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TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF PERSONALITY DIMENSIONS ON IDENTITY CRISIS AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence and identity crisis is a much discussed phenomena. As growing individuals, their personality dimensions or a set of characteristics are also playing an important role in their being. The present study attempts to explore the relation between personality dimensions and identity crisis of adolescents if any. In the present study, standardized tests were administered to obtain the scores on self image of students (considered as the indicator of identity crisis) and scores on different dimensions of personality. Based on the results of the study, it was observed that personality dimensions of the adolescents do not play any significant role in causing identity crisis among adolescents. Adolescents are able to cope well with their situations and people around them and live rather comfortably. The study conducted indicates that personality dimensions do not become causal factors for identity crisis.

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INTRODUCTION

Identity formation, establishment, sustenance or loss are some issues that pose challenges in various age groups, particularly in adolescence, as observed by Conger John Janway (1977). As stated by, Erickson Eric (1968), Identity Crisis could be common phenomena during the adolescence age. The present study intends to focus on the adolescent age group which is considered to be the formation stage as far as individual's identity is concerned. It may be considered that the phase of adolescence calls for many adaptations, adjustments or coping to various factors one of them being their personality. Personality has been defined as the integration of those systems or habits that represent an individual's characteristic adjustments to the environment. According to Carver and Scheier (2000), personality is a dynamic organisation, inside the person, of psychophysical systems that create a person's characteristic patterns of behavior, thoughts, and feelings. The traits or characteristics that we call personality could be inherited, developed or adopted from the environment or the situation. It is based on the set of these traits that the person determines his way of thinking, his responses and his abilities to act and react. The study conducted attempts to determine if Personality of the individuals affects the phase of adolescence

and if it leads to any crisis of identity in the minds of the adolescents.

Concepts undertaken for the Research

Following are the concepts considered by the researcher in the present study.

Adolescence

The study considers adolescence as a phase in the development of the life span of an individual, where one moves towards physical and emotional maturity. It is a stage of development of life when the body has taken a full growth spurt. Thus, adolescence is understood as those years of life where young boys and girls develop their cognitions in terms of their understanding, perception, imagery, etc.

Identity

The study considers identity as the individual's sense of one self. It can be explained as the image one wishes he / she should be known with or known for. It can be seen as the process of role clarification. Formation of identity would also mean developing and showcasing unique characteristics.

Crisis

In the present study, crisis is understood as an acute problem. A state marked by confusion and conflict or a situation that

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needs to be resolved. The word has a negative connotation and indicates trouble.

Identity Crisis

In the present study identity crisis is referred with respect to adolescent phase of life. Children in the age group of 12 to 17 years are in the stage of growing on various parameters. As they grow physically, they are also growing psychologically. Inputs on to knowledge, learning, perceptions, experience, interactions, and other cognitive processes are also increasing. They try to relate themselves to things, people, places, events, etc around them. In the process, there arises a need within them to answer the question – “Who am I?”. There seems to be a need to establish their identity. However, considering the changes occurring in this phase, there is a possibility that this process of establishing identity may not be very smooth for some. It is likely to be interfered with different problems. There may arise a certain turmoil within the child with respect to various factors. The researcher refers to such turmoil or problem among adolescents as ‘Identity Crisis’.

Personality dimensions

Personality is referred to those set of qualities of an individual that helps him understand, analyse, interpret and act or react to a person, situation or environment. Personality dimensions are those characteristics that account for consistent patterns of behavior.

Significance

The present study stands significant in many aspects. Identity Crisis as described by researchers means ‘rediscovering of oneself’ or ‘establishing one’s self image’ during adolescents. However, it has been postulated that this process can be difficult leading to a crisis. There could be number of factors responsible for a turmoil situation in the growing years. These could be either physical and or psychological factors. Personality, social, moral, religious, economic, cultural, value system, familial, peer group, school, teachers, etc, could be other factors. However, it is important to find out how these factors contribute during this period. The present study focuses on the impact of personality dimensions. Whether they affect favourably or unfavourably and how adolescents deal with it. India is considered as a growing and a fast progressing nation. Its development in many fields is considered as the responsibility of next generation as well. Today’s kids are considered as the constructive and creative generation of tomorrow. It is therefore imperative to study their growing years and how they have adjusted to their situations, if they have any problems in establishing their identities, if any or are they able to adapt to the transition to adulthood smoothly.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Following methodology and materials were used to conduct the study.

Objective

To study the relationship between identity crisis and personality dimensions among adolescents.

Hypotheses

Identity crisis among adolescents is contributed to by their personality dimensions

Sample information

The sample chosen for the present study was from English Medium Schools of Nashik city. It consisted of 100 boys and girls in the age group of 12 – 17 years, studying between Std 7th to 12th. The students were selected by a random sampling method.

Tools Used

The study was conducted using the following tools

Standardized tests

Following tests were administered to the sample considered.

Self Image Questionnaire (SIQ)

by Lalita Sharma, Agra Psychological Research Cell, Agra.

According to the manual of SIQ - the questionnaire has been tested successfully for split- half (.82) as well as test-retest reliability (.69). The questionnaire also ensures high content and face validity.

Multi-dimensional Assessment of Personality (MAP – Form T)

Designed and developed by M/s PSY-COM Services, New Delhi. According to the manual of the MAP – The test-retest and split half reliabilities of MAP have been calculated. The coefficient of correlation for the 20 dimensions included in the scale for test retest reliability ranged from 0.63 to 0.76 and from 0.64 to 0.76 on split half reliability (Spearman Brown method). The scale has been validated by establishing the factorial validity of each dimension.

- Interview
- Observation

The methodology and materials suggested by Kothari C R. (1995) regarding interview and observations were used to conduct the study.

Statistical analysis

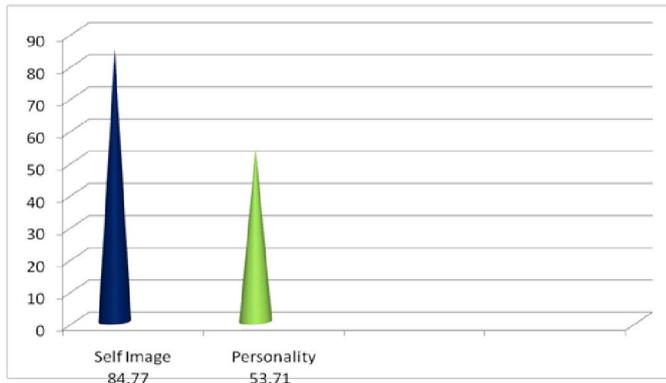
The statistical method of Mean for the obtained data has been considered to analyse the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the present study, an attempt is made to assess the impact of personality dimensions on the adolescents’ identity crisis, as explained by Clifford T Morgan, Richard A King, John Weiz, John Schopler (2001). For this multi dimensional assessment of personality test was administered on adolescent sample. As indicated in Table 1, the co-relation between self image of adolescents and personality dimension is 0.1420 which shows low Co-relation between the two factors. However, when we compare the Mean scores of both these factors, it is observed that self image has a Mean value of 84.77 and personality has a Mean value of 53.71. This is presented in Figure 1.

Table 1. Mean scores and Correlation value of self image and personality of adolescents

Factors	Mean scores	Correlation with Self Image
Self Image	84.77	-
Personality	53.71	0.1420

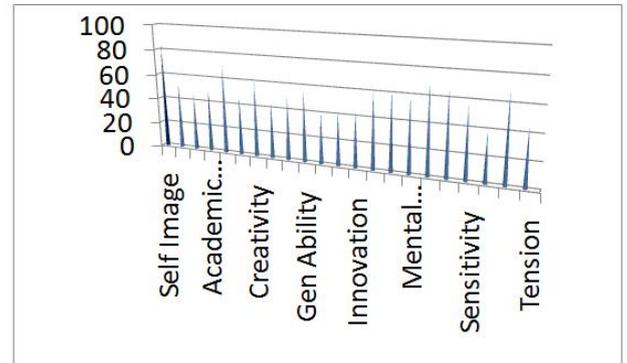
**Fig. 1. Mean scores of self image and personality of adolescents**

The results attribute to the fact that self image is seen by all adolescents on the higher side. Personality is a combination of multiple traits together. The Multi Dimensional Personality Inventory administered to obtain data on personality of adolescents focused on 20 important traits or dimensions. The Mean scores and Correlation values for these various dimensions of personality and self image of adolescents were computed, and the results seen are as mentioned in Table 2

Table 2. Mean scores and Correlation value of self image and dimensions of personality of adolescents

Dimensions of personality	Mean	Co-relation with Self Image
Adaptability	44.36	-0.13563
Academic Achievement	50.71	-0.02605
Boldness	70.64	0.138193
Competition	46.86	0.045577
Creativity	59.64	-0.00213
Enthusiasm	44.00	0.153514
Excitability	50.07	-0.08687
General Ability	55.43	0.210912
Guilt Proneness	40.21	-0.16445
Individualism	42.50	-0.11309
Innovation	44.00	-0.00347
Leadership	60.29	0.177129
Maturity	62.57	0.07107
Mental Health	58.07	0.160611
Morality	70.07	0.170654
Self control	67.00	0.14138
Sensitivity	56.29	0.006872
Self Sufficiency	38.00	-0.00261
Social Warmth	69.00	0.061431
Tension	44.43	-0.115

The Mean scores of the studied dimensions of personality and self image of adolescents is represented in the graph as shown in Figure 2.

**Fig. 2. Mean scores of self image and dimensions of personality of adolescents**

Self Image and Personality Dimensions

In the present study, nine dimensions of personality like adaptability, academic achievement, creativity, excitability, guilt proneness, individualism, innovation, self sufficiency, and tension show a negative Correlation with self image. This means that when these dimensions increase self image decreases or vice versa. However, the scores of these dimensions which are low, are very weak in strength and hence we may conclude that the negative Correlation is not significant. Dimensions like competition, maturity, sensitivity, social warmth show score of 0.0, and as such the Correlation with self image does not exist. The two factors are totally independent of each other. While dimensions like, boldness, enthusiasm, general ability, leadership, mental health, morality, and self control, indicate some positive Correlation with self image. It can be interpreted that as the personality dimension increases, so does the self image of the adolescents under study. It is seen that the present generation adolescents are smart and bold. They are aware of their presentation in the society and among different age groups. They are enthusiastic and want to do many things at a time. This is because they are exposed to many things due to media, internet, interactions and awareness. They know well how to carry themselves in a group. In terms of mental health, the test states that high scores mean that adolescents are relatively enduring. It is a positive state and indicates mere absence of mental disorder. Those with high scores, indicate that they perceive themselves as able to reach personal goals without much difficulty, are not distracted and can concentrate and are generally satisfied with their lives. Though they perceive that they are 'cool' and as such enjoy sound mental health and have self control, it is seen that they get disturbed, loose temper easily. However, they may also regain control easily.

They also score high on morality with an average of 70.07 score. They perceive that they generally follow rules. According to the test interpretation extremely high scores are associated with rigidity and unrealistic high standards for themselves. High scores indicate academic achievement, interest in school and peers, popularity and election to leadership. This dimension depicts the tendency to drive the ego and restrain the id, which are seen as marks of super ego. As such the average score of 70.07 on the test in the present

study indicates the adolescents' super ego which is high. This is likely to reflect in their high self image and hence the positive Correlation between the two. With the factor of morality aiding self image of the adolescents, identity crisis, does not seem to have any scope in their lives as far as this dimension is considered. On the dimension of self control which also indicates a low positive Correlation with self image of adolescents at 0.14138, adolescents perceive high self image when they have a feeling of self control. According to the test, high self control indicates that adolescents have a feeling of emotional and behavioral control in social circumstances. They appear to be consistent and control anxiety. Adolescents under study perceive themselves as emotionally strong and hence reflect an average score of 67 on self control dimension. All these factors show very weak correlation to self image, even if it is positive. Some personality dimensions indicate negative and some indicate no relation. As such it can be interpreted that the considered personality dimensions do not impact self image and thereby identity crisis of the adolescents under study.

The hypothesis in this regard is hence rejected

Personality, as described by Elizabeth Hurlock (1985), of adolescents is subject to many factors. It builds over a period of time based on their ideas, experiences, the inputs they gain, learning, knowledge and grooming. They may also have inputs of certain hereditary factors, as stated by Stephen P. Robbins, Timothy A. Judge and Seema Sanghi (2009). The adolescents normally appear to be well adjusted personalities as they enjoy a very protective and secure support system in terms of family, relatives, friends, neighbours, teachers and the social system they live in. These factors have helped to enhance their personality dimensions. What may seem to interfere with their personality could be based on the perception of inputs gained. Generally, adolescents have healthy personalities and as such they do not contribute to any identity crisis.

Conclusion

In the overall conclusion it can be stated that in the present study personality dimensions among the adolescents are rather helpful in making them smart, confident, bold and well adjusted beings. As such personality aids the self image. Their personalities make adolescents understand, analyse, act or react to persons, environment or situations in a manner that they can deal with comfortably. Personality does not interfere in any manner in their growing and hence does not contribute to any conflict or crisis of identity.

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