



## STUDY OF EGO IDENTITY STATUS ACROSS AGE GROUPS

**Alka\* Nov Rattan Sharma\*\***

*\*Assistant professor, N.M.P.G.College, Hansi, India.*

*\*\* Professor, Department of Psychology, M.D.University, Rohtak, India.*

### **Abstract**

*Adolescence is a stage when rapid changes take place. The individual's physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual outlooks undergo revolutionary changes. Such changes during adolescence are more rapid than during infancy and childhood. Due to these growths, adolescent's personality develops new dimensions. Identity formation is the main dimension, which develops in the age of adolescents. There are many researches which explain the important role of identity in the development and growth of the individual. The adolescents, who are having poor sense of identity, are not able to adjust in all aspects of life. This study was conducted on 300 students (150 boys and 150 girls) studying in different grade from 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> classes of the Bhiwani city school. These participants were tested on Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status. The findings of the study reported that the pattern of identity starts with the different age group. The study further emphasizes the need of identity formation for adolescents of all age groups.*

### **Keywords: Ego identity, Adolescents.**

In the age of adolescence the social role is not well defined, hence, the adolescent is a marginal person, neither child nor adult. This lack of specificity in role definition leads to a disruption of self-concept and identity, leading to the crisis. If the adolescent is not capable of forming a coherent and acceptable identity, self-doubt, role confusion and indulgence in self-destructive activities may result. In turn, these poor images of the self may relate to mal-development such as juvenile delinquency and personality aberrations. Erikson(1968) stated that the major development issue in the adolescent's is identity formation. He further stated that Ego identity is the conscious sense of self that one develops through social interaction. According to him, the ego identity is the constantly changing due to new experiences and information you acquire in daily interactions with others. If the adolescents handled their stage well, they will feel the sense of mastery, which referred to Ego Strength. This Ego Strength helps them in their physical, psychological and social well-being and adjustment. With this adolescents achieve their all life goals.

Identity is a multidimensional concept which included not only the literature but also the related factors of self-esteem, self-concept, self-perception, self-efficacy and ego-development. Cote (1996) stated that the sheer volume of literature, as well as conceptual, definitional and methodological diversity in the area of identity or self, which makes it one of the most contradictory and complicated work in the field of social science. Identity formation is a process which depends on adolescents' judgment process. How adolescents judge others and others judge them, depends also on their ability to evaluate these judgments in the light of culture. He observed that in adolescents, strong positive interpersonal relationships are beneficial because they function as a source of comfort and safety throughout the multiple life challenges that occur during this stage of development. Happiness also increases the level of wellbeing. Happiness and life satisfaction are the positive effects of life. Both indicates the wellbeing of an individual as much more is known about negative effects of depression on student success than about the benefits of happiness and life satisfaction (Khrantsora et al., (2007).

Like above factors of identity, there is one another factor i.e sense of control which is also having close relationship with positive well being. Ward, (2011) reported that higher personal mastery and lower perceived constraints were associated with better self-reported health. Kenneth (2012) studied the relationship between the exercise behavior and the self-esteem. He found in his study that there is a significant difference in self-esteem for those who exercise and those who do not. He concluded that the youth who exercise have higher self-esteem than



those who don't exercise. Thus, identity formation is the most important aspects of the adolescents because the whole development and the success in life all depend on the pattern of identity formation.

## METHODOLOGY

### Objective

Objective of the study is:

1. To study the nature of Identity Formation amongst different age adolescent students.

### Hypothesis

The following hypothesis is formulated:

1. There would be significant difference on Identity amongst the different age adolescent students.

### Design

A three independent group design was employed to achieve the research objectives in the present investigation. However, all three groups with mixed gender but from the same socio-economic status and urban atmosphere.

### Sample

A sample of 300 adolescents was selected on the basis of availability. The sample were categorized into three groups on academic basis i.e 7-8 grade, 9-10 grade and 11-12 grade adolescents. Each group had 100 adolescents with 50 male and 50 female students. The age range of the sample was 7-8 grades (12-13 years 6 months), 9-10 grades (14-15 years 6 months) and 11-12 grades (16-17 years 6 months). The entire sample was from the middle socio-economic status and urban atmosphere. The entire sample was taken from the Govt. Schools of Bhiwani city. All the students were contacted personally in their respective.

### Instrument

#### 1. Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status-2:

This tool is consisting of 24 items which measures the Identity Formation pattern on two domains- Ideological domain ( which include occupation, religion, politics and philosophical life style) philosophical life style was excluded because of the sample age and interpersonal domain ( which covers the areas like friendship, recreation, dating and sex roles). Only recreation was studied in the interpersonal domain and the area of friendship, dating and sex role were excluded because of the inappropriateness for Indian adolescents. This test was developed by Layne Bennion and Gerald Adams (1986). Test-retest reliability of the test is ranged from 0.73 to 0.91. This version of objective measure of ego identity status contained 24 items with 6 items reflecting each of the four identity statuses for the domain areas of occupation, religion, politics and recreation. Each item was responded to by the subjects on the 6 point Likert Scale scale i.e 1. Strongly agree, 2. Moderately agree, 3. Agree, 4. Disagree, 5. Moderately disagree, and 6. Strongly disagree. The subjects were instructed to read all the items carefully and choose one given option. All the items were scored from 1 to 6.

### Procedure

The test was administered on the participants one by one under the constant supervision. Before the administration of the tool, the standard general instructions were given to all the respondents; however, the specific instructions relating to pertinent instrument were narrated from the test manual. After the administration of the tool, the scoring of each questionnaire was done according to the manual specifications. The data was collected after seeking the informed consent from the participants. The score of identity was analyzed with the help of ANOVA and t-test.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The major objective of the investigation is to study the nature of identity formation among the different age groups adolescents. The obtained data was treated with suitable statistical procedure and findings were discussed accordingly.

**Table1. Application of one way ANOVA to the scores on Identity across the three groups**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	"p" level
Between Group	1372.447	2	686.223	3.38	p<.01 S
Within Group	60368.150	297	203.260		
Total	61740.597	299			



Table reflects the F value of Total Identity Scores i.e 3.38, which is significant at .01level. This result clearly shows that a significant difference is found across the three groups. It means Group I (7-8grade), II (9-10 grade), and III(11-12 grade) are having different patterns of Identity Formation according their age. Identity is the important phenomenon for the adolescents. This is started in the early stage of the adolescence and different-different patterns are used with the advancement of age. As the age increases the way to form the identity is changed. In early age the adolescents are followed the identity pattern as their parents suggest. But as the time passes they tried to find out their own ways and follow only those patterns on which they believed.

From the above result it is clear that on Total scores of Identity formation F- value is significant. But which group is different from another, this is not identified. For this purpose, only on significant F values Post-hoc test was applied for further mean comparisons. So, Least Significant Difference-LSD Post-hoc was used to get the multiple mean comparisons.

**Table.2 Significance of multiple mean comparisons on total identity score among three groups**

	Group I	Group II	Group III
Group I	-	1.47	3.62
Group II	-	-	5.09*
Group III	-	-	-

\*p <.05

From the above table it is clearly shown that the significant difference is found only between the Group II and III. No mean difference is found between Group I and II, Group I and III. This result suggests that in Group I (7-8 grade) adolescents, they do not have understand the meaning of the identity. That's why between these groups the difference is not found.

From the above result it clearly shows that on identity scores, there is significant difference is found between the groups. A number of studies reveal the fact that lower score on diffusion status shares the many emotional problems ( Donovan, 1970; Claney and Dollinger, 1993). Cramer (1995) stated that diffused identity status males are having instable personality traits along with low self-esteem and enhances anxiety and depression. The identity diffusion status is found to be associated with many antisocial and behavioral problems. Rotheram- Borus (1989) found that who are having low score on identity diffusion are engage in behavioral problems ( Ryan and La Voie (1986); White and Jones (1996).

Erikson (1968) postulate in his theory the gender differences in the decision making processes, with males expected to become identity achieved before females. The purported reason for this is that adolescent females are believed to be dealing with intimacy issues, which until resolved, inhibit the formulation of a strong identity. In direct contrast to this expectancy, adolescent females have been found scored higher than males on the measure of moratorium (Jones and Stretmatter, 1987), and identity achievement (Abraham, 1984) during early and middle adolescence. Kroger (1987), after studying a group of women 17-47 years of age, found that the predominant identity status among all the women was that of ' moratorium'. He speculated that this could be because women tend to form personal identity in response to changes in role expectations. Males have also been found to have more identity diffused than females during early and middle adolescence (Jones and Streitmatter, 1987).

Identity enhances the self-esteem and predicts the well-being of the adolescents. Marcia (1966) stated in his study that achievement and moratorium males did better under stress attaining concept. Many researchers suggested that achievement and moratorium males scored at higher developmental levels of judgment than foreclosure and diffusion males. Raphael et al (1987) found that high score on moratorium indicate the well-being of the adolescents. They trying out various roles in their lives very confidently and they focused on the construction of their lives.In nutshell, it is concluded that identity plays an important role in adolescent's life. Healthy identity formation pattern helps adolescent to gain healthy physical and mental health, adjustment and well-being. A clear



sense of identity promotes individual towards their life goals and give them happiness along with the satisfaction in their life. With this healthy sense of identity increases the level of motivation, self-worth, self-esteem, self-concept and other individualistic characteristics. The literature also suggest that identity formation is the complex and changing for the all especially for females. Thus, the formulated objective and hypothesis i.e **“To study the nature of Identity amongst different grade adolescent students”**. **“There would be significant difference on Identity amongst the different grade adolescent students”** is accepted.

Thus, results emphasize that identity formation is the important dimension for the adolescents. This process starts with the early stage of adolescent. If adolescents not able to achieve healthy pattern of identity, they may indulge many anti-social activities and it also affects their health, adjustment and well-being etc. The implication of this results lies in that family is essential source of love and courage that may help adolescents to gain confidence and self-esteem, efficacy and other personal factors. Another implication lies in schools because schools are the second important source of adolescents, where they are gained important lessons of life.

## REFERENCES

1. Abraham, K.G. (1984). Ethnic differences in identity development. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on Family Relations, San Francisco, C.A.
2. Bennion, L.D. & Adams, G.R.(1986). A revision of the extended version of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status: An identity instrument for use with late adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research* 1,183-186.
3. Clancy, S.M., & Dollinger, S.J.(1993). Identity, self and personality: Identity status and the Five-Factor model of personality. *Journal of Research in Adolescence*, 3, 227-245.
4. Cote, J.E.(1996). Sociological perspectives on identity formation: The cultural-identity link and identity capital. *Journal of Adolescence*,19, 417-428.
5. Cramer, P.(1995). Identity, narcissism, and defense mechanism in late adolescence. *Journal of Research in Personality*,29, 341-361.
6. Donovan,J.M(1970). *A study of ego identity formation*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan.
7. Erikson, E.H.(1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York: Norton.
8. Jones, R.M. & Strietmatter, J.L.(1987).Validity and reliability of the EOMEIS for early adolescents. *Adolescence*,22,3-52.
9. Khramtsova, I., Sarrino, D.A., Gordeeva, T., & Williams.(2007). Happiness, Life satisfaction and depression in college students: Relations with student’s behavior and attitudes. *American Journal of Psychological Research*, 3(1), 8-16.
10. Kroger, J. (1985). Separation-individuation and ego identity status in New Zealand university students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 14, 133-147.
11. Marica, J.E.(1966). Development and validation of ego identity status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*,3, 551-558.
12. Raphael, D., & Bachor, D.(1987). Student teachers’ perceptions of the identity formation process. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*,16 (4),331-334.
13. Rotheram-Borus, M.J.(1989). Ethnic differences in adolescents’ identity status and associated behavior problems. *Journal of Adolescence*, 12, 361-374.
14. Ryan, M.F., & La Voie, J.C. (1986). *Affective moral and perception of behavioural characteristics among delinquent and non-delinquent adolescents*. Paper presented at the first biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, Madison, WI.
15. Ward, M.M. (2011). *Sense of control and socio-demographic differences in self-reported health in older adults*. Retrieved at September 17, 2011 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22120892>.
16. White, J.M., & Jones, R.J.(1996). Identity styles of male inmates. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 23,490-504.