

Full Length Research Paper

Family functioning on the identity statuses in High School Boys in Isfahan, Iran

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between family functioning and the identity statuses in high school boys. 330 high school students from five different education zones in Isfahan, Iran were randomly selected with cluster sampling. Questionnaire was designed to measure the levels of family function and identity status. These comprise 'Extended Version of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOMEIS-2)' and 'Family Functioning Scale'. A question on factors that influence identity statuses was formulated. Data were analyzed by hierarchy regression. The results showed that there are significant relationships between sub-domains family function and identity status. Democratic family style, family idealization and cohesion could predict foreclosure statuses; family sociability, religious orientation and family idealization could predict achievement statuses; democratic family style and family organization could predict moratorium statuses and family organization, religious orientation and authoritarian family style could predict diffusion statuses. These findings show that to have adolescents with achievement identity, parents should try to have a family with family sociability, religious orientation and family organization among other sub-domains of family functions.

Key words: Identity status, family function.

INTRODUCTION

Having a proper identity is very important for all human beings in order to function truly. Psychologists believe that people should already have a sense of identity by the age of eighteen. Some psychologists even suggest that adolescents should have an identity intact in themselves before the end of secondary school. Since preparatory students who are doing their foundation for their bachelor's degree have passed that age, it is expected of them to have already formed an identity (Yunus et al., 2010).

However, it has been said that the adolescence years are the most difficult and challenging for adolescents to find an identity. According to Romano (2004), adolescence years are when people undergo a dramatic change where they are expected to form an identity of their own. The adolescents need to figure out who they are as well as think about what they want to do with their life. These are the years adolescents will get into conflicts and from there, countless problems emerge (Berk, 2006) but a positive sense of identity in adolescence can help to inhibit or decrease problem behavior (Marsiglia et al.,

2001). One of the problems that seem to be a concern to many adults is the fact that some adolescents seem to have conflicts about their own identity.

Erikson described adolescent identity exploration as a crisis of 'identity versus identity diffusion'. From among all possible imaginable relations, adolescent must make a series of ever narrowing selections of personal, occupational, sexual, ideological commitments (Erikson, 1968).

Marcia (1966), in relation to Erikson's theory, developed the Identity Status Paradigm (ISP) that influences identity research. According to Erikson (1968), adolescents are experimenting with alternative roles and ideals available in their society before making relatively enduring commitments, which provide them with a secure sense of identity within their community. Marcia (1966), based on Erikson, viewed identity as a global construct and he initially aggregated it from the domains of occupation, politics and religion. He used a semi-structured interview to measure four identity statuses as follows: Adolescents who have gone through a period of

exploration and have established firm identity commitments are assigned to achievement status; they have explored meaningful alternatives and then made a commitment (Arnett, 2009). Adolescents who are actively seeking among alternatives to arrive at a choice are in moratorium status. Adolescents who follow the commitments that are presented to them by parents (or other significant adults), without exploring options, are in foreclosure status; in fact, they have made a commitment but no exploration. Finally, identity diffusion status refers to adolescents who have no commitments and who are not actively trying to form any (Marcia, 1980).

Everall et al. (2005) and Bergh and Earling (2005) observed identity achieved adolescents are to perform very well under stress. They also have a high level of moral development and have a high level of independence. Apart from that, identity achieved adolescents are found to be more creative as well as more rational than the other adolescents in other statuses. Adolescents who are in the identity achievement and identity moratorium status are more advance in cognitive development than adolescents in the other identity statuses (Krettenauer, 2005). In theory, it has been assumed that identity achievement increases with age. Therefore, only a small number of adolescents in the late years should be in the identity diffusion status (Graf et al., 2008).

Contextual influences on identity statuses had been largely neglected in empirical research. Côté and Levine (1988) identified the ignored role of the context and viewed statuses as an intrapersonal attribute, whose development is mainly affected by individual factors. For Erikson, the adolescent's commitment to his or her identity is not complete unless society finds him or her as somebody who had to become the way he or she is (Erikson, 1968).

In recent years, the effect of family relationship has been an important study of the society. The effects of family functioning on adolescent identity (Adams et al., 1990; Gumina, 1995; Hamilton, 1996; Perosa et al., 1996) and behavior problems have been widely and separately studied.

Families have the potential to be an important stabilizing influence in the development of adolescents' identities. Although some assert that parents do not matter (Harris, 1998), family structure provides an important environment in which identity development occurs (Archer and Waterman, 1994). A family with good family function would mean the family members are willing to solve problems together, showing concern for each other, and there will be fewer quarrels (Lian and Yusooff, 2009).

Family functioning is a process by which the family operates as a whole, including communicating in and manipulating the environment for problem solving and meeting the needs of its members through developmental transition. In the Beavers Systems Model of Family Func-

tioning two dimensions are identified for family function: family competence and family style. Family competence is the horizontal axis in the model and it refers to the structure, adaptive flexibility, and available information in the family system. High competent families have a flexible structure which enables them to negotiate, function better, and more successfully cope with stressful incidents. Family style is the vertical axis of the model and it refers to the families' view of the origin of satisfaction in relationships. In the Process Model of Family Functioning, families are regarded as ever changing, complex systems. According to this model, families aim to accomplish several basic, developmental, and crisis tasks. To accomplish each demanding task, the family has to organize itself. The process of task accomplishment determines if a family achieves or fails its fundamental objectives. The family intends to allow the continued development of each family member, to provide family members with security, to make sure that there is family cohesion and to function efficiently in the society. In the process of task accomplishment, the problem or task is first identified, then alternative solutions are explored, next the selected solution is applied, and finally, effects of this application are evaluated. The Mc Master Model of Family Functioning is founded on a systems theory. The McMaster Model identifies dimensions of family functioning. These dimensions do not represent all features of family functioning. However, they have been found significant in working with families in clinical settings. Families are evaluated based on their effective functioning in each dimension. These dimensions are problem solving, communication, roles affective responsiveness, affective involvement and behavior control (Amado, 2005).

Boekaerts and Roeder (1999) believe family functioning comprises a set of family and parent variables. These factors include parental adjustment, marital adjustment or conflict, family conflict, family resources, family cohesion, family adaptability, and the degree of parenting stress. Bloom's (1985) introduced three dimension for family function that they reflecting family relationship, system maintenance, and personal growth dimensions. They have included family sociability; expressiveness; enmeshment; disengagement; conflict; cohesion; intellectual; recreation; religious orientations; democratic; authoritarian; and laissez-faire; decision-making styles; organization; external locus of control; and family idealization.

Some research examined the relationship between family function and identity statues and behavior problems. Schwartz and Pantin (2005) showed that 20% of the relationship between family functioning and behavior problems operated indirectly through identity, and identity diffusion partially mediates the relationship between family functioning and early adolescent behavior problems. Schwartz et al. (2009) found that family functioning was significantly related to changes in identity

confusion. Their follow-up analyses suggested that family functioning primarily influences identity confusion in early adolescence, but that identity confusion begins to exert a reciprocal effect in middle adolescence. Schwartz et al. (2008) showed that adolescents whose identity confusion scores increased over time were most likely to initiate cigarette use, alcohol use, and sexual behavior during the course of the study. Adolescents whose identity confusion scores remained stable over time were less likely to initiate, and adolescents whose identity confusion scores decreased over time were least likely to initiate.

The quality of family functioning has consistently been identified as one of the most important predictors of individual well-being (Mandara and Murray, 2002). Also, the emergence of adolescent behavior problems has been linked to a number of family factors including conflict, support, and communication (Loeber et al., 1998). Some studies have illustrated the effects of family functioning on decreasing the risks of youths' violence and aggression (Gorman-Smith et al., 1998) and substance abuse (Brooks et al., 1998). Family functioning has been shown to have positive correlation with academic achievement (Heiss, 1996), cognitive performance (Burchinal et al., 1997), social and emotional adjustment (Taylor and Wang, 1997), and self-esteem (Brody and Flor, 1997).

Among some families such as Latino families, factors such as familism and cohesion are especially important (Santisteban et al., 2003; Vega et al., 1993). Bosma and Kunnen (2001) have discovered that family relationships are crucial for healthy identity development. Other researchers have concluded that family support (Meeus et al., 2005) and parent-adolescent communication (Meeus et al., 2002) have high correlation with identity exploration and commitment.

Olson (2000) believe one would expect that families who report moderate levels of cohesion and adaptability would be better functioning than families who report "extreme" levels of these two variables. However, they reported that families who report "extreme" levels of cohesion and adaptability and are satisfied with their family's functioning will function "well." Lian and Yusooff (2009) showed that severity of conflict, social isolation and family cohesion have a great effect on the self-esteem of adolescents. Engels et al. (2006) have found lying in adolescents was moderately associated with parent-child communication, the quality of the parent-child relationship, and with parenting practices. Marsiglia et al. (2009) have found family cohesion, however, was found to be protective against conduct problems and rule breaking but not aggressive behavior.

In Iran the individual's total life is dominated by the family and family relationships. Children, especially young boys are the focus of attention and affection from both the nuclear and extended family and may be spoiled by aunts, uncles and grandparents. As they grow older they are expected to be polite and respectful towards

adults. The Iranian child is typically well mannered and can sit quietly for hours in an adult's presence. Boys learn to respect their father's authority and dominance, yet are also encouraged to be assertive and independent. Child rearing involves many prohibitions that parents express repeatedly. For example, children are told to be obedient, to behave like adults and to be quiet (Jalali, 2005). It is crystal clear that all parents want to nurture children who have achievement identity in adolescence. One of the most questions of Iranian parents is how can they shape achievement identity in their adolescents and what are the family roles in shaping identity? The aims of the present study are to examine the associations between family function and identity statuses of adolescents among high school boys.

The purpose of the research is to answer the following question:

1. Which factor(s) of family function has/have more correlation with identity status among adolescent boys?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design

A cross-section study was carried out in a sample of 330 undergraduates from the start of the education year in autumn up to the end of autumn.

Population

The population of this study was all high school boys in five educational areas in Isfahan, Iran. The study sample included 330 senior boys that they were randomly selected with cluster sampling. The questionnaire was distributed to 11 classes by two research assistants to respondents. All data were obtained from adolescents; also they provided family income, parental marital status and parental educational level information. 90% of the parents were married, 3.2% were divorced, and 6.8% were continuously single mothers. No single fathers were in the sample. Approximately, 41% of the parents had graduated from high school only. 25% had experienced some college, and roughly 22% of the sample had graduated from college. Only 9% of the parents in the sample did not graduate from high school, and 3% did not report any educational information. 52% of the families have moderate monthly family income, 22% of the families have low income, 20% of the families have more than average and 6% did not report any levels of monthly family income.

Measures

Family functioning scale

The FFS is a 75 items, of 4 points. The survey consists of 15 scales reflecting family relationship, system maintenance, and personal growth dimensions. This measure, based on prior family assessment instruments, is one of the most comprehensive scale available to assess characteristics of family functioning (Koranek, 1989). It has been used successfully to differentiate intact versus divorced families (Bloom, 1985). Scales measure family sociability; expressiveness; enmeshment; disengagement; conflict; cohesion;

intellectual, recreation, and religious orientations; democratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire decision-making styles; organization; external locus of control; and family idealization. It has adequate psychometric properties and discriminant validity. Scale items consist of statements concerning family life; participants are asked to rate on a 4-point Likert scale how true each statement is for their own family (1 = strongly disagree; 4 = strongly agree). These dimensions have been cross-culturally validated. Reliability of FFS was established in the present study with internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) being 0.77 and test-retest reliability for the 15 dimensions ranging from 0.45 to 0.78. Reliability of FFS was established in the present study with internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) being 0.77 and test-retest reliability was reported for the 15 dimensions ranging from 0.45 to 0.78 (Kapanee and Rao, 2007). Scale scores are constructed by reversing the points allocated to reverse-scored items and simply summing the points.

Extended version of the objective measure of Ego identity status (EOMEIS- EIS-2)

Students' responses to the EOM-EIS-2 developed by Grotevant and Adams (1984), and revised by Bennion and Adams (1986) were used to classify students into one of the four identity statuses. The questionnaire consisted of 64 items measuring the presence or absence of crisis and commitment in both the Ideological Domain (occupation, politics, and religious and philosophical worldviews) and the Interpersonal Domain (friendship, dating, recreation, and sex roles) via a six point, Likert-type response format. Two items were used to measure each status for the interpersonal and ideological subscales, each of which consisted of four sub-domains, so that each of the four identity statuses was indexed by 16 items (8 for ideological and 8 for interpersonal Domains). In 25 years since the introduction of the OM-EIS, continual efforts have been made to increase the psychometric properties of the instrument. The obtained alpha coefficients for the EOM-EIS II were as follows: Interpersonal – Achieved, 0.62; Moratorium, 0.75; Foreclosed, 0.75; Diffusion, 0.62; and Ideological – Achieved, 0.60; Moratorium, 0.58; Foreclosed, 0.80; and Diffusion, 0.64 (Bennion and Adams, 1986). A factor analysis of the EOM-EIS II supported the theoretical distinctions between status categories with one exception; the Diffusion and Moratorium subscale loaded on the same factor. Achievement and Foreclosure were distinct factor scores (Adams, 1998). Bennion and Adams (1986)' examination of the measure's psychometric properties revealed the expected results when assessing for convergent validity. Specifically, the interpersonal status-type scores were most highly correlated with the corresponding ideological status-type score. Assessing the results of the factor analysis and convergent validity led Bennion and Adams (1986) to conclude that diffusion and moratorium measure are overlapping but distinct concepts. Concurrent validity was assessed by comparing the EOM-EIS II with the identity measure by Rosenthal et al. (1981). As expected, ideological and interpersonal identity achieved subscales were positively correlated with Rosenthal et al.'s (1981) identity subscale score ($r_s = 0.38$ and 0.47 respectively) (Bennion and Adams, 1986). For the current study, the alpha coefficient ranged from 0.59 to 0.83.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics for identity status and family function are reported in Table 1, in relation to subscales of family function. As can be seen in correlational matrix, foreclosure status was related to cohesion ($r = 0.118$, $p <$

0.016), religious orientation ($r = 0.110$, $p < 0.023$), organization ($r = 0.114$, $p < 0.019$) and disengagement ($r = 0.134$, $p < 0.007$). There were no significant correlations between identity foreclosure status and other subscales of family function. Achievement status was related to religious orientation ($r = 0.182$, $p < 0.000$), organization ($r = 0.118$, $p < 0.016$), family sociability ($r = 0.212$, $p < 0.000$) and family idealization ($r = 0.224$, $p < 0.010$). Moratorium status was related to cohesion ($r = 0.150$, $p < 0.003$), organization ($r = 0.149$, $p < 0.023$), democratic family style ($r = 0.131$, $p < 0.009$), enmeshment family style ($r = 0.193$, $p < 0.000$). Diffusion status was related to cohesion ($r = 0.151$, $p < 0.002$), intellectual-cultural orientation ($r = 0.121$, $p < 0.012$), active-recreational orientation ($r = 0.110$, $p < 0.022$), religious orientation ($r = 0.113$, $p < 0.020$), organization ($r = 0.183$, $p < 0.000$), democratic family style ($r = 0.199$, $p < 0.000$) and authoritarian family style ($r = 0.143$, $p < 0.005$).

Predicting identity status

When a researcher has many variables and is interested in identifying a useful subset of the predictors, stepwise regression is an appropriate analysis; therefore, stepwise regression analysis was used to investigate the degree to which identity status could be explained by independent variables. Summary data for this analysis are reported in Table 2. The semi-partial regression coefficient was calculated. It is the contribution of a predictor variable to the dependent variable after other variables have been statistically controlled.

Table 2 shows that for foreclosure status in step 1 democratic family style could predict 26% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.026$; $F = 12.54$, $p < 0.000$) but in step 2, democratic family style and family idealization could predict 3.98% of the variance in foreclosure ($R^2 = 0.039$, $F = 9.45$, $p < 0.000$). In step 3, democratic family style and family idealization and cohesion could predict 4.17% ($R^2 = 0.417$, $F = 7.72$, $P < 0.000$). Other variables, although contributing to the overall variance were not significant predictors in foreclosure statuses. For achievement status in step 1, family sociability could predict 0.46% of the variance in achievement statuses ($R^2 = 0.046$, $F = 22.28$, $p < 0.001$) and in step 2, family sociability and religious orientation could predict 0.6 % of the variance in achievement statuses ($R^2 = 0.06$, $F = 15.91$, $p < 0.000$); in step 3, family sociability, religious orientation and family idealization could predict 7.3% of the variance in achievement statuses ($R^2 = 0.073$, $F = 12.37$, $p < 0.001$). Other variables, although contributing to the overall variance, were not significant predictors in foreclosure statuses. For moratorium status in step 1, authoritarian family style could predict 2.5% of the variance in moratorium statuses ($R^2 = 0.025$, $F = 12.04$, $p < 0.001$). In step 2, authoritarian family style and family

Table 1. Means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations for identity status and family function subscales.

Variables	M	D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1. Foreclosure	55.16	18.19	1	0.064	0.06	0.032	0.118'	0.0009	0.027	0.046	0.085	0.11'	0.114'	0.063	-0.01	-0.008	0.134''	0.018	0.064	0.059	0.012
2. Achievement	67.8	9.4		1	0.036	0.061	0.88	-0.025	0.015	0.09	0.064	0.182''	0.118'	0.212''	0.032	0.224''	-0.045	0.038	-0.88	0.048	0.0014
3. Moratorium	46.97	1.76			1	0.369''	0.150'	-0.028	0.053	0.05	0.006	-0.007	0.150''	-0.037	-0.01	-0.12	-0.016	0.193''	0.149''	0.193''	0.002
4. Diffusion	66.6	8.87				1	0.151''	-0.003	0.000	0.0124''	0.11	0.113'	0.183''	0.028	0.032	0.066	-0.017	0.199''	0.055	0.143''	0.032
5. Cohesion	13.18	2.14					1	-0.059	-0.05	0.132''	0.249''	0.149''	0.138''	0.124''	0.109'	0.292''	-0.042	0.028''	0.199''	0.143''	0.005
6. Expressiveness	4.77	1.02						1	0.007	0.014	0.041	0.044	0.039	0.017	0.024	0.037	-0.012	-0.001	-0.006	0.062	0.021
7. Conflict	10.29	3.13							1	0.034	0.044	-0.28	0.015	-0.335	-0.029	-0.238	0.003	0.241''	0.059	0.137''	0.011
8. Intellectual-cultural orientation	13.3	2.97								1	0.0617''	0.095'	0.145''	0.093'	0.139''	0.176''	-0.051	0.1'	0.065	0.104'	0.12'
9. Active-recreational orientation	15.14	3.20									1	0.0121'	0.311''	0.195'	0.201''	0.310	-0.031	0.217''	0.147''	0.087	0.025
10. Religious emphasis	15.87	3.55										1	-0.006	0.215	0.028	0.317''	0.017	0.014	-0.014	-0.086	0.021
11. Organization	13.52	1.94											1	0.204	0.187'	-0.08	-0.09	0.112'	0.079	0.152''	0.001
12. Family sociability	15.16	2.7												1	0.112'	0.466''	-0.046	0.002	0.037	0.136''	0.154''
13. External locus of control	14.89	4.03													1	0.170'	-0.033	0.128'	0.135''	0.041	0.181
14. Family idealization	15.06	2.84														1	-0.019	0.123'	0.099'	-0.063	0.214''
15. Disengagement	14.76	5.39															1	-0.065	-0.011	0.015	0.049
16. Enmeshment	12.46	5.76																1	0.034	0.024	0.012
17. Democratic family	12.04	2.72																	1	1	0.155''
18. Authoritarian family	12.35	1.57																		1	0.155''
19. Laissez-Faire	12.07	3.30																			1

Note: "p<.01, p<.05".

organization could predict 0.37% of the variance in moratorium statuses ($R^2 = 0.037$, $F = 8.97$, $p < 0.001$). Other variables, although contributing to the overall variance, were not significant predictors in foreclosure statuses. For *diffusion status* family organization could predict 0.2% of the variance in diffusion statuses ($R^2 = 0.020$, $F = 9.45$, $p < 0.002$). In step 2 family organization and religious orientation could predict 2.9% of the variance in diffusion statuses ($R^2 = 0.029$, $F = 6.91$, $p < 0.002$). In step 3, family organization, religious orientation and authoritarian family style could predict 0.37% of the variance in diffusion statuses ($R^2 = 0.037$, $F = 6.01$, $p < 0.002$). Other variables, although contributing to the overall variance, were not significant predictors in diffusion status.

DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted to clarify the relationship between family functioning and identity development over time in a sample of Iranian high school boys. It examined the significant relationships between sub-domains family functions and identity status. We investigated which family function variables could predict identity status. The results showed family function has important role in identity status. The finding is consistent with past research linking family functioning to identity (Kamptner, 1988; Reis and Youniss, 2004; Schultheiss and Blustein, 1994; Schwartz et al., 2008, 2009).

Our results showed several noteworthy findings,

democratic family style, family idealization and cohesion could predict foreclosure status. Olson (2000) defines cohesion as togetherness, or the emotional bonding family members have with each other, and every family system must negotiate the balance between separateness and togetherness. Family researchers view cohesion as a resource for the family when handling stressors. Families are regularly faced with stressors. Some of them may be simple but others are more serious. Whether the stress is simple or serious, they all need some level of renegotiating the structure and routine of family life. In fact, it has been suggested those families who function with balanced levels of cohesion and adaptability will adapt more successfully to these stressors

Table 2. Stepwise multiple regression of the independent variables on four dependent variables.

Identity status	Step	Predictors	B	SE B	β	T	sig	Semi-partial	
Foreclosure	Step 1	Constant	41.82	3.85		10.84	0		
		Democratic family	1.01	0.303	0.161	3.54	0.002	0.161	
	Step 2	Constant	31.89	5.46		5.83	0		
		Democratic family	0.977	0.304	0.147	3.21	0.001	0.147	
			Family Idealization	0.743	0.116	0.198	2.54	0.011	0.117
	Step 3	Constant	24.84	6.52		3.8	0		
Democratic family		0.87	0.308	0.131	2.82	0.005	0.161		
Family Idealization		0.607	0.299	0.095	2.03	0.043	0.135		
		cohesion	0.79	0.402	0.093	1.96	0.05	0.143	
Achievement	Step 1	Constant	56.55	2.39		23.61	0		
		Sociability	0.142	0.155	0.215	4.77	0	0.215	
	Step 2	Constant	52.48	2.15		19.088	0		
		Sociability	0.633	0.159	0.183	3.99	0	0.215	
			Religious Orientation	0.361	0.123	0.135	2.94	0.003	0.178
	Step 3	Constant	50.22	2.91		17.28	0		
Sociability		0.492	0.174	0.136	2.68	0.007	0.123		
Religious Orientation		0.294	0.126	0.11	2.33	0.02	0.107		
		Family Idealization	0.382	0.172	0.115	2.21	0.027	0.102	
Moratorium	Step 1	Constant	42.46	1.34		31.49	0		
		Authoritarian family	0.311	0.107	0.158	3.46	0.001	0.158	
			Constant	36.78	2.71		24.54	0	
	Step 2	Authoritarian family	0.35	0.107	0.149	3.28	0.001	0.15	
		Organization	0.438	0.182	0.11	2.4	0.016	0.111	
	Step 1	Constant	58.05	2.83		20.49	0		
Organization		0.638	0.207	0.14	3.07	0.002	0.14		
Diffusion	Step 2	Constant	54.45	3.312		16.44	0		
		Organization	0.628	0.207	0.138	3.04	0.002	0.14	
			Religious Orientation	0.234	0.113	0.095	2.07	0.038	0.097
	Step 3	Constant	51.6	3.58		14.38	0		
Organization		0.594	0.207	0.131	2.87	0.004	0.14		
Religious Orientation		0.254	0.113	0.102	2.24	0.025	0.097		
		Authoritarian family	0.247	0.122	0.093	2.03	0.043	0.095	

or crises (McCubbin and Figley, 1983; McCubbin et al., 1999) such as finding identity among their adolescents. Families with balanced levels of cohesion are also able to pass easier through this renegotiating process. Family idealization refers to the extent to which family members value the family unit as a whole while disengagement

refers to lack of communication among family members and a general lack of interaction among family members (Carr, 2006). Adolescents who have foreclosure status give commitment but they do not explore alternatives; in fact family cohesion influences accepting roles and beliefs that their parents or families accept. Also, it seems

that adolescents with foreclosure identity do not swerve from family unit values. Therefore, they can be an explanation for positive relationship between foreclosure status with cohesion and family idealization. Democratic parenting style recognizes that children are equal to their parents; not in sameness of intellect or experience but in their value as a human being. Children should be treated with respect and parents balance their freedom with responsibilities. This is accomplished by setting limits, providing choices within those limits, employing kind of choices but firm discipline and focusing on solutions not punishment and rewards (Stienberg, 2011); these factors help to accepting values, roles and beliefs of their parents. Family sociability, religious orientation and family idealization could predict achievement status. The family sociability variable of family functioning refers to the extent to which families involve in pleasurable activities together, which may occasionally involve the inclusion of non-family members (Krumholz, 2011). As pointed notes, identity achieved adolescents have made a personal commitment to an identity after a period of crisis or exploration. An explanation for positive relationship between achievement status and family sociability can be pleasurable activities with other people. It causes exposure to different ideas and life styles and unity of family members allows adolescents to experience security in spite of encountering different ideas; also religious orientation causes adolescents have clear and definite values in their families, helping them to commit to an identity. Religious orientation facilitates family functioning and focuses on the marital relationship or relationships between parents and children. A considerable body of evidence documents a link between religion and marital stability, adjustment and happiness. For example, Scanzoni and Arnett (1987) showed that religious orientation was positively related to marital commitment and the use of positive conflict-resolution tactics and there was a positive relationship between emphasis on religion and affective mother-child relationships (Ellison et al., 1999; Mahoney et al., 2001; Pearce and Axinn, 1998). In fact, religious involvement increases supportive and responsive family relationships which help them to cope with stress such as finding identity among adolescents. Also research has shown that religion has a vital role in adolescents' lives, positively influencing their academic performance, educational aspirations, worldview, and optimism about the future (Regnerus et al., 2003). Religious orientation has also been related with adolescent psychological well-being, positive self-concept, and good physical health (Donahue and Benson, 1995; Ellison, 1991; Oleckno and Blacconiere, 1991). Religious adolescents are less likely to engage in risky behaviors (Hays et al., 1986).

As seen above authoritarian family style and family organization could predict moratorium statuses. Parents who are too demanding but not attentive to their responsibilities are authoritarian. Authoritarian parents

demand obedience and tend to forceful disciplinary. The underling belief of the parents is that their children should admit their rules without question (Stienberg, 2011). The finding is consistent with past research linking family organization to child outcomes (Ermisch and Francesconi, 2001; Hill et al., 2001; Painter and Levine, 2000; Biblarz and Stacey, 2010; Francesconi et al., 2010). It seems that family organization is a framework that determines family membership, hierarchical position of family members; besides authoritarian family style among other family function dimensions it causes the adolescents to find their place in the midst of crisis and experimentation.

Family organization, religious orientation and authoritarian family style could predict diffusion status. The pointed factors with each other cause adolescents not to have firm commitments and are not trying to make them. In fact, adolescents who have authoritarian parents that place a high value on religious orientation cannot make commitments. It seems that the society demands authoritative parents who are warm but serious in attending to the development of self-regulation and accept ultimate responsibility for their adolescents' behavior (Steinberg, 2011).

These findings have shown that to have adolescents with achievement identity, family sociability, religious orientation and family organization are most important than other sub-domains. Also family organization, religious orientation and authoritarian family style among sub-domains of family function can guide adolescents to diffusion identity. In fact, adolescents with authoritarian parents are put in the opposite situation, where they have no values frame and become confused about selecting values and making them.

These findings show parents play an important role in their children's growth from birth to adulthood. Our findings can be found in Erikson's (1968) claim that differences between essential parental attributes and those of social persona may cause difficulties in the development of ego identity. In spite of these findings, the role of significant variables to determine variances of different identity statuses is not strong. It seems other variables in adolescence have most strong role in forming identity status such as friends. For example, Aker et al. (1998) found that mutually identified best friend were more similar in attitudes, behavior and intentions. Duriez et al. (2007) showed the important role of parental goals in forming identity. Wires et al. (1994) showed age differences in identity status for young adolescents, identity development associated with time, and a strong relation between adolescent behavior problems and levels of identity status.

In summary, it seems that Iranian adolescents have some problem in exploring themselves because of positivism in ideas and beliefs in modern world. Regarding the total variance, other researchers should include other important person and situation variables

that are most important in adolescence such as personality, peers or various types of social support and opportunity.

The results of this study were limited by the self-report nature of the instruments. However, we suggest that future research examines the identity status with different variables, which may be determining variance of identity status among Iranian students.

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