

INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOSITY, LOCUS OF CONTROL AND VALUE ON IDENTITY FORMATION OF EARLY ADOLESCENTS IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NNEWI NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ANAMBRA STATE.

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at investigating some factors impacting identity formation among early adolescents in secondary school, Nnewi North, Anambra State. The study adopted a descriptive correlational design in exploring the impact of value clarification, locus of control and religiosity on identity formation. The study target population was 9,680 students in Private Schools comprising 4,356 male students and 5,324 female students. The sample of the study consists of 200 adolescents: 90 male students and 110 female students who were randomly chosen from these Private schools in the local government. The age of the students range between 12 and 16 and their mean age was obtained as 13.2. Four validated instruments were used in collecting data for the study. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis were used in analyzing data obtained. The result showed that identity formation significantly correlated with value clarification ($r = .288$; $P < 0.05$); locus of control ($r = .412$; $P < 0.05$); and religiosity ($r = .263$; $P < 0.05$). Further analysis showed joint predictive influence of three variables on identity formation with adjusted R^2 obtained as 19.7%. Locus of control made the most significant contribution to the identity formation, (Beta = .312; $t = 4.351$; $P < 0.05$); and closely followed by value clarification, (Beta = .170; $t = 2.536$; $P < 0.05$). The study raised implication for the need of counselors who could help intervene in psychological problems militating against students. It was recommended that effective skill-building programs should be organized in schools to help adolescents develop skills for healthy identity formation.

Key Words: Religiosity, Value, Locus of Control, Identity Formation, Early Adolescents.

Introduction

Identity formation is the development of the distinct personality of an individual in a particular stage of life in which individual characteristics are possessed and by which a person is recognized or known. This process defines individuals to others and themselves. Pieces of the person's actual identity include a sense of continuity, a sense of uniqueness from others, and a sense of affiliation. Identity formation leads to a number of issues of personal identity and an identity where the individual has some sort of comprehension of him or herself as a discrete and separate entity. This may be through individuation whereby the undifferentiated individual tends to become unique, or undergoes stages through which differentiated facets of a person's life tend toward becoming a more indivisible whole.

Identity is often described as finite and consisting of separate and distinct parts (family, cultural, personal, professional, etc.), yet according to Palmer (2008) it is an ever evolving core within where our genetics (biology), culture, loved ones, those we cared for, people who have harmed us and

people we have harmed, the deeds done (good and ill) to self and others, experiences lived, and choices made come together to form who we are at this moment (Palmer 2008).

The question, "Who am I?" is especially pertinent during adolescence. The combination of physical, cognitive, and social changes that occur during that time, plus the serious life choices to be faced (occupation, life partner) spur what Erik Erikson (1968) famously called an identity crisis. He used the term, "crisis," to mean a turning point rather than a period of profound or debilitating uncertainty. Erikson acknowledged that identity issues could arise throughout the life course, but saw identity formation as the critical "developmental task" of adolescence.

Parents may feel bewildered at rapid changes in which their adolescent children appear to be, as reflected in such things as musical tastes, appearance, friends, romantic partners, hobbies, decision-making, and moral conduct. However, recent research has made some headway in understanding adolescent identity exploration. For example, there is evidence that adolescents' identity differs across contexts. That is, teenagers often see themselves differently when they are with parents and teachers, than they do when they are with peers. Middle adolescence (approximately ages 14-16) in particular is often marked by behavior that varies depending on where they are and whom they are with -- for example, being outgoing with friends, but shy at home (Steinberg & Morris, 2001).

There are a lot of factors that influence identity formation among early adolescent, among them is religiosity. Religiosity, in its broadest sense, is a comprehensive sociological term used to refer to the numerous aspects of religious activity, dedication, and belief (religious doctrine). Religion serves as a powerful influence on an individual identity assuming that the person involved is deeply religious or significantly committed to his/her religion. Good and Willoughby (2007) explored the identity construction processes of church-attending adolescents from rural and urban background and concluded that strong faith leads to adolescents towards the status of identity achievement as opposed to those with less attendance in the church. The study found prominent differences between the church-attending adolescents and the control group (those who have never attended church in their life yet) with regard to their personal identity construction experience. They differed significantly in relation to their role models, turning points in their lives, career goals, family-related goals of life, and their commitment to religious values on personal front. Thus, religious affiliation played a significant role in their identity formation experience leading them towards identity achieved status. The influence of religion on identity formation may also work through parental influence. Children whose parents are significantly religious are more likely to be significantly religious themselves. The influence of religion on identity formation might also arise from community influence. Assume that members of a particular community are mostly religious. It would be the case that, most people would adhere to the norms of the community. If it is the case that the norms of the community is binding on most, if not all the members of the community, then, religion might play significant role in identity formation.

Moreover, value plays a role in identity formation. Mature understanding of oneself and one's emotions implicitly includes some understanding of one's values. Thus, as youths' self-identities evolve, a value system emerges. However, some adolescents do not seek to actively explore their own individual value system; instead, they simply accept the values of their family, community, and culture. But the majority of youth will explore their value system, at least to some degree. This exploratory process may range from a simple questioning of why things are the way they are, to experimentation with a different set of values and beliefs, to outright rejection of generally accepted values and beliefs. This exploratory process can be frustrating for many parents, especially when teens challenge the religious or cultural values held sacred by the family, or when youth directly challenge parental authority.

When adolescents experiment with their value system it can take many forms. For example, a formerly shy, quiet, and agreeable adolescent may suddenly become argumentative and begin to speak out about a great many topics. Some adolescents may alter their appearance by wearing a different style of clothing, getting a tattoo or body piercing, coloring or styling their hair in unusual ways, or "bending" their gender such as boys wearing cosmetics. They may also change their musical preferences to include music their parents may find objectionable (e.g. lyrics that condone violence), give-up cherished activities such as sports in favor of role-playing games, or attend a Buddhist temple instead of their family's Christian church. As adolescents experiment with different values and beliefs, their circle of friends may change as well.

Furthermore, Locus of control plays a vital role in identity formation. Locus of Control (LOC) is the extent to which individuals believe that their life circumstances are a function of either their own actions or external factors beyond their control (Moorhead & Griffin 2004). People who believe that they are in control of their own lives and that effort and ability determine their futures have an *internal locus of control* (ILOC). In contrast, individuals with an *external locus of control* (ELOC) believe that fate, luck, chance, or other people's behavior determines what happens to them.

This stage, which Erikson calls stage five, identity versus role confusion, is between the ages of 18 and 21 years. During this stage, late adolescents are mostly concerned with what other people think of them, instead of how they see and feel about themselves (Kaplan & Saddock, 2007). Role models play an important role during the process of identity formation (Meyerhoff, 2005). Locus of control forms an integral part of the identity formation of an individual adolescent.

Because individuals vary in the meanings that they attach to their own or others' behavior, they place themselves on qualitatively different developmental paths (Molden & Dweck, 2006; Thompson, 2000). In other words, if one person believes his behavior is the result of fate, and another believes hers is the result of hard work, they will differ in the goal setting behaviors and in the amount of effort they extend toward achieving those goals. This is the basic underlying concept of locus of control.

Statement of Problem

It has been noted with great concern the urgent need for identity formation among early adolescent in the Secondary Schools in Nnewi North Local Government, Anambra State. Identity formation can be especially challenging for early adolescents who feel different from others because of their cultural, ethnic, gender or sexual identity. This has resulted to juvenile delinquency, drug and alcohol abuse, early pregnancy, sexual transmitted diseases etc. There is the fear of what the home, the school and the society could become if no adequate attention is paid to it. It is not that the problem cannot be curbed, but the need of an effective tool is called for. What solution could be applied? What approach could be used? Who would take the responsibility of reaching out to affect the lives of early adolescent in Junior Secondary School in Anambra State? All these questions point to the need to bring to their knowledge and create the awareness of the effects of Religiosity, Gang membership, Value, and Locus of Control on Identity Formation.

This study is an attempt to investigate these problems within the Junior Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

1. Are there any significant relationship among religiosity, value and locus of control on identity formation of early adolescents in the Secondary School?
2. What is the joint contribution of religiosity, value and locus of control on identity formation of early adolescents in the Secondary School?
3. What is the relative contribution of religiosity, value and locus of control on identity formation of early adolescents in the Secondary School?

Objective of the study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence predictive effects of religiosity, locus of control and value on identity formation of early adolescents in the Private Secondary Schools in Nnewi North Local Government, Anambra State.

Emperical Review of Literature

Kjersti et al., (2013), examined the relationship between identity status and locus of control through techniques of meta-analysis, with a total of 711 participants from University of Tromso, Norway. The result showed that internal and external locus of control scales were correlated with each identity status, and effect sizes were primarily in predicted directions.

Kitty (2013), investigated the relationship between locus of control and identity status in a sample of high school students. Subjects were 223 9th-12th graders attending high school in a rural area of a southwestern state. Results confirmed that identity achievement individuals were significantly less external in locus of control than individuals in all other identity statuses.

Jayce (2012) examine the association between identity and faith formation processes in 285 college students (age 18-25) from a large public university in the southeast. He observed that mature identity formation processes were highly associated with faith maturity-commitment/integration, moderately associated with questioning beliefs within faith maturity-exploration. Informational identity style exhibited predictive value for both outcome measures of faith maturity. Those practicing and representing mature identity processes are more likely to integrate their faith into their relationships. Keith, Kris, Martin et al.,(2008), investigated religious doubt and identity formation as predictors of adolescent religious doubt. The participants were 604 Euro-Americans youths (59% female, 41% male). Result revealed identity moratorium, identity achievement, and doctrinal uncertainties are positive predictors of religious doubt while identity foreclosure, identity diffusion, and religious satisfaction are negative predictors.

Michael, Jan, Bart and Bart (2011), studied the associations between identity styles and value orientations. Participants were 1078 students and adults (51% females) from different areas of Poland. Result shows that a diffuse-avoidant identity style was positively associated with values that highlighted self-interest such as hedonism and power. Individuals with a normative identity style are strongly committed, conscientious, and self-disciplined but in a rigid, unwavering fashion, with a high need for structure, cognitive closure, and authoritarian control.

Bart, Koen, Bart and Michael (2012), investigated cross-lagged relations between identity styles and goals pursuit. Participants were 806 students from Leuven, Belgium. Results support a reciprocal model, with process and content influencing each other. As for process effects, the informational and diffuse-avoidant style predicted decreases in conservation goals, and the normative style predicted increases in conservation and extrinsic goals. As for content effects, conservation goals increased the normative style, and extrinsic goals decreased the informational and increased the diffuse avoidant style.

Methodology

The study adopts descriptive design of survey type. This enables the researcher to collect data from a fairly large sample. The data collected helped to determine the predictive effects of religiosity, locus of control, gang membership and value (independent variables) on identity formation of early adolescents in Junior Secondary School in Anambra State. (dependent variable).

Sample and sampling technique

Four Secondary Schools were selected through stratified random techniques in the study: Holy Innocent Secondary School, 100 foot Road, Nnewi; Day by day Secondary School, 100 foot road, Nnewi; Kiddies Secondary School, 100 Foot Rd, Nnewi; Dr.Alutu's Secondary School, Nnobi Rd, Nnewi. In each of these randomly selected Private Secondary Schools, participants were selected through stratified random sampling technique . Fifty (50) students were selected from each of the four schools, making a total numbers of two hundred students (200), consisting of 90 male students and 110 female students.

Instrumentation

Four instruments would be used to generate information for the study: Identity Formation Scale, Religiosity Scale, Value Scale, and Locus of Control Scale which apart from personal information represents five sections (B-E)

Administration of Instruments

Questionnaires were administered on the participants by engaging the services of 200 students in secondary schools. The questionnaires were divided unequally among those schools, 60 copies for three schools and 80 copies for one school.

The researcher requested for the assistance of the school teachers in each of the schools with the permission of the school principals. They all helped to deliver instructions, and also assurance of confidence in the way students' responses would be treated. The administrations were an on- the-spot exercise, that is, administered and collected at the spot where respondents were met. Out of the two hundred and sixty questionnaires' administered, two hundred were returned in good state.

3.5. Method of data analysis

Data collected on the study were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression analysis. Specifically, the study provided answers to research questions that are meant to examine predictive influence of religiosity, locus of control, and value on identity formation of early adolescents in the Private Schools in Nnewi North L.G.A Anambra State.

Results of the Study

This chapter presents the results and summary of findings. The study investigated the influence of value clarification, Locus of Control, and Religiosity on identity formation of early adolescents in Private secondary schools in Nnewi North Local Government, Anambra State. Three Research Questions were raised and answered. The data were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) and multiple regression statistical method. The results are presented below:

Research Hypothesis One: There will be no significant relationship between value clarification and identity formation

Table 1: The summary table showing significant relationship between value clarification status and identity formation

Variable	Mean	SD	DF	N	R	P	Remark
Identity Formation	30.60	5.84	198	200	.288**	.000	Significant
Value clarification	57.04	4.83					

The table 1 above showed that there was significant relationship between identity formation and Value clarification ($r = .288$; $P < 0.05$). This means that clarification of value has significant influence on adolescents' identity formation.

Research Hypothesis Two: There will be no significant relationship between Locus of Control and Identity formation

Table 2: The summary table showing significant relationship between Locus of Control and Identity formation

Variable	Mean	SD	DF	N	R	P	Remark
Identity Formation	30.60	5.83	198	200	.412**	.000	Significant
Locus Of Control	104.42	15.14					

The table 2 above showed that there was significant positive relationship between locus of control and identity formation ($r = .412$; $P < 0.05$). This means that locus of control has significant influence on identity formation.

Research Hypothesis Three: There will be no significant relationship between religiosity and Identity formation

Table 3: The summary table showing significant relationship between Religiosity and Identity formation

Variable	Mean	SD	DF	N	R	P	Remark
Identity Formation	30.60	5.84	198	200	.263**	.000	Significant
Religiosity	34.74	5.23					

The table 3 above showed that there was significant positive relationship between religiosity and identity formation ($r = .263$; $P < 0.05$). This means that religiosity has significant influence identity formation.

What is the joint effect of value clarification, locus of control and religiosity on identity formation of adolescents?

Table 4 Summary of Regression for the Joint Contributions of Independent Variables to the prediction of identity formation

Model	R	R (adjusted)	R ² (adjusted)	Standard error of estimate	
	.457 ^a	.209	.197	5.23281	
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1419.063	3	473.021	17.275	.000 ^b
Residual	5366.937	196	27.382		
Total	6786.000	199			

The table 4 above shows that the three independent variables when pulled together have significant effect on the identity formation. The value of multiple correlation (R) is obtained as .457; R^2 as .209 and R^2 (adjustment) is obtained as .197. The analysis of variance performed on the multiple regressions yielded was significant ($F(3,199) = 17.275$; $p < 0.05$). This shows that the three independent combined together to account for 19.7% of the variance in identity formation of adolescents.

Table 5: Relative Effect of the Independent Variable to the Prediction of Identity formation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.542	4.809		.321	.749
Value clarification	.206	.081	.170	2.536	.012
Locus of Control	.121	.028	.312	4.351	.000
Religiosity	.134	.077	.120	1.755	.081

The table 5 above shows how each of the three independent variables made significant contribution to the prediction of identity formation. As obtained, locus of control made the most significant contribution to the identity formation, (Beta= .312; $t = 4.351$; $P < 0.05$); and then Value clarification, (Beta= .170; $t = 2.536$; $P < 0.05$).

Discussion of the findings

Research Question One: Are there significant relationship that exist among the independent variables (value clarification, Locus of Control and Religiosity) and identity formation of early adolescents (dependent variable)?

In response to the raised research question on what pattern of relationship exist among the independent variables and identity formation, the result showed that identity formation significantly correlated with Locus of Control, value and religiosity. The relationship coefficients revealed thus: Locus of Control ($r = .412$; $P < 0.05$); religiosity ($r = .263$; $p < 0.05$). value clarification ($r = .288$; $P < 0.05$) respectively. This implies that identity formation significantly correlated with locus of control, value and religiosity.

In relation to the finding on locus of control and identity formation, the finding of the study is in line with other findings e.g (Kjerst, Jane & Monica, 2013; Cooper, 2002). Cooper, (2002) concluded that locus of control plays an important role in a person's perception concerning a situation and possible reactions to what is happening, or should be happening. The importance of locus of control cannot be undermined in regard to identity formation. Individuals with an internal locus of control in comparison to individuals with an external locus of control tends to handle stressful situations more effectively by making use of problem solving strategies which improves his identity formation.

Furthermore, the findings established a significant linear relationship between religiosity and identity formation. The findings corroborate previous studies e.g. (Steward, 2013; Duriez, Smits, Goossens, 2008). Steward, (2013), opined that religiosity is found to be relevant in explaining commitment and purposefulness in terms of identity formation and that the strength of the relationship between religion and identity vary across different demographic groups as well as different epochs.

As regards to value, findings corroborate previous studies e.g (Koen, Seth, Bart, Maarten, & Luc, 2002; Berzonsky, M.D., 2011). Berzonsky, M.D (2011) observed that individuals with a normative identity style are strongly committed, conscientious, and self-disciplined but in a rigid, unwavering fashion, with a high need for structure, cognitive closure, and authoritarian control.

Research Question Two: What is the joint effect of independent variables (value clarification, Locus of Control, and Religiosity, on identity formation of in-school adolescents? (dependent variable)

In response to the second research question on the joint effect of the independent variables on identity formation, the result showed that the independent variables when pulled together have significant effect on the adolescents' identity formation. The value of multiple correlation (R) is obtained as .457; R^2 as .209 and R^2 (adjustment) is obtained as .197. The analysis of variance performed on the multiple regressions yielded was significant ($F(3,199) = 17.275; p < 0.05$). This shows that the three independent combined together to account for 19.7% of the variance in identity formation of adolescents.

Religiosity was found to be an important contributor to identity formation. This result is similar to (Janet, Sara, & Kristine, 2009; Puffer, Pence, Graverson, et al., 2008). Janet et al., (2009) found that higher informational identity style scores high related to stronger faith, whereas identity distress was related to greater questioning of beliefs and expecting future change in those beliefs.

Value was established as a predictor of identity formation. This predictive influence of the variable is in line with the work of (Hossein & Abbasali, 2014; Koen, Seth, Bart, Maarten, & Luc, 2002). Koen, Seth, Bart, Maarten, & Luc, (2002) concluded that an informational identity style was positively associated with values emphasizing independence (openness rather than conservation) in a way that transcended selfish interest, whereas a normative identity style was positively associated with values such as security and tradition (conservation rather than openness).

The study also found predictive effect of locus of control on identity formation. This corroborates other findings e.g. (Lee, 2012; Kaplan & Saddock, 2007; Meyerhoff, 2005). Kaplan & Saddock (2007), observed that during the developmental stage of an adolescent, identity formation is one of the demanding challenges confronting them. Often the demands posed by these challenges are at the root of the frustrations experienced by the individual adolescent and these are the cause of aggression. Thus if adolescents perceive and experience that external factors are in control of situations, these adolescents will act differently from those adolescents who perceive and experience that they are in

control of what is happening. Meyerhoff, (2005) added that role models play an important role during the process of identity formation. Thus locus of control is correlated to identity formation.

Research Question Three: What is the relative effect of independent variables (value clarification, Locus of Control, Religiosity, gang membership on identity formation of secondary school early adolescents?

In response to the third research question on the relative effect of each of the independent variables on identity formation, the result shows that the independent variables significantly contributed to the prediction of adolescents' identity formation. In term of magnitude of contribution, locus of control made the most significant contribution to the identity formation, (Beta= .312; t= 4.351; P<0.05); and then Value clarification, (Beta= .170; t= 2.536; P<0.05).

It implies that identity formation is actually determined by the reinforcement of the two predictors' variables (locus of control and value clarification). The most potent of them is locus of control, followed by value clarification. This finding echoes Mozaffari, Fathabadi, Bagherian (2009) submission, when they submitted that those with achieved identity status had more internal locus of control than others. It can be concluded that identity achievement may be a developmental. Locus of control consumedly affects from external experiences such as field of study.

Moreover, Bart, Koen, Bart and Michael (2012), observed that there is a reciprocal model, with process and content influencing each other. As for process effects, the informational and diffuse-avoidant style predicted decreases in conservation goals and the normative style predicted increases in conservation and extrinsic goals. As for content effects, conservation goals increased the normative style, and extrinsic goals decreased the informational and increased the diffuse avoidant style.

Conclusion

This study established that there is a predictive positive relationship between locus of control, religiosity, and value clarification on the identity formation of early adolescents in Private Secondary School in Nnewi North Local Government, Anambra State.

5.3 Recommendations

In order to improve the identity formation early adolescents, the following suggestions are made as possible strategies based on the outcome of the study.

To the early adolescents: They should believe in themselves, and make good choice of friends and values these would help them to have healthy identity formation.

To Parents and the early adolescent workers: As a parent or someone working with the early adolescents, It is necessary to note that adolescent early stage is the developmental stage from the age of 12 to 18 years, and that during this period in an individual's life, new and demanding

challenges regarding approaching adulthood often confront an adolescent. These challenges which include discovering their own identity have to be discussed with them, and the better approach. Failure to do this can cause many problems for adolescents when discovering who they truly are, and not how other people want them to be. A useful place to start is to become familiar with some good, reliable, early adolescents friendly resources yourself.

Also, conducive environment should be created to allow self identity emerge gradually and naturally. Self-identity is one of the craftiest part of identity and aspect of development because no single rule could be applied universally. However, use of technology and exposure to the media can be censored so as to reduce externalization of identity, protect adolescents against their ill-effects and guard them towards a healthy identity.

To educator (counsellors and teachers): Effective Skill-Building Programs should be organized, which can succeed in helping the early adolescents develop skills for healthy identity formation. Early adolescents are very receptive to information about identity formation and infact want to receive more information on it.

To psychologists: Psychologists should look into the occurrence of several factors that have been highlighted to improve the identity formation of the early adolescents and use them as a basis to develop a template, model and map to exercise significant control over it when need arises.

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