sunni Islamic faith (Van Praag, 2006). Cross-cultural research about parental ethnographies shows that main values in Dutch socialization, such as autonomy and authoritative instruction, are rooted in a more individualizing, secular orientation in Dutch culture (Harkness, Super, & Van Tijen, 2007). A review by Pels and De Haan (2007) of literature looking into changes in family socialization of Moroccans after migration to the Netherlands shows a twofold of continuity and discontinuity. Values and expectations, for example, concerning age-based hierarchy in family relations, appear to be more 'robust'; while everyday practices gain more flexibility after migration. For example, parents and children find a greater variety of communication efforts to direct behavior and engage in family relations (Pels & De Haan, 2007). More recent research by de Haan et al. (2013) reports of the formation of 'hybrid' parenting practices within Moroccan-Dutch families, such as parents' investment in emotional closeness and authoritative communication to morally guide and direct their offspring. The same study also shows how Moroccan-Dutch mothers use their parenting networks as a valuable source to gather information about Dutch practices as well as to discuss Moroccan ways of parenting.

Aimed to support parents in raising teenagers in urban areas the YoT-parenting programme was developed by regional Moroccan-Dutch organization the Attanmia Foundation in collaboration with the local community. The programme was implemented by community members through its integration in regular meetings of neighborhood-based migrant organizations scattered over the city. The programmes' intentions are pre-dominantly process-oriented, offering parents techniques of reflection, dialogue,

observation, feedback and negotiation, while thematically addressing socio-psychological and Islamic theories on child development, parenting styles, urban youth culture and citizenship. The bottom-up format allows for the content to be directed by participants in collaboration with YoT-trainers (van Beurden, De Haan & Jongmans, 2018). More information about the programme and research project can be found here (in Dutch only): <http://www.attanmia.nl/projecten/project-shabab-jeugd-van-nu/>.

3.2. Participants, procedure and instruments

Using an ethnographically inspired method we used two nested samples derived from the extensive research project, including 1) in-depth social network interview data ($N = 23$) and 2) observational data of YoT-programme sessions ($N = 5$). Thirteen mothers and ten fathers from six groups participated in the interviews. Interviewees' mean age was 45 years at time of data collection, with a minimum and maximum of 36 and 52 respectively. Looking at participants' migration age, 22,7% migrated to the Netherlands during childhood (ranging from five to 14 years old) and 77,3% of participants during adulthood (ranging from 16 to 29 years old). Although the Dutch legal age for adulthood is 18, we decided to mark it off from 16 years in this study, because those participants that migrated at that age did so for marital reasons. Most participants were married, had three or four children with at least one aged 10–23 years old and resided in the same Dutch urban area of the migrant organization in which they engaged. Educational levels ranged from no educational experience ($N = 1$) to vocational training ($N = 15$) and higher education ($N = 7$). Half of the participants were employed (47,8%) and 39,1% did volunteer work. Observed groups included four mother groups (nos. 1, 2, 11 & 12) and one father (no. 14) group, ranging from 6 to 18 parents per group. They were located in two neighborhoods centers, two migrant organizations and a mosque spread over three inner-city and one suburban neighborhood. The great majority of observed participants were Moroccan-born, with some born in Algeria, Iraq, France and the Netherlands. The gender-homogeneity of the groups mirrors predominant social norms within the community concerning gender-separation in public spheres. The higher prevalence of mothers reflects the higher attendance of women to neighborhood centers and Attanmia's programmes.

We invited parents for research participation through introductory meetings of the YoT-programme and leaflets, which informed them about the research aim and procedure. An informed consent procedure was included and pseudonyms are used in this paper to refer to participants. Ethical approval for the study was given by the FETC (Faculty Ethics Review Board) of Utrecht University. Two pilots were performed in order to test research instruments and the procedure. As no significant changes were made, pilot data was included in this analysis. Interviews and observed meetings took on average 40–60 min and two-and-a-half hours respectively. They were done in Dutch and Moroccan-Arabic by the first author, assisted by a multilingual research team.

In order to collect data about social learning happening through spontaneous social encounters, participants' individual narratives about parenting and learning experiences in their social networks were gathered through repeated in-depth social network interviews. A semi-structured interview design was used with open questions about pre-defined topics (parenting concepts, practices, context, and changes in parenting over time), upon which participants were invited to reflect post-hoc in conversation with the interviewer (Silverman, 2013). Moreover, participants were asked to identify significant social relationships for their parenting. Following, questions were phrased to target participants' social learning experiences concerning parenting within their social networks, for example about the role contacts play (“*Can you provide an example of a change in parenting due to your interaction with one of your contacts?*”), reciprocity (“*Can you describe the role you play for others in your network in relation to the parenting of their children?*”) and diversity in the network (“*Do you see differences in your support and learning exchanges between contacts?*”). In order to collect data about social learning happening through participants' lived experience of group discourses (Silverman, 2013) in their communities of practice, ethnographic field notes were gathered through participatory observations at YoT-programme sessions. A topic list guiding the observations included peer-to-peer learning interactions (exchange of or reflections on knowledge, ideas, experiences, advice, or support between parents), programme enactment by trainers and group dynamics revolving around meaning making and identity as our main interests.

3.3. Analytical framework

Transcribed interview data and ethnographic field notes were first thematically coded by the first author and one research assistant using NVivo 11. software. Interpretative analysis methodologies were used with a discourse analytical approach (Gee, 2014), focused on describing how participants' purposive interactions reflect ideas about parenting, learning, cultural meanings and belonging. Drawing upon our theoretical framework we used below questions to guide the analysis of participants' individual narratives and group discourses. These questions were coherently used in the analysis to determine how social interactions, identifications with diverse communities and interrelated negotiations over meaning function as dynamics for learning and the (re)constructions of practice:

1. Can we find social interactions in which participants explore and negotiate parenting practices at the boundaries of cultural meanings?
2. Can we find if and how participants (dis-)identify with different communities as they engage in these negotiations?
3. Can we find if and how participants (re)construct, or re-align, practices in relation to the communities they (dis-)identify with?
4. Can we find if and how participants produce ‘glocalized’ knowledge, as they engage in social negotiations over meaning and identity and (re)construct parenting practices?

Excerpt 1

Interview notes Meissane (213–248).

“Soms zeg ik tegen moeders, het gaat niet om de hoofddoek of djellaba, die lange jurk, of Arabisch of Berbers. Het gaat om de regels. Dan botsen de kinderen niet met de cultuur en de tijd. Regels volgen, dan neem je verantwoordelijkheid. Onze regels passen niet, je moet je aanpassen. Ik zeg niet dat het perfect gaat. Het gaat er niet om of wat goed is, het gaat er om dat het past”. (...)

“Hoe ik ben opgevoed, past bij mij in Marokko. Ik zou ermee zijn doorgegaan in Marokko. Maar nu heb je verschil tussen twee landen. Hier past het niet. Wat het beste is om te doen, is goeie punten uit Nederlandse cultuur halen. Niet slaan, ik mag belonen, aandacht geven, nieuwsgierig voor hén leven, voor hen uitdagingen vinden. (...) Als ze groot zijn hier, zijn ze in een ander land”.

“Sometimes I tell mothers, it's not about the veil or djellaba, the long dress, or Arabic or Berber [Tamazight]. It is about the rules. So the children don't clash with the culture or the time. Following rules, that's how you take responsibility. Our rules don't fit, you have to adjust. I don't say it goes perfect. It's not about what's good, it's about whether it fits”. (...)

“How I'm raised fits with me in Morocco. I would have continued with it in Morocco. But now there is a difference between two countries. Here it doesn't fit. The best thing to do is to take good things from the Dutch culture. No beating, I can reward, give attention, live curiously for them, find challenges for them. (...) If they have grown up, they are in a different country”.

4. Results

In this analysis we looked at social learning dynamics happening in participants' interactions and how these led to new understandings of parenting. We analyzed how participants explored and negotiated the meaning of parenting practices, and specifically how these negotiations were informed by references to belonging or not belonging to communities in order to define meaning. Our analysis shows that participants' interactions thematically revolved around specific parenting issues, such as teenagers' increased social and financial autonomy; parents' fear of 'street culture'; discrimination as perceived socialization risks in their urban residence; and questions about children's media use within our digital age. Participants' experiences of clashes at cultural boundaries are interwoven in the social exchanges about these issues, as we illustrate below. In the following we describe the findings of particular social learning dynamics, while keeping the aforementioned questions of analysis in mind.

From the analysis we found that tensions between different cultural frameworks experienced by participants in their current parenting context created learning opportunities. These learning experiences were identified as involving particular collective processes in participants' social networks and learning communities. Reflecting upon parenting practices, participants negotiated the meaning of these practices in interaction with others with respect to their senses of belonging, as illustrated by the excerpts below. The narrative of mother Meissane (39, 3 children; YoT-group 1) in [Excerpt 1](#) shows how migration opened up a social learning space situated within everyday encounters, urged by the need to redefine the meaning of parenting practices:

Taking a 'non-normative' position in her reflection on different cultural meanings (“*It's not about what's good*”), Meissane uses an argument of 'fit to place and time' (“*it's about whether it fits*”) to re-align her parenting practices to the new context, and accordingly advises other mothers to do the same. As such, this mother experienced her re-location as a migrant as an invitation, or even a demand for learning. In order to prevent her children from experiencing cultural clashes (“*So the children don't clash with the culture or the time*”) and embed them in the society in which they are growing up (“*If they have grown up, they are in a different country*”), she actively explored and adopted new cultural practices (“*to take good things from the Dutch culture*”). Placing herself within a migratory transition (“*now there is a difference between two countries*”), Meissane's motivation to learn is induced and sustained by this identification, as she emphasized she would not have changed if she would not have migrated (“*I would have continued with it in Morocco*”). Moreover, her learning interactions with others are strongly directed by this notion as input for change and learning. This example illustrates how migration opens up a social learning space manifested in participants' everyday social encounters.

The learning dynamic found from the data analysis shows how participants come to new understandings through an interactive process of identification and dis-identification, to define the meaning of parenting practices. This is further illustrated by [Excerpt 2](#). A group discourse of 18 mothers of YoT-group 12 shows how they refer to multiple different cultural frameworks and communities to collectively scrutinize and explore the meaning of the practice of giving pocket money to teenagers:

The practice, with which they are not familiar through their own socialization (“*in Moroccan culture parents are not used to give children pocket money*”) and with which they are now confronted (“*This does happen in the Netherlands*”), is ultimately given meaning through identification with a 'global' religious community (“*doesn't look at other parents and that culture doesn't matter, but that she finds security in the Islam*”). As such, these mothers relieve cultural dilemma's encountered in parenting and produce 'glocalized' knowledge through the renewed meaning they give to the practice of giving pocket money. Moreover, by sharing their search for the meaning of practices with each other, personal learning processes at the boundaries of frameworks (“*culture can clash with the Islam*”) become a collective transcendence of boundaries. While doing so, these mothers together with the trainer came to a shared understanding of the cultural transformation of practices through their communal engagement (“*culture is a man-made, ever-changing process*”). From the data analysis we found that participants used their reference to a global religious community to explore the meaning of practices for other parenting issues, too, such as to morally guide children in peer relations in the neighborhood and to monitor children's media use.

The above examples illustrate how clashes of parenting practices experienced at the boundaries of cultural meanings open up a learning space manifested in participants' social interactions. From the analysis we found that collective learning processes emerging from participants' need to negotiate and define meaning, serve as a platform for a new, local sense of belonging that drives further

Excerpt 2

Observational notes YoT-group 2, session 3 (291–306).

Hajar vertelt dat in de Marokkaanse cultuur ouders niet gewend zijn om kinderen zakgeld te geven. In Nederland gebeurt dat wel en om zekerheid te krijgen over wat ze moest doen, heeft Hajar de Islam geraadpleegd. Daarin vond ze dat de profeten ook zakgeld gaven. Hajar zegt dat ze niet naar andere ouders kijkt en het niet uitmaakt om welke cultuur het gaat, maar dat ze haar houvast in de Islam vindt. 'Het mooie aan godsdienst, is de perfecte manier van opvoeden', zegt ze, en daardoor leert ze dat cultuur in strijd kan zijn met de Islam.

De trainer vat haar antwoord samen. (...)

Aram geeft een voorbeeld van cultuurverschil binnen de Marokkaanse cultuur [m.b.t. etniciteit en taal]: 'Spreek je Berbers [Tamazight] of Arabisch?'

Andere vrouwen in de groep reageren en discussiëren met Hajar.

De trainer onderbreekt hen en vertelt in een mix van Nederlands en Arabisch dat deze discussie het levende bewijs is dat er niet één cultuur is, maar dat cultuur een maakbaar veranderingsproces is.

Hajar explains that in Moroccan culture parents are not used to give children pocket money. This does happen in the Netherlands and in order to be sure of what to do Hajar consulted the Islam. There she found that the prophets give pocket money, too. Hajar says she doesn't look at other parents and that culture doesn't matter, but that she finds security in the Islam. "The beautiful thing about religion is the perfect way of parenting", she says, and that's how she learns that culture can clash with the Islam.

The trainer summarizes her answer. (...)

Aram gives an example of cultural differences within the Moroccan culture [in relation to ethnicity and language]: 'Do you speak Berber [Tamazight] or Arabic?' Other women in the group react and discuss with Hajar.

The trainer interrupts them and says in a mix of Dutch and Arabic how this discussion in the living example proving there is not just one culture, but culture is a man-made, ever-changing process.

learning. Reflecting upon YoT-programme participation, participants' narratives reflected a recognition of being part of a 'migrant parent learning community'. As illustrated by the following quote, this newly found sense of belonging was referred to by participants to ground the (re)constructions in parenting they made. At the third programme-session of YoT-group 14 the trainer invited the attending fathers to reflect upon the meeting. In response, father Amrou (48, 3 children; YoT-group 14) looked back at how they learned in the group and said: "What I find important, is that you choose to be friends with your child or not. If you [as parent] decide on everything, you get a different result. In our group we have chosen to remain friends with our children". From the data-analysis we found that participants' reference to being a migrant parent, and specifically being part of a migrant learning community, was more often brought forward towards to end of the YoT-programme, indicating the build-up of such local belonging.

Exemplified by the above, participants found and used their identification with multiple cultural frameworks and communities as a means to navigate the heterogeneity of meanings of parenting practices within their postmigration context. In addition to identification as a 'migrant parent' marking a geographical transition, participants referred to both 'globally' as well as 'locally-based' communities with which they identified. As such, senses of belonging emerged and were called upon by participants as they renewed and defined parenting practices in negotiation with each other. The different identifications participants referred to were not found to be opposed to one another but rather used within and across YoT-communities and participants simultaneously. Variation in the use of their plural sense of belonging to (re)construct parenting practices was found, too. Participants' migration age was found to be a particular marker in social negotiations. While placing themselves within the multiple communities they find themselves in, participants who migrated during childhood as opposed to adulthood used their position of being 'in-between' migration generations to bridge the meaning of practices, as illustrated by [Excerpt 3](#):

Referring to her personal experiences as a teenager in the Netherlands ("Because I have experienced it myself and I regretted it quite a

Excerpt 3

Interview transcript Zaheda (645–670).

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>M: Bijvoorbeeld schoolreisje zeg maar, van groep acht. Dan gaan ze [kinderen] dus vijf dagen, zeg maar, weet je. Een andere vriendin [van mij], (...) haar dochter mocht niet. Nee, dat kan niet. Ik zeg [tegen vriendin]: Nee, doe het nou maar, want vroeger mocht ik het niet. En dat vind ik wel best jammer. Weet je wel? Ik zeg: Dat is een leuke ervaring. Zulke dingen probeer ik dan, eh wel over te brengen. Ja. Maar je snapt ook goed wat de angst is van die moeder zei je, omdat</p> <p>I: [je
[Ja, ja, ja, ja.</p> <p>M: ook die kant snapt.</p> <p>I: Ja ik snap, daarom zeg ik: ik snap het ook wel, maar ik probeer het aan</p> <p>M: mij eigen kinderen wel die keuze te laten maken (...)
Dus dat advies geef je aan de mensen om je heen.</p> <p>Ja. Omdat ik het zelf heb ervaren en het best jammer vond, [weet je</p> <p>I: wel?</p> <p>M: [Ja.</p> <p>Maar ja, het is eerste generatie, he. Dat is heel anders.</p> <p>I:</p> <p>M:</p> | <p>M: School trip for example, let's say, from grade 8 [last grade in Dutch primary school]. They [children] go for five days let's say, you know. Another friend [of mine], (...) her daughter wasn't allowed. No, that can't be. I say [to friend]: No, just do it, because in the past I wasn't allowed. And I regret that quite a lot. You know? I say: It is a nice experience. Those kinds of things I try to, eh communicate.</p> <p>Yes. But you also very well understand the fear of this mother you said, because [you</p> <p>I: [Yes, yes, yes, yes.
also understand that side.</p> <p>M: Yes, I understand, that's why I say: I do understand it, but I try it to let my</p> <p>I: own children make that choice. (...)</p> <p>M: So that advice you give to the people around you.</p> <p>Yes. Because I have experienced it myself and I regretted it quite a bit, [you know?</p> <p>I: [Yes</p> <p>M: But well, it's the first generation he. That is very different.</p> <p>I:</p> <p>M:</p> |
|---|---|

bit”) and as a Moroccan parent socialized in Dutch society (“*you also very well understand the fear of this mother*”), mother Zaheda (42, 3 children; YoT-group 9) positions herself as someone who has insight in both the perspective of children and parents. Labelling parents from the “*first generation*” as “*very different*”, this mother called upon her bridging position to direct the exchange with her friend to new understandings of the practice of allowing children social autonomy, situated in their current parenting context. Similar findings were found concerning parenting issues involved with children's autonomy and social contacts, for example, with respect to sleep-overs. This exemplifies how different identity positions in participants' historical-geographical relocated community were taken, depending on migration age, to initiate and engage in learning opportunities.

5. Discussion

With this paper we aimed to investigate how postmigration parents' daily social interactions serve as sites for learning about the practice of child care. The cross-pollination of social learning theory and migration studies offered us an interesting framework to disentangle the under-examined processes of social negotiation and (dis-)identification underlying the cultural transformation of parenting practices in the everyday. By presenting the above analyses we showed how postmigration parenthood can function as a catalyzer for social learning and cultural transformation. Findings show how Moroccan-Dutch mothers and fathers learn in interaction with others and produce glocalized knowledge together through the hybridization of cultural meanings, as they situate them within their urban postmigration parenting context. These findings leave us with three interesting insights.

First, this study exemplifies how learning happens at the boundaries of cultural frameworks. Navigating the heterogeneity of their postmigration context, parents reflect upon and re-interpret cultural meanings in exchange with others. A review by [Akkerman and Bakker \(2011\)](#) about the innovative potential of boundary crossings in education shows how dialogical interactions at boundaries serves as a source for cultural discontinuation and change. Findings presented in this paper show how tensions between different cultural frameworks experienced by parents in their current parenting context created opportunities for learning and development, manifested in parents' social encounters. Although research predominantly emphasizes the risk of parenting stress and ambivalence in migrant families (e.g. [Kwak, 2003](#); [Merry, Pelaez, & Edwards, 2017](#); [Moro, 2014](#); [Reese, 2002](#)), this study contributes to a growing body of literature ([Cook & Waite, 2016](#); [De Haan, 2011](#); [Deepak, 2005](#); [Renzaho, Green, Mellor, & Swinburn, 2011](#)) that reports on assets and renewed practices, as people learn and create them through relocated settlement and social negotiations at the boundaries of cultural meanings.

Second, this study reveals how people's plural sense of belonging postmigration interplays with learning as a social meaning making process. As [Levitt and Glick Schiller \(2004\)](#) pose, due to the interconnectivity of our time people's sense of belonging to multiple border-crossing communities becomes intensified postmigration, making their plural identifications not mutually exclusive but rather co-existing. Findings show how Moroccan-Dutch parents bring in their identification as a migrant as a drive for personal and communal development, as well as that they find a renewed sense of belonging to their global religious community and a new sense of belonging to their local migrant parenting learning community. By addressing the collective dimension of learning, we were able to bring to the surface how parents come to new understandings of parenting by consciously using these multiple identifications to engage in everyday learning dynamics.

Third, this study highlights how postmigration parents create ‘glocalized’ knowledge ([Hermans & Kempen, 1998](#)) as a learning outcome of collective contextualized re-interpretations of practices. Findings show how the cultural transformations parents make have specific, hybrid meanings underlying them, contesting ideas of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ parenting practices of migrant families. For example, as found with parents' negotiation over the practice of giving pocket money, their choice for a ‘modern’ parenting practice is grounded in ‘traditional’ religious beliefs, as they explored the different meanings and identifications attached to the cultural dilemma encountered postmigration. As [Cook and Waite \(2016\)](#) argue, based on [Zontini's \(2007\)](#) work: “*Rather than engaging in linear paths from imagined landscapes of ‘traditional’ to ‘modern’, migrant families are conceptualized as sites of contestation where roles and values are under negotiation around a range of positions.*” (p. 1390). The social dynamic by which Moroccan-Dutch parents ‘return’ to ‘renew’ found in this study exemplifies the subtle processes by which parents glocalize practices postmigration.

6. Conclusion

Concluding, this paper provides us with interesting considerations concerning theoretical perspectives on sociocultural learning and cultural transformation. Describing how the cultural meanings of parenting practices are informed by people's complexified belonging in their postmigration context is new to the communities of practice perspective. As such, it enhances our understanding of social learning processes that are particular for our ever-increasing globalized societies. By drawing our analytical lens to people's sense of belonging in a culturally heterogeneous context ([Diminescu, 2008](#)), we gained insight into how parents' plural identifications emerged in meaning making processes as well as how identifications were used by parents to direct learning dynamics in urban social spaces. Moreover, approaching the practice of child care from a sociocultural learning angle has shown how learning is present in our everyday lives, which contributes to our knowledge of the underexposed field of informal learning in the family context.

Vice versa, by adopting a sociocultural learning perspective to study the (re)construction of practices postmigration we gained new insights interesting for parenting in migration studies, too. [Wenger's \(2010\)](#) ‘communities of practice’ perspective enabled us to conceptualize how parenting serves as a practice-oriented negotiation over meaning and identity. In particular, it mapped out parents' social negotiations over the meaning of parenting practices, bringing to the surface how exactly cultural transformations take place in people's everyday encounters in social networks as well as at neighborhood-based social meeting places. As such, it reconsiders our understanding of parenthood as a platform for adult learning. Approaching parents as ‘learning agents’ ([Hoek, 2007](#))

from a communities of practice perspective (Wenger, 2010) enables to shift our analytical lens to how parents direct learning towards the creation of practices that fit their local parenting context, embedded in their sociocultural belonging.

6.1. Future recommendations

Weille (2011) stresses how parenthood is a “neglected area of study” (p. 8), at expense of child development-oriented interests. As meanings and identities become contested postmigration, we encourage scholars and professionals alike to consider the space that migration allows for parental experiences of learning. Viewing postmigration parenthood as a social learning site invites us to work from a perspective of transformation taking place through parents’ daily interactions and from ‘glocally’ defined meanings of parenting practices as they are informed by parents’ identities. Therefore, we suggest practitioners to include an identity-oriented learning approach on parenthood to support families in migration contexts. Moreover, parents’ informal everyday learning can easily be overlooked due to prevailing attention in research for parenting programmes’ effectiveness (Cottam & Espie, 2014; e.g. Kane, Wood, & Barlow, 2007; Ortiz & Del Vecchio, 2013). Findings suggest that parents’ intentionally set-up urban learning communities embedded in local migrant organizations offered parents a social space in which the informal practice of parenting can be advanced for community-based adult learning. These kinds of support initiatives that connect to social learning processes happening in parents’ wider social networks may be of interest to researchers, policy makers and practitioners to explore and understand how cultural transformations of parenting practices take place in the everyday.

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