

## IDENTITY CRISIS AMONG ADOLESCENTS OF THIRD-SECONDARY STUDENTS

Fawaz M. A. Al Shehari<sup>1</sup>, Anas Mohammad Hasan Nawafleh<sup>2</sup> and Aparna A. Ashtaputre<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,3</sup>Department of Psychology, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad (M.S), India

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Al Ain University, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

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### Abstract

*The chief aim of this study is to identify the level of identity for third- secondary school adolescents. A survey descriptive method is implemented on a sample of (370) male students who were selected randomly. Using (Rasmussen) scale and the study was confined to the Yemeni milieu, the study shows a low level of identity crisis among third- secondary school adolescents, which means a successful solution to the teenager's identity crisis. Accordingly, a number of recommendations are provided such as increasing of students' care socially and psychologically as well as dealing with students on the basis of developmental characteristics.*

*Keywords: Trust vs. Mistrust, Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt, Initiative vs. Guilt, Industry vs. Inferiority, Identity vs. Role Confusion, Intimacy vs. Isolation, Productivity vs. Stagnation, Integrity vs. Despair.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Psychologically speaking, a human passes different stages in one's life. The childhood is the first and the elder stage is the last. Adolescence is considered to be the most sensitive stage in one's life (Alminizel, 1994). A Teenager encounters a critical phase that is identity crisis. Identity crisis for teenager is a case in their lives in which they cannot identify themselves clearly; or cannot recognize himself at the present; or to be worried about future so that he feels lost subordinated teenager becomes ignorant of what is his life supposed to be or what he believes in. to overcome his identity crisis successfully lies on what options and alternatives they explore in the social and ideological fields (Abdulrahman, 1998). The studied of Mursi (1997), Watts (1996), and Abu-Gazala (2007) indicate that a wide number of teenagers suffer from identification crisis.

Identity crisis is linked to, according to Erikson, juvenile and teenager phase. In such a stage in one's life, it is the basic requirement for growing. It is a turning point in normal growth and independence in adulthood. Though it depends on the previous biological needs, in the first and second stages, and on the social needs, in the third and fourth stage, it is neither these identifications nor both. It is a productive amalgamation process which secures mutual assimilation and selective repudiation. It produces a

complete, new and different unit from its origin which creates a bridge between childhood and immaturity. Erikson views that “constructing self-identity exists when the identification events vanish as separate elements” (Erikson, 1968). Forming identity is confined to a number of societal issues including traditions, beliefs, language, verbal and recorded heritage, and art and mental production. A teenager can use all these issues to express his self (Hogan, 1999) as for Erikson growth stages are eight, starting with childhood and ending with adulthood. They are chronologically linked and each crisis can be overcome positively or negatively. The success of each stage depends on the success of the previous one and the feeling of continuity and the strength of the ego; however, the failure and negativity lead to solidarity and the feeling of being denied (Erikson, 1968). Study focus on exploring the level of the identity crisis of teenagers.

## **2. THE EIGHT STAGES OF GROWTH PROPOSED BY ERIKSON**

Erikson saw that each stage of development presents its own unique challenges, which he called crises. Crises of the ego presented challenges to one’s individual identity.

### **2.1. First Stage: Basic Trust versus Basic Mistrust**

This stage covers infancy stage including caring, love, and feeding the infant. This helps construct trust or distrust in basic emotion in the surrounding environment. As a result, it affects the upcoming feelings in one’s life. This stage corresponds to Freud’s Oral stage. It extremely relies on parents (Abu Jawood, 1998). Erikson thinks that mother plays a great role in developing child’s trust not only meeting all basic rest and needs of the child but also possessing trust herself. Worried mother transfers worry to her child and mistrust and absence of security is the result (Fleming, 2004).

### **2.2. Second Stage: Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt**

This phase corresponds to Freud’s Anal Stage. It covers the 2-3 year childhood. It has features of large development in child’s ability to control his body’s parts and muscles. In case a child succeeds, he will be able to improve his autonomy. If he fails, feelings of shyness and doubt develop (alawnah,2004).

In this phase, a child shows his own behavior to emphasize his self-autonomy. He resorts to practices familiar stereotyped behaviors in which he displays the desire to perform some activities with no help from others. Equilibrium manifests when an individual feels independence and able to reject and violate. He does all these willingly with correspondence to his desires with no fear (Tarshawi, 2002).

### **2.3. Third Stage: Initiative versus Guilt**

It occurs in middle childhood. It corresponds to Freud’s phallic stage. It starts from year four till joining a school. The child at this stage is very active, wide imagination and curiosity (Zastrow,1993). We should encourage the child to overcome such stage by performing varied activities (Abdalaziz,1997). Thus, feeling confidence and autonomy helps child improve initiatives. He can go anywhere and have a wide range of curiosity. Overcoming this stage successfully leads to the feeling of responsibility. Level of initiative gains child in this stage is connected to the community economically.

#### **2.4. Fourth Stage: Industry versus Inferiority**

It is the latency stage or school age that starts from 6 to 12. The task at this stage is to develop the ability to feel perseverance or tender while avoiding inferiority that may be taxed for primary school. Children must learn to feel pleasure in achievement and success, whether in school, in playgrounds, in school or in the community (Nasser, 2003). When children feel less efficient than their peers in achievement, skills, and abilities, they develop a sense of inferiority. Successful children show a sense of productivity in their sense of efficiency and pleasure in work (Ahmed, 2001).

#### **2.5. Fifth Stage: Identity versus Role Confusion**

This stage corresponds to Freud's fifth stage, which is the sexual stage, and begins with the beginning of puberty and ends when the young man takes a specific position from the world in which he lives; that is, when he develops a distinct identity. This stage covers the period between the twelfth and the eighteenth years old. The adolescent tries to answer this (Who am I? What profession am I interested in? What is the nature of the group that I prefer to belong to or to deal with?) (Alawnah, 2004).

Erikson attributes the love of adolescents largely due to an attempt on the part of the individual to arrive at a clear definition of his identity by dropping his scattered self on another person and then seeing this image reflected or returned to him (Qashqosh, 1980). Erikson believes that the new psychosocial dimension that emerges during adolescence is either a sense of ego identity if it is positive, or a sense of role-playing if it is negative, i.e. between identity versus dilution in the role and emphasis on the ego and its influence on society, in particular, his peers (Ahmed, 2001).

Erikson calls this phase the acquisition of the "**real sense of identity**" because the acquisition of a sense of identity is necessary for the teenager to make mature decisions such as the choice of profession or choosing life partner (Qnawi and Abdelmatti, 2001). At this stage, Erikson affirms honesty, loyalty and ability to live up to social norms. Honesty is the best vision of society and find a place in your community, a place that gives you the opportunity to give and contribute (Nasser, 2003).

#### **2.6. Sixth Stage: Intimacy versus Isolation**

This stage starts from the late 18 to 25 years and is called adulthood. It is the most vocal of childhood. The task in this period is to achieve some degree of so-called affection and familiarity. In contrast, isolation, affection, and familiarity mean staying close and loved by others as a lover or a friend or a participant in the community. This develops a clear sense of ego. The behavior of some at this risk stage lack of maturity and the establishment of many goals such as marriage, completion of an academic achievement, the acquisition of a job, and the ownership of a house ... etc. (Nasser, 2003).

Erikson's familiarity term means more than simply achieving love, it also means being able to share and take care of another person without fear of losing something of himself in this process (Tarshawi, 2002). Erikson believes that intimacy involves more than sex, including interpersonal relationships between friends, or in the broadest sense a commitment towards comrades and humanity on the one hand, and also speaks of affection and intimacy with oneself, that is, an individual can integrate

his identity with another without fear of loss Something of the same .this aspect of intimacy is seen by Erikson as essential to the realization of meaningful marriage (Jabir, 1986).

### **2.7. Seventh Stage: Productivity versus Stagnation**

The emergence of the crisis coincides with the entrance of the individual to the middle of life. the individual is characterized, now, by readiness for productivity, which represents the axis of growth at this stage. this stage means the interest of the old generation to build and direct the new generation and contribute to help them to live effectively and creatively (Asiri, 2004). The Man exercises his choice in the field of "love and work". He combines and establishes the basis of family stability, and chooses the work through which he can achieve himself and reach a point where he asks - what then? (Qenaoui and Abdel-Maati, 2001). In the case of a positive solution to the crisis of this stage, the ego acquires a new force of interest which means the ability of the individual to expand the care of others .he feels that there is someone who needs this attention (Asiri, 2004). The negative solution leads to a sense of productivity through which the main concern is the provision of personal needs. the lack of sense of productivity leads to stop the person performing his role as a productive member (Tarshawi, 2002).

### **2.8. Eighth Stage: Integrity versus Despair**

This stage is the essence of previous stages because its roots lie in early confidence, autonomy and active initiation, independent identity, successful authorship and creative production. At this stage, the individual ensures his contribution to the creation of the new generation and accepts his entire life cycle,( AbuJawood,1998). The successful solution to the crisis of the eighth stage leads to the sense of the individual integration of the ego, which means his acceptance of the life cycle and the lives of others. It implies the thorough understanding and mature judgment. The negative side of this crisis appears in the form of an individual sense of despair and frustration (Asiri, 2004).

## **3. AIM OF STUDY**

The study aims at identifying the level of an identity crisis of the third-secondary school teenagers.

## **4. HYPOTHESIS**

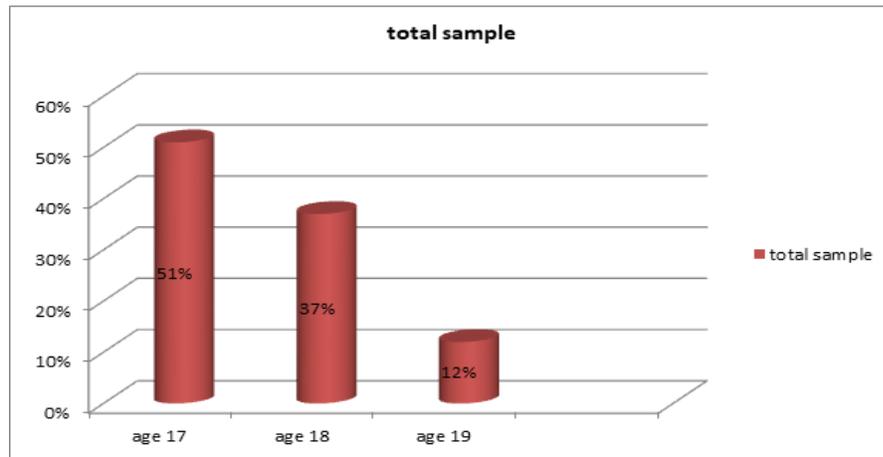
There is no statistically significant between the hypothesized mean and the actual mean identity crisis level of the third-secondary school teenagers.

## **5. METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1. Participants**

There was a random sample of (370) males in the third-secondary grade in all schools in the city of Ibb In Yemen, between the ages of 17-19 years. The sample was divided by age, the proportion of those aged 17 years (51%) and age 18 (37 years) % And 19 years (12%) as shown in Figure (1).

Figure (1) show the distribution of the sample by age



## 5.2. Measure

The researcher used the Ego Identity Scale (Rasmussen), which was translated into Arabic by Abdullah Al-Manizel. The scale includes the first six stages of the eight stages of growth proposed by Erikson. There were three dimensions of each stage. Each dimension includes four statements, (36) positive responses and the other half (36) negative responses. The answer to the statement is either (Agree) or (disagree), the positive (Agree) takes two marks, and (disagree) takes one mark if the statement is positive, but if the statement is negative the reverse debugging mode (Agree) takes one mark, and (disagree) takes two marks.

The researcher also re-standardized the scale on the Yemeni environment and calculated its credibility and stability. It was presented to the competent arbitrators, and there was a consensus among the arbitrators on the occasion of the paragraphs to measure the dimensions that were classified in them before releasing it in the final version. The researcher also re-standardized the scale on the Yemeni environment and calculated its credibility and stability. It was presented to and consulted the competent arbitrators, and there was a consensus among the arbitrators on the appropriateness of the statements to measure the dimensions that were classified in them before releasing it in the final version. It achieved stability coefficient in the Yemeni environment of (0.68).

## 5.3. Data Collection

After getting to the city's schools, the students have been given permission to participate in the survey by the schoolmasters. The researcher has surveyed the adolescents in their classrooms with the help of schoolmasters and teachers. Thus, the researcher has taken enough time to tell the participants about the process of answering the items of the scale. For example, the participants have been told that there are no "correct" or "wrong" answers, but they will observe that the meaningful results will not be obtained unless they answer the questions correctly and seriously, leaving no items without an answer, and thus the results will be used in scientific research, and it has been lasted for managing the tool for approximately an hour.

#### 5.4. Data Analysis

The data were processed by using the SPSS program according to the following statistical methods, the test of "t" is for one sample to determine the differences between the hypothesized mean and the actual mean of the adolescent crisis level.

#### 6. RESULTS

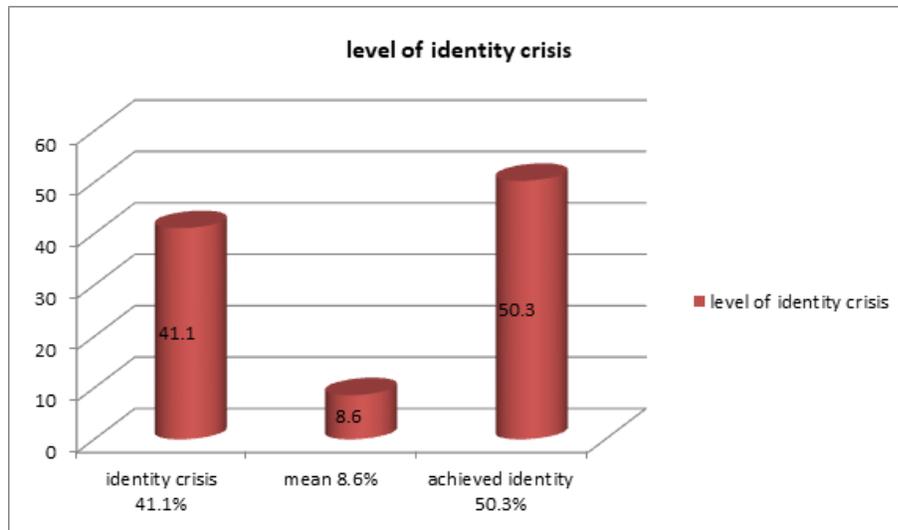
The first aim of this study is to determine/ identify the level of the identity crisis among the third-grade secondary students. The researcher used the t-test for one sample to test the difference between the actual average, the hypothesized mean, and the standard deviation, as shown in Table (1).

**Table (1) shows the t-test for one sample to test the difference between the actual average, the hypothesized mean, and the standard deviation**

Self-identity	Number of sample	Actual mean	Hypothesized mean	Standard deviation	"t" value	Significance levels
Total degree	370	8.55	10	3.47	.023	0.003

Statistically significant differences were found between the actual mean and this indicates that the level of identity crisis among adolescents in the total degree is low. This decline in the level of the identity crisis can be illustrated by the distribution of the average of the adolescent marks graphically between the actual average and the mean of the self-identity scale. Figure shows (2).

**Figure (2) shows the level of the identity crisis**



It was found that the average score of adolescents on the scale of self-identity was (50.3%) who achieved identity; that is to sit, any successful solution to identity at this stage. Whereas, (41.1%) still have an identity crisis, while 8.6% are in the middle; that is to say, they approach to achieve the identity.

## 7. DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the level of the identity crisis is low, which means a successful solution to the teenagers identity crisis. This finding is in line with the findings of (Morsi,1997) that the identity crisis was low and showed an achievement of self-identity. The results of the studies that examined the concept of self-identity between two different samples that showed assurance of self-identity, namely (Khaled,2007), which showed an investigation of the total self-identity of high-achieving adolescent students. The study of (Tarshawi,2002) and (Al-Manizel, 1994) Total self-identity among adolescent students and compare them with juveniles in favor of the good. The researcher attributes this to the fact that the Yemeni family has an effective role in maintaining the proper growth of the adolescent by adapting to technological developments in a way that does not contradict the values, beliefs and social roles. The researcher attributes also to the population of this study where there are cultural, social and economic environments that help them establish their identities, as well as the presence of some factors that help design the features of identity, including clubs, specialized institutes, and means of living and others.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This study indicates that adolescence is an important stage for young secondary- school students because it is the stage of achieving identity and overcoming its crisis. We also note that adolescents did not suffer much from the identity crisis because they are part of the Yemeni society which enjoys and adheres to many customs, traditions, and values that interact with achieving identity despite the large and negative effects of adolescence on young people in general. The low level of identity crisis appears clearly when high school students progress in adolescence where the stability of this identity is observed in the late adolescence and before entering adulthood. That helps make them also young people enjoying

awareness, maturity and positive concept and thus serve their community and their homeland.

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