Ego-Identity and Academic Achievement among B.Ed Teacher Trainees

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Abstract

Adolescence represents a period of intensive growth and change, in nearly all aspects of a child's physical, mental, social, and emotional life. Adolescence needs security, guidance from their parents and teachers until they establish self-support like adults. The identity search starts during the period of Adolescence (Erikson, 1968). Adolescence often self-confused about their own identity. During late adolescence, individuals try to come out of the confusion about their self-identity and, develop their norms of behavior and expectations and thereby abilities and values. The purpose of the present study was to investigate B.Ed teacher trainees' ego-identity and academic achievement concerning demographic variables viz. year of study, the stream of study, and learners' generation. Through this study, the B.Ed teacher trainees understand the significance of assessing ego-identity and providing tailored guided interventions to facilitate exploration to help the students to achieve the ego-identity. A descriptive survey method was adopted and a convenience sampling technique was employed to choose a sample size of 95 B.Ed teacher trainees. The Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (EIPQ) (Balistreri, 1995) was used as a research tool to collect the data for the present study. Descriptive and inferential statistical procedures were employed to analyze the data. The results revealed that the B.Ed teacher trainees showed a high ego-identity level. Further, the variables such as year of study, the stream of study, and learners' generation did not influence B.Ed teacher trainees' ego-identity level. The study also revealed that there was no significant relationship between ego-identity and academic achievement among B. Ed teacher trainees.

Keywords: academic achievement; B.Ed teacher trainees; commitment; ego-identity; exploration

1. Introduction

"Adolescence is a period between the onset of puberty and the beginning of adulthood" (Stangor & Walinga, 2014). Adolescence represents a period of intensive growth and change, in nearly all aspects of a child's physical, mental, social, and emotional life. Adolescence needs security, guidance from their parents and teachers until they establish self-support like adults. Some of the crucial changes that occur during puberty are the development of self-concept and new attachments. During adolescence, the attachments move increasingly towards the peers and decrease towards the parents, resulting in diminished parental influence at this stage (Harris, 1998). The identity search starts during the period of Adolescence (Erikson, 1968). Adolescence often self-confused about their own identity. During late adolescence, individuals try to come out of the confusion about their self-identity and, develop their norms of behavior and expectations and thereby abilities and values. According to Erikson, each life stage is a unique challenge in which a person, who reaches it, must face. He said that the successful development of each of the life stages involves approaching and positively resolving the goals and demands. The most important social task of an adolescent is the search for identity. In the process of the search for a unique identity, the adolescents may try to find out the answer to the question like "Who am I"? This process may lead the adolescence to experience role confusion in which they may balance or choose identities or even give up an identity altogether if the situations are not favorable. After attaining identity achievement, adolescence passes into the "Intimacy versus Isolation" stage of Erickson's theory and forms a strong friendship with others. If adolescents are not successful in the crisis of "Identity versus Role Confusion," they might be confused with the future which may lead to issues related to personal, social, and psychological as an adult.

Ego-identity has two specific dimensions; they are commitment and exploration. Commitment dimension of ego-identity, identified from one's beliefs, goals, decision-making, and efforts taken to achieve the goals. The expression of active searching on one's feelings and intentions is known as the exploration part of ego-identity. Exploration helps the individual to have strong confidence in judgments about him/her. Erickson (1968) stated that during adolescence or adult stage, all individuals engaged

with the process of self-exploration leads to the development of ego-identity, and continued throughout life. Ego-identity is the result of a higher level of commitment and exploration. The psychosocial development theory of Erickson (1968), the identity status theory of Marcia (1980), and the identity styles of Berzonsky (1989) are the chief postulates of identity formation. James Marcia (1980) developed an approach to assess identity development among adolescence. In his plan, the adolescents are classified into four identity categories based upon their responses on commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity. James Marcia's stages of identity development are identity-diffusion status, foreclosure status, moratorium status, and, identity-achievement status. The purpose of the present study was to investigate B.Ed teacher trainees' ego-identity and academic achievement concerning demographic variables viz. year of study, the stream of study, and learners' generation. Through this study, the B.Ed teacher trainees understand the significance of assessing ego-identity and providing tailored guided interventions to facilitate exploration to help the students to achieve the ego-identity.

2. Objectives of the study

The following are the objectives of the study

1. To assess the commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity among B. Ed teacher trainees

2. To study the significant differences if any among B.Ed teacher trainees in terms of ego-identity concerning the demographic variables viz. year of study, the stream of study and learner's generation.

3. To study the significant differences if any among B.Ed teacher trainees in terms of academic achievement concerning the demographic variables viz. year of study, the stream of study and learner's generation.

4. To verify whether there is any significant relationship that exists between ego-identity and academic achievement among B. Ed teacher trainees.

3. Significance of the study

"Emerging adulthood" is a term popular in recent decades, which refers to the period between late adolescence and adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Extensive explorations

in love, work, and worldviews are the main characteristic features of the emerging adulthood people between the ages of 18 and 25. How an individual tackles the identity issues during their emerging adulthood decides their balancing level of autonomy and interdependence, ultimately their interpersonal maturity in adulthood (Marcia, 2002). The assessment of ego-identity among B. Ed teacher trainees are essential, because the B.Ed teacher trainees must aware of their ego-identity, as they are going to face and facilitate the adolescents in the schools. The B.Ed teacher trainees must mindful of the significance of identity formation, as it is the primary psychological task among adolescence. The findings of the study might be useful to evaluate the status of ego-identity among the B.Ed teacher trainees, which conclude the effect of academic achievement against the demographic variables viz. year of study, the stream of study, and learner's generation. These findings would be useful for the B.Ed teacher trainees for facilitating the young adolescence to pursue moral development and character formation, which ensures social mobility and thereby nation development.

4. Hypotheses of the study

The following are the hypotheses framed for the present study:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of ego-identity among B.Ed teacher trainees concerning the demographic variables viz. year of study, the stream of study and learner's generation.

2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of academic achievement among B.Ed teacher trainees concerning the demographic variables viz. year of study, the stream of study and learner's generation.

3. There is no significant relationship between the mean scores of ego-identity and academic achievement among B.Ed teacher trainees.

5. Review of Related Studies

Reshma, P., and Manjuli, G. (1989) made a study "Ego-Identity in Adolescence: Some Psychological Correlates". The study focused on the effect of age, sex, sex roles, and social class on ego-identity. The sample for the study comprised of 1200 adolescence between the ages of 15 to 18 years. Chi-square test, ANOVA, and t-test are

used to analyze the data. The major findings of the present study are as follows: 1. Age has no significant effect on ego-identity. 2. Boys were higher in their ego-identity than girls.

Janarthanan, D., and Gnanadevan, R. (2014) investigated "Ego-Identity status of Higher Secondary students". The study used a stratified random sampling technique to select a sample size of 800 higher secondary students from the cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu. Descriptive analysis, t-test, and ANOVA are used to analyze the data. The study found that the majority of the higher secondary students are identity achievers. The mean score of identity achievement is higher among higher secondary students. The study also found that higher secondary students with different subject backgrounds differ significantly in their ego-identity.

Mohammadi, H., and Akbari, O. (2016) conducted a study "Ego identity, self-esteem, and academic achievement among EFL learners: A relationship study". From four universities 217 students were selected as a sample for the study.158 were females and 59 were males. A random sampling technique was adopted to select the sample for the study. EOM-EIS and Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale were employed as research tools. Cronbach's alpha and Pearson correlation coefficient were applied to establish the reliability of the research tools. The study found that all subscales of ego identity had a significant relationship with academic achievement. The study also revealed that ego identity and self-esteem are influential in the academic achievement of the students.

6. Research Design and Methodology

6.1 Method

The investigator is interested in assessing the ego-identity among B.Ed teacher trainees concerning the demographic variables viz. year of study, the stream of study and learner's generation and its relation with academic achievement. For this purpose, the investigator adopted the descriptive survey method.

6.2 Sample

The sample for the study consisted of 95 B.Ed teacher trainees selected from the Department of Education, Gandhigram Rural Institute (Deemed to be University),

Gandhigram located within Dindigul district, Tamilnadu, India. The investigator used the Convenience sampling technique to select the sample. Table 1 reflects the distribution of the sample.

Table 1: Distribution of Sample

Variables	Sub-variables	*N*	Percentage	*N*
Year of Study	First Year	49	52	95
	Second Year	46	48	
Subject Background	Arts	27	28	95
	Science	68	72	
Learner's Generation	First Generation	60	63	95
	Other than First Generation	35	37	

6.3 Tools Used

The Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (EIPQ) (Balistreri, 1995) was used as a research tool to collect the data for the present study. The appropriateness of the research tool was established through the pilot study. 50 B.Sc., B.Ed (Integrated) student teachers employed as the sample for the pilot study.

6.4 Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (EIPQ)

The EIPQ consisted of 32 items with a 6 point Likert-type scale ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The elements of EIPQ bring out the commitment and exploration factors of the respondents. The reliability coefficients of 0.69 and 0.71 were established for the commitment and exploration factor of ego-identity, respectively. The simple language and the high reliability with the universal background of the EIPQ led to choose the EIPQ as a research tool for the present study. The commitment and exploration factors of the Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (EIPQ) consist of 16 statements, each with ten positive statements and six negative statements. The positive statements scored 6 points to 1 point for strongly agree to strongly disagree and vice-versa for the negative statements. The minimum possible score is 16, and the maximum score is 96 for both commitment and exploration factors of the Ego Identity.

6.5 Statistical Procedures Employed

Descriptive and inferential statistical procedures were employed to analyze the data. For the t-test, a 0.05 level of significance fixed to test the null hypothesis

7. Results and Discussion

The underlying assumption of most of the parametric tests is that the data are approximately normally distributed. Shapiro-Wilk test was used to test the normality of the data. Table-2 reveals the results of the Shapiro-Wilk test.

Table 2: Shapiro-Wilk Test

Variable	Statistic	Df	Sig
Ego-Identity	0.984	95	0.3
Academic Achievement	0.983	95	0.27

The null hypothesis of the Shapiro-Wilk test states that the data normally distributed. The p-value of 0.3 and 0.27 of Table 2, suggests that the data are approximately normally distributed. So the null hypothesis is retained at a 0.05 level of significance.

7.1 Descriptive Analysis

The first objective of the study was to assess the commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity among B. Ed teacher trainees. To answer this objective, the mean and the standard deviation computed for the commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity among B. Ed teacher trainees and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Commitment and Exploration factors of ego-identity among B.Ed Teacher Trainees.

Variable	N	M	SD	Minimum Score	Neutral Score	Maximum Score
Commitment	95	60.95	7.87	16	56	96
Exploration	95	60.51	7.99	16	56	96

Table 3 reveals that the mean scores of 60.95 and 60.51 for the commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity respectively. The minimum and the maximum possible score for the commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity are 16 and 96 respectively. The neutral score for the commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity is 56. The mean scores of the commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity of B.Ed teacher trainees were higher than the neutral score. Hence, it is concluded that B.Ed teacher trainees had positive commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity. A similar result was found in the study conducted by Janarthanam, D., and Gnanadevan, R. (2014). The study found that majority of the higher secondary students were identity achievers. The mean scores of identity achievement are higher among higher secondary students.

7.2 Testing of Hypotheses

Table 4: Mean, SD, and 't' – Scores on Ego-identity of B.Ed Teacher Trainees

Population Variables		N	M	SD	Df	t	Result
Year of Study	First Year	49	123.63	11.95	93	1.79	NS
	Second Year	46	119.7	9.18			
Stream of Study	Arts	27	121.2	10.4	93	0.28	NS
	Science	68	121.9	11.6			
Learner's Generation	First	60	121.9	10.4	93	-0.27	NS
	Other than First	35	121.31	11.02			

Note: NS – Not Significant; S – Significant

To verify whether there is any significant difference between the mean scores that B.Ed teacher trainees obtained on ego-identity concerning the year of study, the stream of study, and learners' generation, the 't'-test was employed, and the results are presented in Table 4.

The ego-identity scores of B.Ed teacher trainees concerning the year of study given in row (1) of Table 4 show that there was no significant difference between first year (M= 123.63; SD = 11.95) and second-year (M= 119.72; SD = 9.18) B.Ed teacher trainees, where t (93) = 1.79, p > .05. It reveals that the first year and second-year B.Ed teacher trainees did not differ in their ego-identity. Thus, the framed null hypothesis is accepted. The results of this study are in line with the study conducted by Reshma, P., and Manjuli, G. (1989) revealed a non-significant effect of age was found on ego-identity indicated that the younger and older students did not differ significantly in their ego-identity achievement.

A probable reason for this might be that the sample selected for the study belonging to the same group and might be having more or less similar experiences. Their roles, lifestyles, and expectations would also be more or less similar and, so the sample did not have a significant difference in their ego-identity.

Row 2 of Table 4 shows that there was no significant difference between arts stream (M= 121.26; SD = 10.44) and science stream (M= 121.93; SD = 11.6) B.Ed teacher trainees in their ego-identity where t (93) = 0.28, p > .05. The results revealed that the arts stream and science stream B.Ed teacher trainees did not differ in their ego-identity. Thus, the null hypothesis was retained. The result of the present study is in contradiction to the findings made by Janarthanam, D., and Gnanadevan, R. (2014). The study found that higher secondary students with different subject backgrounds differ significantly in their ego-identity.

Row 3 of Table 4 reveals that there was no significant difference between the first generation (M= 121.98; SD = 10.49) and other than first-generation (M= 121.31; SD = 11.02) B.Ed teacher trainees where t (93) = - 0.27, p > .05. The result reveals that the learner's generation has no significant influence on the ego-identity of B.Ed teacher trainees. Hence, the framed null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 5: Mean, SD, and 't' – Scores on Academic achievement of Prospective Teachers

Population Variables		N	M	SD	df	T	Result
Year of Study	First Year	49	76.59	8.19	93	-0.03	NS
	Second Year	46	76.63	6.4			
Stream of Study	Arts	27	72.7	5.97	93	-3.76	*S
	Science	68	78.16	7.29			
Learner's Generation	First	60	77.03	7.98	93	0.79	NS
	Other than First	35	75.89	6.12			

Note: NS – Not Significant; *S – Significant

The academic achievement scores of B.Ed teacher trainees concerning the year of study given in row (1) of Table 5 shows that there was no significant difference between first year (M= 76.59; SD = 8.19) and second-year (M= 76.63; SD = 6.4) B.Ed teacher trainees, where t (93) = -0.03, p > .05. It reveals that the first year and second year B.Ed teacher trainees did not differ in their academic achievement. Thus, the framed null hypothesis was accepted.

Row 2 of Table 5 shows that there was a significant difference between arts stream (M= 72.7; SD = 5.97) and science stream (M= 78.16; SD = 7.29) B.Ed teacher trainees in their academic achievement where t (93) = -3.76, p < .05. The results revealed that the B.Ed teacher trainees belong to the science stream had higher academic achievement than the arts stream. Consequently, the framed null hypothesis was rejected.

Row 3 of Table 5 reveals that there was no significant difference between the first generation (M= 77.03; SD = 7.98) and other than first-generation (M= 75.89; SD = 6.12) B.Ed teacher trainees where t (93) = 0.79, p > .05. Based on this finding, it was concluded that the learner's generation had no significant influence on the academic achievement of secondary level prospective teachers. Hence, the framed null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 6: Correlation between Factors of Ego-identity and academic achievement

Variables	Commitment	Exploration	Academic Achievement
Commitment	1	-.046	-.131
Exploration	-.046	1	-.086
Academic Achievement	-.131	-.086	1

p<0.05 level (2tailed)

Table 6 displays the correlation between factors of ego-identity and academic achievement. Three sets of correlation worked out. The first set is the correlation between the commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity, exist a relationship of r= -.046 is statistically not significant of p > .05. The second set is the correlation between the commitment factor of ego-identity and academic achievement, exist correlation of r= -.131 is statistically not significant of p > .05. The third set is the correlation between the exploration factor of ego-identity and academic achievement, exist correlation of r= -.086 is statistically not significant of p > .05. Hence, the framed null hypothesis was accepted. It reveals that there is no significant relationship between the commitment and exploration factors of ego-identity and academic achievement among B. Ed teacher trainees. A similar result was found in the study conducted by Kaur and Singh (2019) who reported that the association between identity formation and academic achievement of undergraduate college students was not significant. The result of the present study is in contradiction to the findings made by Mohammad and Akbari (2017). The study revealed that the subscales of ego-identity showed a significant relationship with academic achievement. The result of the study conducted by DeCandia (2014) is not in line with the findings of the present study. DeCandia observed a small, statistically significant relationship between academic achievement and academic identity. The result of the present study is inconsistent with the study of Abiola (2014), who reported that the variations of identify formation contributed better articulate and conceptualizing the academic achievement of students. The result of the present study is also contrary to the results of the studies of Boyd, Hunt, Kandell, and Lucas (2003) revealed that the students with an identity achievement are more confident in their academic abilities.

8. Conclusions

The result of the present study revealed that the B.Ed teacher trainees' ego-identity level is high, which is something remarkable that would lead them a quality life. The teacher education institutes must facilitate all the teacher trainees to achieve ego-identity before they start teaching in schools. The achievement of ego-identity among the B.Ed teacher trainees would help them to communicate well with their students who are adolescents. Thus, the adolescence will feel motivated and attend school regularly. The future teachers with high ego-identity will help adolescents to reach identity achievement, which is the primary psychological task of adolescence.

9. Educational Implications

The school students with less developed identity might adopt ineffective strategies which affect their academic performances. So, in schools, the students' identities must be assessed at the beginning and end of the academic years. Tailored guided interventions might facilitate exploration and help the students to achieve the ego-identity. Higher education institutions could extend guided interventions through the student affairs department. Teacher education institutes providing pre-service training to the prospective teachers should infuse life skills related topics in their curriculum.

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