



## INTRODUCTION

Erikson (1968) defined identity as the psychosocial process that allows all individuals to acquire the specific traits that characterize and differentiate them from other individuals or social groups. It allows them to define *who* they are in society. The identity development process is the cornerstone of adolescence and is influenced by both personal and psychosocial variables (Erikson, 1968), but this process has been extended to emerging adulthood because of the delay in the assumption of adult roles. Structuration and consolidation of identity play a key role during this developmental stage. This research has focused on the *Dual-Cycle Model* (Luyckx, 2005; 2008) to study the identity development process. It has five identity dimensions grouped in two interrelated cycles that allow and promote the structuration and consolidation of identity.

## OBJECTIVES

a) To analyze the trajectory (Mean-level change) of the five dimensions of the identity development process during emerging adulthood, and b) To explore the relationship between the dimensions of exploration in wave 1 (W1) and the dimensions of commitment in wave 2 (W2), of a sample of Spanish university students from a gender perspective.

## METHOD

### PARTICIPANTS

400 university emerging adults (67% girls and 33% boys), aged between 18 and 29 ( $M = 20.31$ ,  $SD = 2.04$  in W1;  $M = 23.66$ ,  $SD = 2.08$  in W2), from the Universidad de Sevilla (US) and the Universidad del País Vasco (UPV).

### PROCEDURE

The DIDS was administered during class time to all the college students in Wave 1, and via online (Survey Monkey) in Wave 2.

### MEASURE

The *Dimensions of Identity Development Scale* (Luyckx et al., 2008) has 25 ordinal items that are divided into five dimensions: **Commitment Making** (e.g., 'Decided on the direction I want to follow in life'), **Identification with Commitment** (e.g., 'Future plans give me self-confidence'), **Exploration in Breadth** (e.g., 'Try to find out which lifestyle would be good for me'), **Exploration in Depth** (e.g., 'Think about the future plans I have made'), and **Ruminative Exploration** (e.g., 'Doubtful about what I really want to achieve in life').

## RESULTS

Table 1. Mean-level change of the identity dimensions from W1 to W2 in both the total sample, and in men and women

	MEN			WOMEN			TOTAL		
	W1	W2	t	W1	W2	t	W1	W2	t
	M (ST)	M (ST)		M (ST)	M (ST)		M (ST)	M (ST)	
COMMITMENT MAKING	3.69 (0.96)	3.69 (0.91)	0.21	3.71 (0.87)	3.63 (1.07)	1.15	3.71 (0.90)	3.65 (1.02)	1.08
IDENTIFICATION WITH COMMITMENT	3.74 (0.94)	3.63 (0.90)	1.79	3.62 (0.88)	3.48 (1.05)	2.10*	3.67 (0.89)	3.53 (1.01)	2.73**
EXPLORATION IN BREADTH	3.99 (0.80)	4.07 (0.81)	-0.96	3.92 (0.79)	4.00 (0.84)	-1.38	3.95 (0.79)	4.02 (0.83)	-1.68
EXPLORATION IN DEPTH	3.43 (0.79)	3.61 (0.89)	-2.60**	3.54 (0.81)	3.59 (0.91)	-0.76	3.50 (0.80)	3.60 (0.89)	-2.04*
RUMINATIVE EXPLORATION	3.14 (1.05)	3.21 (1.00)	-1.12	3.17 (0.98)	3.22 (1.17)	-0.66	3.15 (1.01)	3.21 (1.12)	-1.15

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 2. Linear regression models for the prediction of the dimensions of the commitment of W2 as a function of the dimensions of exploration of W1

	COMMITMENT MAKING W2					IDENTIFICATION WITH COMMITMENT W2				
	B	SD	$\beta$	t	$r^2$	B	SD	$\beta$	t	$r^2$
<b>TOTAL</b>										
E. BREADTH W1	.16	.07	.12*	2.42		-	-	-	-	
E. DEPTH W1	-	-	-	-	.126	.28	.06	.23***	4.53	.123
E. RUMINATIVE W1	-.38	.05	-.37***	-7.39		-.33	.05	-.33***	-6.65	
<b>MEN</b>										
E. BREADTH	.22	.10	.20*	2.23		-	-	-	-	
E. DEPTH	-	-	-	-	.170	.31	.09	.28**	3.32	.180
E. RUMINATIVE	-.36	.07	-.43***	-4.91		-.32	.07	-.39***	-4.58	
<b>WOMEN</b>										
E. BREADTH	.13	.09	.09	1.47		-	-	-	-	
E. DEPTH	-	-	-	-	.113	.28	.08	.21**	3.45	.106
E. RUMINATIVE	-.38	.07	-.35***	-5.68		-.33	.07	-.31***	-5.04	

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

## CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ The evolution of the dimensions of the identity development process is slightly different in men and women. *Commitment making*, *exploration in breadth* (both are the dimensions of the first cycle of the model), *identification with commitment* (second cycle), and *ruminative exploration* did not vary significantly over time and stayed stable in men, but *exploration in depth* (second cycle) had a significant increase from one wave to another in them. In contrast, all women's identity dimensions stay stable with the exception of *identification with commitment*, that shows a decrease from W1 to W2. These results shows that both genders are, in fact, developing their identity across dimensions of the second cycle of the *Dual-Cycle Model* (Luyckx, 2005; 2008).
- ❖ *Exploration in breadth* have a significant influence in the *commitment making* of men, but not in women. *Exploration in depth* has a significant influence in the *identification with commitment* of both genders. It is highly possible that the relationship between *exploration in breadth* and *commitment making* decreases after the 20s in women due to the completion of the first cycle of identity development, which implies that they finalize that cycle before their counterparts, while other processes such as *exploration in depth* and *identification with commitment*, that are part of the second cycle, would become more relevant for both genders at the mid of the emerging adulthood.
- ❖ Differences between women and men are "masked" in the results of the general sample, which denote the necessity of analyzing women's and men's identity development processes separately for a better understanding of the identity process from the perspective of each gender.

## REFERENCES

- ❖ Erikson, E. H. (1968). Identity: Youth and crisis (No. 7). WW Norton & company.
- ❖ Luyckx, K., Goossens, L., Soenens, B., Beyers, W., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2005). Identity statuses based on 4 rather than 2 identity dimensions: Extending and refining Marcia's paradigm. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 34(6), 605-618. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-005-8949-x>
- ❖ Luyckx, K., Schwartz, S. J., Berzonsky, M. D., Soenens, B., Vansteenkiste, M., Smits, I. & Goossens, L. (2008). Capturing ruminative exploration: Extending the four-dimensional model of identity formation in late adolescence. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 42, 58-82. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2007.04.004>