

EGO IDENTITY FORMATION: FROM THEORY TO LIFE -A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH-

Prof. Dr. Hasan ATAK



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Curriculum Vitae

Prof. Dr. Hasan Atak was born in Ankara and completed his primary education in Aksaray and his secondary education in Eskişehir. After completing his undergraduate studies at Ankara University in 2001, he obtained his Master's degree in 2005 and his Ph.D. in 2010, both from Ankara University. Since 2011, he has been working at the Department of Educational Sciences in the Faculty of Education at Kırıkkale University. He worked at the Department of Psychology at the University of Minnesota from 2015 to 2017. Since 2019, he has been working as a Professor in the Department of Educational Sciences at Kırıkkale University, teaching courses on developmental psychology, behavioral disorders, and individual psychological counseling practice.

Preface

Ego identity formation refers to the psychological process through which individuals develop a coherent and stable sense of self. It involves the exploration, consolidation, and integration of various aspects of one's identity, including personal values, beliefs, goals, interests, and roles within society. Ego identity encompasses a person's understanding of who they are, what they stand for, and how they relate to others and the world around them. Identity formation is a dynamic and ongoing process that occurs throughout the lifespan, but it is particularly prominent during adolescence and emerging adulthood. During these periods, individuals undergo significant physical, cognitive, and social changes, which prompt them to explore different aspects of themselves, experiment with various roles and identities, and make important life decisions.

The process of ego identity formation involves a series of tasks and experiences, including self-reflection, introspection, exploration of personal values and beliefs, engagement in social and cultural contexts, and the establishment of meaningful relationships. It requires individuals to reflect on their past experiences, anticipate future goals, and reconcile conflicting aspects of their identity.

In the journey of self-discovery and personal growth, understanding one's identity is a fundamental and complex task. The concept of ego identity formation has captivated the attention of psychologists and scholars alike, who have delved into the intricate processes involved in shaping our sense of self. This book aims to explore the theories of prominent psychologists such as Erik Erikson, J. J. Arnett, James Marcia, and Michael Berzonsky, as well as the insightful contributions of Waterman, in unraveling the mysteries of identity formation during adolescence and emerging adulthood. Erik Erikson, a towering figure in developmental psychology, laid the groundwork for our understanding of ego identity formation. His psychosocial theory emphasized the crucial role of social interactions and the resolution of conflicts in navigating the stages of life. By examining the interplay between identity and societal expectations, Erikson provided a rich framework to comprehend the challenges and opportunities encountered during identity development. J. J. Arnett's theory of emerging adulthood further expanded our understanding of identity formation. Recognizing the unique transitional phase between adolescence and adulthood, Arnett highlighted the importance of exploration,

self-focus, and the pursuit of individuality. This stage of life offers a fertile ground for shaping one's identity, as emerging adults navigate educational, occupational, and personal choices, while negotiating societal and cultural influences. James Marcia's identity status model propelled the study of identity formation by distinguishing between various identity statuses. By exploring the dimensions of exploration and commitment, Marcia provided a nuanced understanding of the identity development process, highlighting the dynamic nature of identity and its role in shaping an individual's choices and sense of self. Michael Berzonsky's theory of identity style introduced the concept of information processing and cognitive strategies in identity formation. Berzonsky emphasized the importance of self-reflection, exploration, and commitment in constructing an authentic and coherent sense of identity. His work shed light on the cognitive processes underlying the development of identity and highlighted the role of personal agency in this transformative journey. Waterman's work on identity in adulthood broadened the scope of identity research beyond the formative years. Her theory highlighted the continued exploration and development of identity throughout adulthood, emphasizing the significance of self-reflection, personal values, and social connectedness in achieving a fulfilling and authentic sense of self.

By integrating the invaluable contributions of these theorists, this book aims to shed light on the complex and dynamic process of ego identity formation during adolescence and emerging adulthood. Through a comprehensive exploration of various theoretical frameworks, psychological research, and real-life narratives, we seek to provide readers with a deeper understanding of the challenges, triumphs, and transformative possibilities that characterize this significant period of self-discovery.

I hope that this book serves as a guide and a source of inspiration for individuals navigating their own paths of identity formation. May it ignite conversations, encourage self-reflection, and foster personal growth, as we embark together on this illuminating journey of understanding the ever-evolving tapestry of human identity.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this book, identity concept is approached in a multidimensional manner and throughout the book, the use of the term "identity" is preferred instead of the concept of "ego identity" for the sake of writing convenience. The book initially provides explanations and definitions related to the concept of identity, followed by discussions on identity as a concept, identity formation, and then the basic theories and literature on identity under main headings. The theories are presented within a specific classification based on their explanations and taking into account identity formation. In addition, new orientations in identity and related explanations are also addressed.

Identity as a Concept

Identity is a concept that has gained importance in the psychology literature, particularly with Erikson's observations on ethnic identity. Erikson conducted studies in Native American communities and later worked in a rehabilitation center after World War II. Through his work with these two groups, Erikson believed that individuals experienced "identity confusion." These experiences led Erikson to become more interested in the concept of identity (Elkind, 1979). Furthermore, Erikson states that being an immigrant in America led him to focus more on the concept of identity (Evans, 1981, p.29). In this case, the emphasis is primarily on the fact that identity is essentially a concept based on ethnic identity. However, the concept of identity was initially extensively examined by clinical psychologists, followed by developmental psychologists, social psychologists, and finally sociologists. However, when looking at the history of psychology, it can be seen that the developmental aspect of the concept is predominantly emphasized in psychoanalytic explanations (Kimmel & Weiner, 1985).

The concept of identity is defined in different ways in different fields, and the reason for the lack of a common definition is that the concept encompasses physical, cognitive, and social elements (Waterman, 1992; Marcia, 1983). When explaining the concept of identity, Erikson sometimes refers to it as an emotion and sometimes as a psychological structure, describing the process of identity formation as a combination of conscious and unconscious mechanisms. According to Erikson, identity is a fundamental characteristic that needs to be acquired during adolescence, and it is a

combination of statuses such as group identity, occupational identity, national identity, cultural identity, and sexual identity. Erikson did not provide a definitive definition of the concept in his work. While Marcia (1983; 1993) explains identity with the concepts of sense, attitude, and resolution, it can be said that the most appropriate term is "an internal self-constructed structure." In this context, identity consists of the dynamic organization of an individual's instincts, beliefs, and personal history (Marcia, 1994). Kroger (2003) defines the sense of identity as the individual's feeling of existing as a unique and distinct individual in their own way, and this sense being continuous. Identity is a concept that can be used in contexts such as ego identity, personal identity, group identity, ethnic identity, sexual identity, and national identity. All these contexts essentially constitute different aspects of an individual's sense of identity, and the key concept underlying this sense is "ego identity."

Despite the growing importance of the concept of identity in the psychology literature, it is noteworthy that in the literature, the terms "I," "self," "self-concept," "personality," and "identity" are sometimes used interchangeably. The common aspect of these concepts is that they refer to the emotions, thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors that distinguish an individual from others. Taking all these concepts into consideration, it can be said that the term "identity" is generally more preferred in European psychology circles. In European psychology circles, identity is used as a concept that involves the integration of personal and social characteristics, interpersonal interaction relative to the self, and reference to social reality (Bilgin, 1994). On the other hand, the concept of "self" represents the cognitive representation individuals have about their own personalities (Kihlstrom & Cantor, 1984). According to Mussen (1986), identity is a compound structure that encompasses the individual's self-perception as a distinct entity from others, with consistent self-representations, behaviors, needs, and interests (Bilgin, 1994). A definition of "identity" that can be used in all fields is simply the answer an individual gives to the question "Who am I?" According to Myers (1980), how individuals define their lives (happy-unhappy, productive-barren, good-bad) is closely related to the answer they give to this question.

According to Adams (1992), the theorists who best explain the concept of identity are Erikson and Blos. Erikson proposed his psychosocial development theory based on clinical observations. He was influenced by

Hartmann and Anna Freud's theories focusing on the adaptive functions of the ego and expanded Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Erikson went beyond the boundaries of childhood experiences, taking into account not only early childhood experiences and oedipal issues but also the social environment in which the child lives (Waterman, 1982; 1992). This theory is the most comprehensive explanation that takes into account the cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of human development, establishes connections between these elements, and has an interdisciplinary perspective.

According to Erikson, an individual develops through the process of interaction with the environment throughout their life. Erikson stated that personal development and societal changes, as well as the identity crisis in an individual's life, cannot be separated from the current crises in history (such as economic crises or wars), and these domains complement each other. In Erikson's theory, the life cycle is defined as developmental stages, and adolescence is emphasized as the most critical stage in identity formation. Erikson defined identity formation as the relationship between psychological, social, developmental, and historical factors (Erikson, 1968). According to him, identity consists of many interconnected elements and is a higher-level psychosocial structure that includes gender role identification, individual ideology, accepted group norms and standards, self-concept, and more. During adolescence, young people repeatedly ask themselves, "Who am I?" Those who make correct decisions begin to integrate their previous experiences into an identity, while those who cannot make the right decisions have to deal with questions like "Who am I? What are my expectations from life?" as adolescence progresses (Adams & Gullotta, 1989).

According to Erikson, an individual develops through interaction with the environment throughout their life. Identity is defined by Erikson as a kind of organization of biological heritage or personal experiences. Erikson bases the individual's development on the relationship between biological variables, socio-environmental influences, and the ego process referred to as personal experiences. According to Erikson, identity is essentially the "continuity of the individual's sense of uniqueness" (Kroger, 1989). This definition poses challenges for researchers in studies related to identity due to its multidimensional, complex, and abstract nature (Cote & Levine, 1987; Bosma, 1992; 1994; 1995; Paterson, Sochting, & Marcia, 1992).

According to Peter Blos, one of the scientists who made significant contributions to the understanding of identity (1967), identity is the process of separation. The concepts of "separation and individuation" are used in developmental psychology to explain the development of autonomy and independence both in infancy and adolescence. Psychodynamic theories focus on the developmental changes in the parent-child relationship. The concepts of separation and individuation were introduced to developmental psychology by Margaret Mahler (Arnett, 2003). Mahler states that within the developmental process, the child develops a sense of individuality within the first two years, as they become aware of their own desires. This stage is referred to as the "first separation and individuation crisis." Building upon Margaret Mahler's concepts of separation-individuation, Blos developed the concept of individuation in adolescence. According to Blos, adolescents turn to peer relationships due to insufficient autonomy in their relationships with their parents, and their emotional dependence on their parents' decreases. Blos suggests that the peer group has a quality that helps adolescents resolve their conflicts and become independent from their parents. Similar to Mahler's views on individuation, Blos believes that adolescents have clear boundaries that set them apart from others. While explaining the development of separation from parents, which he refers to as the "second individuation crisis," Blos expresses that a growing individual takes on increasing responsibilities regarding who they are and what they do, gradually developing a personal state characterized by independence, competitiveness, and separate emotions from parental ties (Kroger, 1985; Kroger & Haslett, 1987). Gold and Douvan, who further elaborate on Blos's perspective, indicate the need for autonomy attributed to societal role changes such as no longer being under the influence of the family, turning towards the adult world, and taking responsibility for their own adjustments. All of these separation and individuation processes described in Blos's theory are considered part of the process of identity formation in adolescence. This theory and the process of identity formation will be discussed in more detail later on.

Bosma (1994) distinguished the difference between identity and identification and stated that the psychosocial structure called identity is composed of multiple identifications. The process of identification is a structure based on how an individual sees and thinks about others. In contrast, identity is about how an individual sees and thinks about themselves. Identity is a broader concept compared to identification. Kroger (1989) mentioned that

when considering identity, the views of theorists who present a stage approach such as Erikson, Blos, Leovinger, and Kegan can be taken into account. Although these theorists define identity in different ways, the common characteristic in all definitions is the "individual's effort to establish a balance between themselves and others."

As seen, in addition to the common characteristics in the definitions of identity by Erikson and other researchers, there are also distinguishing features. In addition to the described definitions, the easiest definition related to identity is generally accepted as the answer to the question "Who am I?" So how does any answer to the question "Who am I?" form? Moreover, what influences the formation of the answer to this question for an individual?

Adolescence and Identity

Developmental Psychology is one of the subfields of psychology and aims to define and explain changes in an individual's thinking, behavior, reasoning abilities, and functions due to biological, individual, and environmental influences (Muir & Slater, 2003). This discipline examines the life process of individuals in the areas of biological, cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial development, dividing the process from conception to death into stages such as prenatal, infancy, childhood, adolescence, youth, adulthood, old age, and death, and evaluates each stage within itself and in relation to other stages. According to Onur (2011), developmental psychology focuses on defining and explaining the changes individuals undergo throughout their lives, as well as addressing the variations, similarities, and differences among individuals, emphasizing the importance of the concept of "change." Adolescence is a period in which these changes occur intensively. According to Steinberg (2002), adolescence is a period in which individuals take steps towards adulthood, indicating significant changes in the biological, cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial domains. As noted by Erikson (1968), the essential characteristic that needs to be acquired during adolescence is "identity achievement."

Different researchers have different perspectives on the adolescent period. While some scientists perceive adolescence as a challenging and negative stage, others adopt a more positive perspective. For example, Dolton refers to adolescence as the "second birth" and emphasizes the vulnerability of individuals during this period. Anna Freud defines adolescence as a

contradictory "storm and stress period." According to Blos, adolescence is the "second separation-individuation" period, while Jacobson labels it as a "mourning" period, suggesting that adolescents experience a mourning-like state during the process of separation from their parents, which is crucial for ego development. Sullivan likens adolescence to "hell" (Schwartz, 2005). G. Stanley Hall, considered the father of adolescence, also defines adolescence as a "storm and stress" period, and for a long time, the notion prevailed that adolescence and subsequent years were inevitably characterized by "storm and stress." However, this view has been challenged through repeated research. Nowadays, it is more common to perceive adolescence as a period of gradual and continuous development rather than a turbulent and stressful one (Steinberg, 2002). Recent researchers argue that this period is not entirely characterized by turmoil or free from turmoil. According to Arnett (2000), the reason why adolescence is seen as a period of storm and stress is due to conflicts with parents, emotional turmoil, and the presence of risk-taking behaviors. However, it is stated that not all adolescents experience storm and stress, and storm and stress are more prevalent in communal societies and less so in individualistic societies (Arnett, 1999). The view of storm and stress may not apply to most adolescents, and it is noted that adolescents who have successfully completed developmental tasks until this stage can manage the specific stress of this period and experience little turmoil in their daily lives (Morris, 1996).

According to researchers such as Havighurst, individuals are required to fulfill certain developmental tasks in each stage of life. These developmental tasks during adolescence help the individual to define themselves with an individual identity and develop a positive and consistent sense of identity (Adams, 1995). While acquiring a sense of identity is considered the primary task of adolescence, when young people enter adolescence, they do not immediately focus on who they are, what they believe in, and what they will do in the future. Instead, they engage in adapting to bodily and cognitive changes, becoming self-assured individuals, learning independence, developing new relationships with same-sex peers, and exploring love and sexuality (Kimmel & Weiner, 1985).

Adolescence is a period characterized by rapid and concurrent changes in physical, emotional, social, and cognitive domains. The physical, cognitive, and physiological changes experienced by individuals during adolescence

contribute to the acceleration of identity development. During this period, individuals are engaged in the effort to find and prove themselves, chart their own path, determine their goals, acquire their sexual identity, and regulate their interpersonal relationships (Uba & Huang, 1999). The adolescent period is also referred to as the "second birth" period, during which the individual's self-structure begins to clarify (Meeus, 1996). Adolescents describe this period as a time of love, achievement, confusion, sacrifice, freedom, and hope (Kimmel and Weiner, 1985). These expressions by adolescents reflect the contradiction they experience in their current phase, as identity is not yet fully formed (Çuhadaroğlu, 2004).

The onset of adolescence has shifted towards the early tens or even earlier ages in today's society, and its nature has significantly changed as well. Many young people feel pressured by their parents, peers, and the media to grow up quickly and behave more like adults at earlier ages. According to this perspective, contemporary adolescents are immersed in experiences that require them to be more independent compared to previous generations (Arnett, 1992). Being away from direct adult supervision and spending time on their own or with peers, they learn to manage and control their own behavior, thus developing responsibility (Steinberg, 2002). For these reasons, adolescents tend to ask the question "Who am I?" more frequently than before (Morris, 1996).

The concept of identity in adolescence was first emphasized by the psychologist Erik Erikson, who defined the fundamental psychosocial crisis of the adolescent period as the conflict between identity formation and identity confusion. According to Erikson and Marcia, the nature of the adolescent period is dependent on identity acquisition. Erikson suggests that the process of identity formation begins with the first psychosocial crisis, in which basic trust is established, experienced prior to adolescence. Successfully resolving the four crises before adolescence facilitates the formation of a positive or healthy sense of identity. During this process, adolescents begin to make decisions about the future and thus start to shape their identities by asking questions such as "Who am I?", "What are my values?", and "What are my life goals?". The fundamental mechanism in the process of identity formation is the individual's exploration or experimentation with new roles. These details will be explained in more detail in subsequent sections.

As mentioned earlier, the concept of identity has gained importance in the field of psychology, particularly through the work of Erikson, and since then, many developmental psychologists, social psychologists, anthropologists, and sociologists have been studying identity. Researchers from various fields contribute to the literature by offering their own perspectives on identity and proposing new concepts related to identity. Furthermore, when looking at identity studies conducted in the past few decades, it is evident that instead of a general structure or organization of identity, it has been divided into subcategories such as ethnic identity, sexual identity, cultural identity, national identity, ethnic identity, and studies have been conducted on these subcategories. New concepts have been proposed, new models have been put forth, and there has been a departure from a general structure of identity. Another new orientation in identity studies is the explanation of identity development in three main areas: exploration (process/experimentation/inquiry and commitment/decision-making - Erikson, Arnett, Blos, and other researchers), identity style - Berzonsky, Frances and Ruble, Lewis, and other researchers), and identity status - Marcia and Waterman, and other researchers) under the main heading of identity formation. In this context, this book focuses on the second orientation of identity, and briefly touches upon the first orientation under the title of new orientations in identity. However, it is beneficial to first explain the concept of "identity" itself.

College and Non-College Emerging Adults and Identity

In Erikson's psychosocial development theory (1968) and Arnett's theory of emerging adulthood (2000; 2004), identity issues (love, work, and worldview) hold significant importance. Recent developmental psychology studies suggest that the transition to adulthood is completed towards the end of the twenties, and the years of transition to adulthood are prolonged by young people, with experiences such as marriage, parenthood, and completing education being delayed until the mid-twenties or even the late twenties (Arnett, 2000; 2004; Shanahan, Porfeli, Mortimer, & Erickson, 2002; Cote, 2002; Arnett & Tanner, 2002). Therefore, when studying the transition to adulthood, it is important to consider the increased life options presented to young individuals in the domains of love, work, and worldview during these years. Additionally, the decrease in societal support for identity formation during this period should also be taken into account (Cote & Levine, 2002). These two factors can make the transition to adulthood challenging for young

people. Accordingly, if young individuals are to engage in "long-lasting and committed attachments" until the end of their twenties, they should have already fulfilled the task of establishing a "stable identity" that enables the continuation of these attachments. Cote and Levine (2002) state that young people living in unfavorable conditions such as lower socioeconomic status will struggle if they do not receive external guidance or support in the process of identity formation. Individuals with better living conditions can benefit more from the opportunities presented to them during the transition to adulthood in exploring identity issues such as love, work, and worldview compared to others (Schwartz, Cote, & Arnett, 2005). Taking these two pieces of information together, the unstructured nature of the transition to adulthood, the multiplicity of possible identity choices in the domains of love, work, and worldview, and the absence of external or societal help make identity development a personal project for many young individuals and perhaps require the experience of agency for a successful transition to adulthood (Cote, 2002; Erikson, 1968; Schwartz, Cote, & Arnett, 2005).

The transition to adulthood is increasingly prolonged due to economic changes, and choices are expanding in various areas of life as a result of sociocultural changes (Wallace & Kovatcheva, 1998). In many Western societies, society-focused policies and production-oriented lifestyles are being replaced by market-oriented policies and consumption-based lifestyles (Furlong & Cartmel, 1997). Consequently, life events that were once normatively structured by society (such as marriage, gender roles, religious beliefs) have become situations in which individuals must make decisions for themselves, placing them face to face with the responsibilities of their own actions and decisions. In this context, young people have a need to "individualize" their lives, both broadly in terms of shaping their careers and personal relationships, succeeding in education and work life, and planning their future, and more narrowly in terms of forming their identities (Bauman, 2001; Beck, 1992). Young individuals who actively and agency-driven experience these aspects related to identity formation are more likely to develop a consistent identity. On the other hand, young individuals who follow a more passive path may struggle to establish a consistent identity and may not fully benefit from the opportunities for identity formation that the transition to adulthood offers (Cote, 2002).

Depending on the level of agency and self-direction, young people's "individuation" can develop in different ways. For example, at one extreme, some young individuals may embrace the life purposes presented by popular culture in their individuation process and prefer the "ready-made options" provided to them by following the latest trends and tendencies in youth culture. This form of individuation is referred to as "default individualization" (Cote, 2000). It is a prescribed way of life where the individual's effort, competence, and agency are limited (Cote, 2002). A "default individualizer" neglects the opportunities for self-development that they actually have. Such an approach leaves individuals unprepared in making decisions regarding important aspects of transitioning to adulthood and identity formation, which are crucial in preparing individuals for adult life and roles (such as marriage, parenthood, work) (Schwartz, 2005; 2006; Schwartz, Cote, & Arnett, 2005).

As an alternative to default individualization, young people can adopt a lifestyle in which they consider all possibilities. This lifestyle or method of individuation is referred to as "developmental individualization" (Cote, 2000). This type of individuation, as in the concept of active individuation proposed by Evans and Heinz (1994), involves a life path based on continuous growth, development, and pre-planning. Developmental individualization encompasses a way of life that involves utilizing opportunities for cognitive, vocational, and psychological growth and exploring and trying accessible options. It enables individuals to actively experience their abilities and agentic capabilities, which helps in making decisions that prepare them for adult roles and resolving the challenges they may face during the transition to adulthood.

One of the most notable characteristics of the transition to adulthood today is that Erikson's concept of psychosocial moratorium (1968) becomes applicable to almost every young individual, meaning that identity development does not end at the end of adolescence despite starting during adolescence. During this period, young people explore and experiment with possible identity choices without permanent commitments. According to Erikson (1968), the identity stage is a time to expand ego capacities and deal with challenges and obstacles presented by the social environment. However, the success of psychosocial moratorium depends on the individual's adoption of developmental individualization. Individuals who embrace default individualization may miss out on the potential opportunities for identity

formation provided by psychosocial moratorium during the transition to adulthood (Cote, 2002).

When examining the literature, it is noteworthy that there are only a few studies (Cote, 2002; Cote & Schwartz, 2002; Schwartz, Cote, & Arnett, 2005) that investigate the relationship between agency and identity, as well as individuation and identity. The findings of these studies are generally consistent with each other. Cote (1997) found that when viewed from a multidimensional approach (self-esteem, internal locus of control, ego strength, life goals, and their composite), agency was not related to the family's socioeconomic disadvantage. Studies on agency conducted with university students in the literature have shown that personal agency replaces socioeconomic disadvantage in the sub-domains of identity exploration (such as love, work, worldview) and individuals from lower SES backgrounds have healthy identity formation due to high agency in the "university context" (Cote, 1997). Cote (2002) demonstrated that individuals who financially support their own university expenses have advantages in terms of agency and self-perception compared to those whose expenses are covered by their families.

Considering the studies on agency and identity formation, it is observed that there are very few studies (Cote & Schwartz, 2002; Schwartz, Cote, & Arnett, 2005) that indicate a positive relationship between agency and exploration/flexible commitment, a negative relationship between agency and avoidance, and no relationship between agency and foreclosure/commitment. These studies on agency consistently support each other. The consistency of the results can be explained by an individual's ability to "act on their own." It is stated that individuals who can act on their own are more advantageous in terms of personal development, identity formation, and a healthy transition to adulthood compared to others (Cote, 2002; Emirbayer & Miche, 1998).

Both in foreign countries and in Turkey, very few studies have examined the general dimensions of identity (such as love, work, and worldview) among groups with different demographic characteristics. The psychosocial moratorium provided by the university environment offers individuals more options for identity exploration (Arnett, 2004). However, young people who do not attend university and are referred to as the "forgotten half" (Halperin, 2001) work in low-income jobs, and their lack of university education becomes a significant obstacle for identity issues such as

love, work, and worldview. For example, according to Perry (1999), changes in worldview stem from changes in cognitive structure, and the best environment that offers this to individuals is university education. The findings of research suggest that university facilitates the acquisition and exploration of worldview. Studies conducted with emerging adults have also shown that individuals question their political views and religious beliefs acquired from their families during their university experience (Arnett & Jensen, 2002; Donoghue & Stein, 2007). Emerging adults who receive university education have more paths to explore during the transition from adolescence to adulthood compared to those who do not receive university education (Salmelo et al., 2004). When examining the literature, it is emphasized that individuals who receive university education are more advantaged in terms of identity exploration. Similarly, the literature highlights that the university experience provides individuals with an environment that requires more active engagement (Arnett, 2007; Shanahan, Porfeli, Mortimer, & Erickson, 2002; Emirbayer & Miche, 1998). Unlike university students, individuals who do not receive university education have limited lives within a narrow environment and are obliged to comply with the rules surrounding them. Throughout their university education, individuals are on their own in many aspects of life and must make many decisions for themselves and manage their own lives (Arnett, 2004). For example, emerging adults have to make decisions for many daily matters such as what to eat, when to do laundry, when to come home at night, or whether to come home or not, without the control of others. The greatest benefit of focusing on themselves for emerging adults is agency (Arnett, 2007). In short, the literature suggests that individuals who continue their university education are more advantaged than others in the sub-domains of identity such as love, work, and worldview, as well as in agency. In other words, individuals who experience university life are considered to be more advantaged in terms of identity and agency.

The debate in sociology regarding whether actions shape society (structure) or society shapes actions is referred to as the "agency/structure" debate. The agency-structure debate is an ongoing discussion, and the interest in this concept in sociology dates back to the theorists who first proposed it, such as Durkheim, and it is also somewhat of an unresolved debate (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Part of this unresolved nature is attributed to Durkheim's efforts to separate sociology from psychology and the attitudes of sociologists towards psychology since Durkheim (Cote and Levine, 2002).

However, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) argue that in order to understand personal agency, it is necessary to acknowledge that individuals' mental states may be responsible for certain social structures to some extent. Additionally, according to Cote (2000), in order to empirically examine the structure-agency relationship, the study of agency from a psychological perspective and individual differences is required. It should also be acknowledged that social structures can either facilitate or hinder active behavior and engagement in a certain form of agency (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Taking this information into account, when viewed as a social structure, it can be stated that university life supports active behaviors, while not experiencing university life leads to less active engagement in life.

CHAPTER II

IDENTITY FORMATION AS A DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS

Identity development is complex and multifaceted. Generally, researchers have explained how an individual's sense of identity changes during adolescence through three different approaches, each focusing on a different aspect of identity development.

The first approach in developmental psychology emphasizes that people form their self-conceptions based on various general personality traits and that these conceptions evolve over time. On the other hand, the second approach, which is completely different, takes into account adolescents' self-esteem and self-image, focusing on how individuals perceive themselves positively or negatively. Lastly, the third approach highlights the sense of identity, addressing questions about who the person is, where they come from, and where they are heading. Additionally, Erikson suggested that during the process of identity exploration, adolescents engage in experiments in three fundamental areas: work/career, ideology/worldview, and romantic relationships/love. He stated that these experiments act as the driving force behind the process of identity exploration and thus identity formation.

Marcia, on the other hand, viewed identity formation as a whole rather than just identity exploration. He defined statuses based on the presence or absence of dimensions such as exploration and commitment/investment. In other words, for Marcia, identity formation concludes with a certain status, and transitions between statuses occur. Berzonsky, who also considered cognitive elements in identity formation, proposed a new approach to identity and defined identity styles. Similar to Marcia, Berzonsky took into account identity exploration but offered a different model of identity formation by including cognitive elements in the process. This model introduced a new concept called identity style to the field of identity formation. Arnett, like Erikson, focused on identity exploration; however, he suggested that identity exploration begins during adolescence and that adolescents engage in experiments in three key areas: work, love, and worldview. He stated that these experiments become more intense during emerging adulthood. It can be said that Arnett mainly addressed the topic of identity exploration in his

perspective on identity formation. It would be beneficial to discuss the views of these researchers regarding identity formation.

During adolescence, all existing feelings of sameness and continuity are questioned again by the adolescent due to the emergence of physical growth resembling early childhood (Erikson, 1968; 1984). Growing and developing adolescents will strive to compare how they perceive themselves with how others see them (Erikson, 1984; Whitbourne, Sneed, & Skultety, 2002). The physiological changes, sexual maturation, and rapid bodily transformations during adolescence create issues in self-identification. It is expected that adolescents accept their physiological changes and sexual feelings as part of themselves (Muuss, 1988; 1990).

Erikson highlights two components of identity formation: the direction and timing of identity formation. The direction refers to how identity changes over time and in which direction it develops, while timing refers to the identification of identity as a dominant concern in an individual's life (Marcia, 1993). In this context, the critical period for identity formation aligns with the adolescent years.

According to Erikson's views, adolescence is an opportunity for restructuring. The psychological and physical maturation of adolescents also brings cultural pressures. Therefore, there is a societal pressure for adolescents to join the adult world and make choices for themselves. Consequently, the most critical stage in the acquisition of identity is the adolescent stage. The physical changes in adolescents lead to a reassessment of social roles. Young individuals struggle to compare their gained sense of identity, shaped by the interaction of culture and their own abilities, with the prototypes of the day in terms of "what they are" in the eyes of others. As a result, adolescents become more susceptible to the influences of both peer groups and significant identification figures (Whitbourne, Sneed, & Skultety, 2002).

During adolescence, the question "Who am I?" is repeatedly asked. Adolescents who make functional decisions regarding this question begin to integrate their previous experiences into an identity. Adolescents who cannot make functional decisions are forced to deal with questions such as "Who am I? What are my expectations from life?" as adolescence progresses (Adams & Gullotta, 1989). According to Erikson, individuals develop throughout their

lives through interaction with the environment. Erikson views the development of an individual as the interaction between three variables: biological factors, socio-environmental influences, and personal experiences referred to as ego processes. Erikson defines identity as a kind of organization of biological heritage and personal experiences. According to Erikson (1968), in its most general sense, the concept of identity refers to the continuity of an individual's sense of uniqueness.

According to Blos (1967), the process of identity formation consists of separation structures. The two concepts mentioned in the developmental literature as "separation and individuation" are used in some psychodynamic theories in developmental psychology to explain the development of autonomy and independence. Psychodynamic theories focus on developmental changes in parent-child relationships (Noom, 1999). Margaret Mahler introduced the concepts of separation and individuation to developmental psychology (Arnett, 2003). Mahler states that within the developmental process, the child's awareness of their own desires leads to the emergence of a sense of individuality for the first time within the first three years. This is referred to as the "first separation and individuation crisis." Building upon Margaret Mahler's concepts of separation and individuation, Peter Blos developed the concept of individuation during adolescence. According to Blos, adolescents turn to peer relationships due to insufficient autonomy in their relationships with their parents, and their emotional dependency on their parents weakens. Blos states that the peer group serves a function that helps adolescents resolve their conflicts and break free from their dependence on their parents. Similar to Mahler's proposition about the baby's process of learning the difference between themselves and their mother, Blos argues that adolescents go through a process where they believe there is a boundary that separates them from others. He refers to this as the "second individuation crisis" and explains the development of separation from parents. Blos (1967) expresses that as a growing person takes on increasing responsibilities regarding who they are and what they do, a personal state emerges that is progressively more independent from the parents, characterized by feelings of competition and separation from them (Kroger, 1985). Gold and Douvan expanded on Blos' perspective in detail, stating that the need for autonomy can be attributed to social role changes, such as no longer being under the rule of one's family, being in a movement towards the adult world, and taking responsibility for self-adjustment.

In addition to common features in Erikson's and other researchers' definitions of identity, there are also distinguishing characteristics. Alongside the described definitions, the easiest definition related to identity is generally accepted as the individual's response to the question "Who am I?" The process of forming any answer to the question "Who am I?" actually refers to the concept of identity formation. In this regard, it is beneficial to talk about "identity formation."

Identity formation, in its most general sense, refers to the development of identity over time. Identity can be shaped in three ways over time: exploration/flexible commitment, foreclosure/conformity, and avoidance (Berzonsky & Adams, 1999; Berzonsky & Neimeyer, 1994; Erikson, 1968; Schwartz, 2005; Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002; Schwartz, Cote, & Arnett, 2005). Exploration/flexible commitment refers to the creation of a consistent identity that includes different aspects in three identity domains of love, work, and worldview. Successful identity status represents this type of formation in identity statuses, while the informational-oriented identity style represents it in identity styles. Foreclosure/conformity involves rigidity and compliance in identity formation. It signifies the creation of an identity with low exploration and rigid commitment in the domains of love, work, and worldview. Foreclosed identity status represents this type of formation in identity statuses, while the norm-oriented identity style represents it in identity styles. Avoidance involves avoiding engagement with identity issues, evading personal problems and decisions, and postponing decisions, despite a strong quest for self. Diffused identity status and moratorium represent this type of formation in identity statuses, while the diffuse/avoidant-oriented identity style represents it in identity styles.

Identity development is complex and multidimensional. However, Erikson stated that during identity exploration, adolescents engage in experiments in three main areas: work, ideology, and romantic relationships. He emphasized that these experiments are the driving force behind the process of identity exploration and, consequently, identity formation. Erikson highlights two components of identity formation: direction and timing. The direction of identity formation refers to the ways in which identity changes over time and develops in specific directions. The timing of identity formation refers to the point at which identity becomes a dominant concern (Marcia, 1993). Marcia identified identity statuses based on the presence or absence of

commitment and exploration dimensions. In other words, according to Marcia, identity formation leads to specific identity statuses, with possible transitions between them. Taking cognitive elements into account in identity formation, Berzonsky proposed a new approach to identity and defined identity styles. Arnett, like Erikson, focused on identity exploration but, unlike Erikson, suggested that identity exploration does not end in adolescence. Arnett argued that individuals continue to engage in experiments in three major areas: work, love, and worldview, and these experiments intensify during the "emerging adulthood" period, with identity exploration concluding at the end of emerging adulthood.

Marcia (1966) and Berzonsky (1989) attempted to expand on Erikson's views on identity development. Marcia proposed four identity statuses: diffusion, foreclosure, achievement, and moratorium. In brief, diffusion (low exploration, low commitment) refers to a lack of interest in identity issues; foreclosure (low exploration, high commitment) involves rigidity and conformity in identity formation; moratorium (high exploration, low commitment) represents a strong search for self; and achievement (high exploration, high commitment) signifies the creation of a consistent identity that includes different aspects. Achievement and diffusion represent Erikson's concept of identity crisis (Cote, 1984; Schwartz, 2002). Building upon Kelly's (1955; Arnett, 2004) perspective of the "person as a scientist," identity processing orientation represents how individuals interpret and handle identity-related issues and dilemmas. Berzonsky (1989) considered this view and proposed three types of identity processing orientation: informational, normative, and avoidant. Informational-oriented individuals consider multiple alternatives. Normative-oriented individuals tend to conform to societal and familial expectations. Avoidant-oriented individuals prefer to avoid making decisions related to identity.

Berzonsky (1989) and Berzonsky and Neimeyer (1994) examined the similarity between identity processing orientation and identity statuses. Informational orientation was found to be associated with the achievement identity status, normative orientation with the foreclosure identity status, and diffuse/avoidant orientation with the diffusion identity status. The moratorium status was found to be associated with either informational or diffuse/avoidant orientation. Studies conducted with different ethnic groups (Berzonsky, Nurmi, Kinney, & Tammi, 1999; Berzonsky, Macek, & Nurmi, 2003) and

different genders (Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002) have also shown a relationship between identity processing orientation and identity statuses.

According to Erikson (1968), having a personal identity is based on an individual's simultaneous observation of their own continuity and the recognition of their continuity by others in terms of their self-identity. In Erikson's assessment of identity formation, it is necessary for the individual to define their own sameness and continuity and for others to define their sameness and continuity. The two concepts involved here are the "ego," which organizes information from the environment, and the "self," which corresponds to the internal experience that represents the individual's emotional perceptions. Based on the observed phenomena in the quest for identity, Tap (1992) expresses personal identity dimensions in the following forms:

- a) Identity sense includes a temporal dimension.
- b) Personal identity involves a sense of unity or coherence.
- c) Personal identity is a system that integrates multiple identities.
- d) Personal identity encompasses separation, autonomy, and self-expression.
- e) Personal identity is reinforced by a sense of uniqueness (originality).
- f) Personal identity takes root in the activity of action and creation.
- g) Personal identity becomes established as a value (Bilgin, 1994).

Erikson suggests that falling in love during adolescence is not entirely or primarily a sexual issue. Falling in love during adolescence is, to a certain extent, an attempt for individuals to reflect their own mixed self-images onto others, thereby seeking self-recognition and forming their own identity (Erikson, 1968; 1984). The main reason why most adolescent love relationships consist only of conversations is the individual's quest for self-discovery (Erikson, 1968; 1984). The process of identity formation involves trials and decision-making in various areas of life (Arnett, 2000; 2004). Love relationships in adolescence are not fully developed relationships and may last for a few weeks or months, usually taking place within groups (e.g., dances, gatherings, and parties). In these love relationships, adolescents search for

answers to the question, "Who would make me happy to be with here and now?" In society and within their network of relationships, adolescents learn about the qualities in others that attract them as well as the qualities that they find unpleasant and bothersome. They also learn how those who want to know them better evaluate them. They learn what others find appealing or unappealing about themselves.

From the perspective of identity exploration, the adolescent period also involves temporary explorations in work and employment. For many adolescents, the development of a vocational identity is problematic, and during this period, adolescents try to make a career choice that suits them. The problem here arises from adolescents imagining unrealistic vocational roles. Many adolescents work part-time jobs during their high school years, but most of these jobs last only a few months, and they prefer service-oriented jobs that have no connection to the careers they wish to pursue in adulthood. Adolescents perceive these jobs they engage in during adolescence not as preparation for their future careers but as a way to earn money in their leisure time (Arnett, 2004). Adolescents aspire to careers that involve making a lot of money easily, such as being a model, actor, race car driver, astronaut, or YouTuber. At this point, adolescents rarely define themselves through their families; instead, they often resist the dominance, value systems, and intrusion into their private lives by their families. This is a natural part of growing up. Adolescents need to separate their identities from their families and develop their autonomy (Muuss, 1988; Whitbourne, Sneed, & Skultety, 2002).

The personal quest for identity by adolescents also involves the formation of a personal ideology or life philosophy that requires a general perspective in interpreting events. Such a general perspective helps guide decision-making, choices, and behavior in life. Since ready-made ideologies or life philosophies exist in societies, it is also possible for adolescents to form their own ideology instead of choosing a ready-made one. The source of changes in worldview lies in cognitive changes. Adolescents express their worldviews based on the information they learned from their families during childhood. Due to the transition to the period of abstract operations and cognitive changes in adolescence, they can lean towards certain ideologies. However, adopting a ready-made ideology or life philosophy may be easy, but it is not suitable or healthy for individual development (Muuss, 1990).

Despite identity explorations, the love and career experiments that individuals experience during adolescence do not always have positive outcomes. Individuals may sometimes experience hopelessness and rejection in matters of love. In the realm of work, they may experience success, failure, and inadequacies. From the perspective of worldview, there may be instances where the beliefs acquired in childhood are rejected (Arnett, 2000).

Marcia examined Erikson's identity crisis dilemma in relation to identity diffusion and the attitudes towards crises and social role determinations that adolescents face or will face based on the levels of "exploration" and "commitment" in their decision-making process. He defined four identity statuses: achievement, moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion. These statuses will be explained in detail in the following sections. However, Marcia's three fundamental views on identity formation are presented below:

- a. There is a strong attachment to basic identity domains such as career or partner selection in the formation of ego identity.
- b. The task of identity formation requires a process of exploration, questioning, and decision-making. This period, which includes this process, is referred to as the identity crisis period.
- c. Western societies, in particular, support the psychosocial moratorium period.

The dimension of exploration mentioned by Marcia in the process of identity formation involves the adolescent exploring, discovering, recognizing options, and seeking answers. The dimension of commitment/inner investment/attachment, on the other hand, is a meaningful choice that guides behavior. The adolescent's exploration and decision-making of options in ideological and interpersonal domains contribute to identity development. The ideological domain includes religious beliefs, political choices, career selection, and philosophical way of life. The interpersonal domain includes friendship, dating, gender roles, leisure activities, and other areas of life (Kroger, 2000; Meeus, 1996; Meeus et al., 2002; Whitbourne, Sneed, & Skultety, 2002). According to Kroger (1985), adolescents need to detach from parental attachments, become autonomous, and turn towards the outside world in order to explore their ideological and vocational interests. From this perspective, adolescents who are in successful identity statuses leave behind

their childhood attachment patterns and engage in active explorations to discover their own values and commit to them. On the other hand, adolescents in the identity foreclosure status will go through a process of restructuring. Individuals in the foreclosure status tend to maintain the values and attitudes they have acquired until adolescence and do not engage in a process of restructuring in terms of ideology and interpersonal dimensions. Individuals in the identity diffusion status do not have any patterns related to their parents, and therefore, they do not make efforts to undergo a new restructuring in identity matters during adolescence, just like individuals in the foreclosure status.

Another important concept in identity formation is the identity styles proposed by Berzonsky. Berzonsky (1992) suggests that different social cognitive processes underlie identity statuses. According to this model, individuals adopt different strategies in problem-solving, decision-making, and dealing with identity issues. These strategies are information-oriented, norm-oriented, and avoidance-oriented (Berzonsky, 1989; 1990; 1992; 1999; Berzonsky & Ferrari, 1996; Berzonsky et al., 1999). Detailed explanations of these styles will be provided in the following sections.

Berzonsky's social-cognitive theory of identity development suggests that individuals systematically evaluate options and their consequences before making decisions in the process of identity formation. According to Berzonsky (2003), new stimuli from the external environment disrupt the balance in the existing identity structure and lead to the formation of a new cognitive structure through the mechanism of adaptation. In other words, during the process of identity formation, individuals create cognitive schemas that emerge from psychosocial interactions, which highlight the differences between individuals. In simpler terms, the driving force behind identity formation is the disruption of balance in the cognitive system and the mechanism of adaptation that leads to the reestablishment of this balance, repeatedly.

In the process of identity formation, it can be observed that there are three main areas reflecting the views of Erikson, Marcia, and Berzonsky, who are three key researchers in this field. These areas are identity crisis reflecting Erikson's views, identity statuses reflecting Marcia's views, and identity styles reflecting Berzonsky's views. The subsequent explanations regarding identity formation are built upon these three fundamental theories. Taking these

explanations into account, it is apparent that common factors in identity formation are family, culture, and psychosocial environmental variables. It is worth expanding on these characteristics.

CHAPTER III

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE IDENTITY FORMATION

According to Erikson (1968), adolescence is a period of opportunities for an individual's restructuring. Along with psychological and physical maturation, adolescents may experience guidance and pressure from society to shape their behaviors. Therefore, joining the adult world, choosing a path and direction for oneself become social necessities for adolescents. Hence, according to Erikson (1968), adolescence is the most critical period for the acquisition of the sense of identity. The physical changes in adolescence also lead to a reevaluation of social roles. Young individuals struggle with the question of "who they are" in the eyes of others, comparing their sense of identity, influenced by culture and their own abilities, with prototypes of the day. As a result, young individuals become open to the influence of both peer groups and significant role models (Whitbourne, Sneed, & Skultety, 2002). Despite identity explorations, the love and work experiments individuals go through during adolescence do not always yield positive results. They may experience feelings of hopelessness and rejection in love relationships. In the realm of work, they may encounter success, failure, and feelings of inadequacy. Regarding worldview, sometimes the beliefs acquired in childhood are questioned or rejected (Arnett, 2000). Based on this information, many researchers (Arnett, 2000, 2004; Shanahan, Porfeli, Mortimer, & Erickson, 2002; Cote, 2002; Arnett & Tanner, 2002; Schwartz, 2005) suggest that identity formation begins in adolescence but intensifies in the early years of transitioning into adulthood.

When considering concepts related to identity, it can be said that identity is shaped or changed through an individual's experiences, formation of identification, and interaction with the social environment. Since identity is a psychosocial structure, it is inevitable for these factors to have a positive or negative impact on an individual's identity development (Markstrom et al., 1997).

One of these environmental factors is the family. The foundations of personality are shaped by the behaviors of the family during childhood years. By adhering to the rules within the family, the child acquires the values of the culture they live in. The family also meets the child's needs for love, acceptance, protection, and belonging. Failure to meet these needs appropriately, as well as excessively protective, rejecting, punitive, or

inconsistent parenting attitudes, can hinder the adolescent's individuation (Berzonsky, 2003; 2005). Just as in the processes of attachment and individuation in infancy, if the family provides a secure "home," the adolescent can enter the process of identity search in a broad domain with ease. The opportunities provided by the family play an important role in the adolescent's career choices, gender role preferences, and the determination of political values (Kroger, 2003; Marcia, 2002a; 2002b; Whitbourne, Sneed, & Skultety, 2002).

Considering theories and research findings related to identity, it can be said that identity changes and takes shape through an individual's experiences, identifications, and interactions with the social environment (Markstrom et al., 1997). Among these factors, perhaps the most important is the family. The foundations of personality are shaped by the behaviors of the family during childhood years. The child learns the rules within the family and gradually acquires the values of the culture they live in. The family also meets the child's psychological needs for love, acceptance, protection, and belonging. Failure to meet these needs appropriately or the presence of overly protective, rejecting, punishing, or inconsistent parenting behaviors can hinder the adolescent's individuation (Berzonsky, 2003; 2005).

Bowlby (1973) defines attachment as the strong emotional bonds individuals develop with those they consider important to them. The caregiver's behaviors during the early stages of life will influence the infant's attachment as secure or insecure. According to Bowlby (1973), attachment and exploratory behavior are interconnected. In order for an individual to learn about the social and physical environment, they need to engage in exploration; however, exploration is both challenging and risky. For exploration to occur, the attachment figure needs to be present and provide the individual with a sense of security. In the process of identity formation, the primary activity is the individual's exploration of new roles. From this perspective, it can be said that individuals who engage in exploration and develop a secure attachment to their primary caregiver during the early years are more likely to utilize research in the process of identity formation. For example, Grotevant and Cooper (1985; 1986) found in their studies examining changes in parent-child relationships during adolescence that individual differences in identity formation were related to the experiences adolescents had with their families. They found that adolescents who experienced

interactions with their families characterized by sincerity, encouragement, and acceptance were more likely to adapt easily to the developmental, emotional, and social changes experienced during adolescence. Although identity and attachment theories have been developed separately, these processes appear to be related to each other (Matos et al., 1999). In the process of identity exploration, if the family provides a secure "nest," just as in infancy during attachment and individuation processes, the adolescent enters the identity search process in a broad and comfortable space (Kroger, 2003; Marcia, 2002a; 2002b; Whitbourne, Sneed, & Skultety, 2002). The love, support, open communication, and parental attitudes that allow autonomy support the process of identity acquisition (Marcia, 1999). Several studies (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Berzonsky, 2003; 2005; Bosma & Kunnen, 2001; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kroger, 1985; Marcia, 1983; Meeus et al., 2002) have demonstrated the relationship between attachment to parents during adolescence and identity development.

Positive adolescent-family relationships support the social and psychological development of the adolescent, while negative adolescent-family relationships can lead to adverse developmental outcomes and psychological maladjustment (Kimmel & Weiner, 1985). The support of the family enables adolescents to be autonomous without feeling insecure, doubtful, or guilty, allowing them to engage in identity exploration. Therefore, parental attitudes that provide love, support, open communication, and opportunities for autonomy support the process of identity acquisition (Marcia, 1989; 1994; 1999). Although adolescents may turn to their peers and distance themselves from their families during this period, their relationships with their families maintain their importance throughout adolescence and into their later lives (Markstrom & Adams, 1992; Goossens, 2001).

In order for adolescents to learn how they are perceived by others, they need to increase their relationships with people outside of the family. The formation of an identity requires interaction with one's environment. During this period, adolescents try to separate themselves from their families and strive to remain as independent individuals, seeking to be with close groups of friends. Friendships during adolescence are seen as a primary source of support (Muuss, 1988). Blos defines adolescence as the "second individuation process" in which adolescents need to search for new objects of love and attachment outside of the family. Therefore, adolescents approach peer groups

by distancing themselves from their families. According to Erikson, friendships play a significant role in shaping identity (Erikson, 1968).

Close friendships established during adolescence provide individuals with social and emotional support, enabling them to understand themselves and others, cope with developmental transitions, and facilitate adaptation to school. This situation also creates an environment for adolescents to develop a sense of identity that is suitable for themselves. Adolescent groups differentiate themselves from one another and from adults through their way of speaking, dressing, and behaving. Additionally, it allows for the individuation of the adolescent and the exploration of different values and roles. By forming relationships with a specific group, adolescents define themselves and begin to form their worldview. While friend groups provide the closeness that adolescent's desire, they also bring a significant level of influence and control into the adolescent's life. Due to the strong need for approval from their peers, adolescents sometimes lose their individuality within the group. Romantic relationships also gain importance during adolescence. Through romantic relationships, adolescents have the opportunity to know themselves better. Therefore, adolescent love often involves "talking to the person one is in a romantic relationship with." Youth relationships around the ages of 14-15 have an important function in clarifying one's identity (Morris, 1996; Uba & Huang, 1999).

As Erikson suggests, identity formation necessitates interaction with the social environment outside of the family. Friends and peer groups can serve as attachment figures for adolescents, and naturally, adolescents may want to spend more time in their peer environment. Trinke and Bartholomew (1997) found that adolescents in romantic relationships ranked the person they were in a romantic relationship with as their primary attachment figure, followed by their mothers, fathers, siblings, and best friends. For adolescents without romantic relationships, their first attachment figure was their mothers, followed by their fathers, siblings, and best friends. This ranking did not differ based on age; there was no significant difference in this ranking between older and younger adolescents. Trinke and Bartholomew's (1997) findings indicate that the role of the parent as a secure base does not disappear, but rather, adolescents share this role with others, especially the person they are in a romantic relationship with, from their perspective.

During adolescence, turning towards the outside of the family and the need for group approval can bring a certain level of control while also providing a platform for risky behaviors. Risk-taking behavior can help adolescents achieve their goals. The display of problematic behaviors during adolescence can serve as a way to gain independence from parental authority and take control of one's own life, as well as express solidarity with peers (Jessor, 1987; Kroger, 2000). Risk behaviors can serve as a means for adolescents to explore identity options, cope with feelings of inadequacy, establish a sense of personal autonomy, and fulfill other psychosocial needs. The new perspectives and activities that adolescents are exploring can spread into areas involving risk, challenge, rebellion, and even danger, and this exploratory period culminates in making distinct choices and decisions. In the process, adolescents form attachments to their future identities, long-term partners, and lifestyles (Bradley & Matsukis, 2000; Arnett, 2004).

One of the factors that influences adolescent identity development is the social context in which they live. The social context in which adolescents attempt to form their sense of identity has a significant impact on the nature and outcome of the process. If adolescents' identities begin to be recognized in certain parts of society, the society will play an important role in determining what kinds of identities are possible options and influencing which identities are desirable or undesirable. Ultimately, the process of identity development will vary in direction among different cultures, within the same society among different subcultures, and across different historical periods (Kroger, 1993). The social context in which an adolescent is situated is evolving and largely determines whether the exploration of self-definition will turn into a full-blown crisis or a more manageable challenge. In general, the more options available to a young individual, the greater the number of areas in which decisions must be made, making the formation of a sense of identity more difficult (Steinberg, 2002).

Another environmental factor that influences adolescent identity development is the socio-economic structure in which they live. In societies that place importance on material wealth and individualism, identity development is influenced by socio-economic status/level (Uba & Huang, 1999).

When considering concepts related to identity, it can be stated that agency also plays a role in identity formation (Erikson, 1968; Schwartz, Cote,

& Arnett, 2005). Erikson (1968) emphasized the importance of agency, self-direction, and free choice in consistent identity formation in industrialized societies. Agency can be defined in various forms (Bandura, 1989; Schwartz, 2002; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Agency can be described as a sense of responsibility for the direction of one's life, taking responsibility for one's life, the belief in controlling one's life decisions and taking responsibility for them, and confidence in coping with obstacles in life and progressing in the chosen direction (Cote & Levine, 2002). Two concepts that are similar to agency and have been studied during adolescence are mastery, which refers to superiority, dominance, and control, and perceived control. These two concepts represent only the "cognitive aspect" of agency.

One of the most fundamental tasks expected during the transition from adolescence to adulthood is the formation of a desired identity (Schwartz, 2005). Additionally, for healthy identity formation, individuals need to experience independent experiences and be able to act on their own (agency) (Bakan, 1973; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1993). Agency, or acting on one's own, is a concept that involves active involvement in one's own development, making one's own choices, and accepting the consequences of those choices (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Cote, 2002). In this context, it can be said that agency is a supported characteristic in individualistic Western societies. However, it is difficult to say that agency is a supported characteristic in collectivist Turkish society (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1993). According to Cote (2002), the degree of being able to act on one's own determines the direction of identity formation. In other words, more agency can lead to healthier identity formation, while less agency can contribute to less healthy (avoidant, norm-oriented) identity formation. There is evidence in the literature supporting this claim. Cote (1997) defined the functional definition of agency as a compound structure consisting of self-esteem, life goals, self-efficacy, and internal locus of control. Cote and Schwartz (2002) and Schwartz, Cote, and Arnett (2005) found a positive relationship between agency and successful identity and a negative relationship between diffuse identity. According to Bakan (1973), agency is an overarching concept that encompasses a person's ability to act on their own, with communion being the concept at the opposite end of the spectrum (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1993). In this context, it can also be said that agency has roots extending to Mahler's separation-individuation concept. The degree of agency can also determine the direction of individuation.

When we look at the studies conducted abroad and in Turkey regarding the factors influencing identity formation, it can be seen that age, socioeconomic status (SES), and gender are the demographic variables most commonly investigated in relation to identity development. In terms of age, research findings suggest that the sense of identity becomes more integrated with advancing age. Generally, both in foreign studies (Adams & Jones, 1983; Archer, 1982, 1985; Wires, Barocas, & Hollanbeck, 1994) and in Turkey (Gavas, 1998; Kağan, 1999; Kartal, 1999; Oflazoğlu, 2000; Uzman, 2002; Varan, 1992), it has been found that identity statuses tend to develop positively with increasing age. There are also studies conducted both abroad (Adams & Jones, 1983; Allison & Schultz, 2001; Watson & Pnotinsky, 1991) and in Turkey (Eryüksel, 1987; Oflazoğlu, 2000; Süslü, 2002) that have shown no significant difference in identity development with increasing age and indicated that adolescents tend to be more in diffuse and foreclosure statuses during early and middle adolescence. These results support the claim that adolescents experience identity crisis and undergo changes in identity statuses as proposed by Marcia, in line with explanations of psychosocial development theory.

Regarding gender in identity studies, it is observed that women and men follow a similar process of identity development. Studies conducted abroad (Archer, 1982, 1989; Streitmatter, 1993) and in Turkey (Başkan, 2000; Çeçen, 2001; Köker, 1997; Oflazoğlu, 2000; Süslü, 2002; Varan, 1992) generally do not find significant differences in identity statuses between genders. However, some studies examining specific identity domains, both abroad (Archer, 1985; Çakır, 2001; Solmaz, 2002) and in Turkey, have found differences between genders. Erikson's theory has received criticisms for not adequately explaining the development of identity in women, and new perspectives suggesting that women and men follow different processes in identity development have been put forward (Schwartz, 2001; Kunnen & Bosma, 2003; Cote & Levin, 1987).

When examining studies that explore the relationship between family, socio-cultural environment, and identity, there are numerous studies demonstrating that the individual's environment of upbringing, family, social structures, and culture are important variables influencing identity development. Studies examining the relationship between family characteristics and identity statuses have yielded conflicting results regarding

the educational status of parents. While some studies have found that the mother's educational status creates differences in identity statuses (Uzman, 2002), other studies have found no such differences (Kağan, 1999). Furthermore, studies have shown significant relationships between family relationships (Papini, Sebby, & Clark, 1989), parental attitudes (Çakır, 2001; Çeçen, 2001; Taylor & Oskay, 1995), and child-rearing styles (Çelen & Kuşdil, 2000) and identity statuses. However, there are also studies that have found no significant relationship between child-rearing styles and identity statuses (Çakır, 2001).

The topic of identity has been examined in conjunction with many other variables, such as substance use, adaptation, suicide, weight issues, and intimacy. In the literature, significant relationships have been found between identity development and academic achievement (Allison & Schultz, 2001), number of siblings (Özgen, 1999), social support (Meeus, 1996; Uzman, 2002; Ünlü, 2001), sports activities (Pugh & Hart, 1999; Shaw, Kleibr, & Caldwell, 1995), living in a foster home (Ofazoğlu, 2000), vocational indecision (Vondracek et al., 1995), employment (Özkamalı, 2000), and urban/rural residence (Nurmi, Poole, & Kalakoski, 1998).

Research findings regarding the relationship between the type of school attended and identity development are contradictory. Some studies have found no difference in identity development based on school type (Gavas, 1998), while others have shown differences (Kartal, 1999; Oskay, 1997). When examining the relationship between identity development and cognitive development in the literature, there are studies suggesting that individuals integrate and use information about themselves and their environment through abstract thinking and that abstract thinking is associated with identity development (Berzonsky, 2003). Furthermore, relationships have been found between identity development and self-disclosure (Gültekin, 2000) and self-exploration (Lucas, 1997). There are also studies that indicate a relationship between self-monitoring and identity development (Oskay, 1997), as well as studies that show no relationship between these variables (Schwartz & Pantin, 2006).

The literature on parental attachment supports the existence of two fundamental dimensions of parental behavior: the acceptance-rejection dimension and the control-autonomy dimension (Gander & Gardiner, 2001). The acceptance-rejection dimension focuses on warm or hostile parental

behaviors. A warm relationship helps children develop a responsible and self-regulating identity, while a hostile relationship supports aggression. The control-autonomy dimension focuses on how restrictive or permissive parents are in enforcing behavioral rules (Gander & Gardiner, 2001). According to Kroger (1985), in order for adolescents to explore the ideological and vocational aspects of identity, they need to detach themselves from parental attachment and turn towards the external world. From this perspective, individuals who develop successful identities will leave behind their childhood attachment patterns and engage in active exploration to discover their own values and commit to them. Rice (1990) states that a secure attachment relationship with parents supports individuals' exploratory behavior and identity development in the dimensions of love, work, and worldview, which are related to identity. Additionally, Rice found that adolescents who develop a secure attachment relationship with their parents have higher levels of social competence, overall life satisfaction, and self-esteem. Similarly, studies conducted by DiTommaso, Branen-McNulty, Ross, and Burgess (2002) and Deniz, Hamarta, and Arı (2005) have found that individuals with secure attachment exhibit higher levels of social skills, consistent with the findings of this study.

Control orientation is seen as important in identity development. Internal locus of control is a variable that enhances an individual's capacity for autonomous action and facilitates exploration or investigation in identity-related matters. When examining explanations related to internal locus of control, evidence supporting this view can be observed. Individuals with an internal locus of control attribute the causes of their behavior to themselves. Similarly, individuals who have completed the process of identity development in a healthy manner take responsibility for their actions and are aware that "what happens to them is a result of their own actions" (Cote, 1997).

Life purposes are also factors that influence the process of identity formation. The concept of life purpose was introduced by Crumbaugh and Maholick (1969). The origin of the concept of life purposes can be traced back to philosophy (Frankl) and psychology (Maslow, Rogers, Jung, Allport, Erikson, Buhler, Neugarten, and Jahoda; Ryff, 1989). Based on Frankl's view that individuals experience a sense of psychological hindrance while searching for meaning, Crumbaugh and Maholick proposed the concept of life

purposes. Yalom (1980) found that the absence of life purposes is associated with psychopathology. Additionally, Yalom suggests a positive relationship between attributing positive meaning to life and parental attitudes, identity, religious identity, group membership, causality, values in life, and explicit goals. Lazarus (2000) argues that life purposes and personal meaning influence an individual's coping process with the stress caused by all changes, especially bodily changes, during adolescence, and facilitate self-discovery. In other words, life purposes indirectly contribute positively to the process of identity formation for individuals.

At times, adolescents may experience difficulties in the formation of their identity and may go through an identity crisis instead. In other words, identity confusion is a psychological state that can occur during adolescence in response to the process of identity formation. There are certain factors that can contribute to identity confusion. The adolescent consciously or unconsciously shapes their personality within the framework of environmental influences. Within this process, they engage in identification and establish a balance between autonomy, freedom, and responsibility. The balance between autonomy and responsibility is achieved through healthy communication and identification. Consequently, the young person learns to behave in a balanced, consistent, realistic manner. However, if the communication during the identification process, the roles they try out, and the behavior patterns they adopt are conflicting, the adolescent may become alienated from their own identity and experience "identity confusion" (Morris, 1996; Uba & Huang, 1999).

Identity confusion refers to a set of experiences that affect adolescents when their sense of identity is temporarily shaken (Dereboy et al., 1994). Factors such as a lack of effort in identity formation, alienation, and isolation can contribute to identity confusion. Three important factors that lead to identity confusion in adolescents are: a) the absence or scarcity of adults who can serve as healthy role models for identity formation, b) the limited opportunities that contribute to the adolescent's search for identity, and c) the failure to successfully complete developmental tasks that should have been accomplished in earlier stages of development (Adams, 1992).

While a successful identity formation brings about positive circumstances in an adolescent's life, an adolescent who struggles with identity formation may face various challenges. Identity confusion can lead to

an increase in destructive behaviors directed towards oneself or others. Adolescents experiencing identity confusion may become tired of a structured and stable life and develop a hatred towards conformity. They may feel that they cannot be themselves or anyone else and may act impulsively. Adolescents who face developmental challenges can engage in destructive behaviors primarily directed towards themselves, especially when triggered by negative influences from their environment (Muuss, 1988).

Based on the explanations above, it can be said that the formation of identity is closely related to the environment in which one is situated. Therefore, it is important to examine the formation of identity among adolescents who are developing in different environments and under different conditions.

CHAPTER IV

IDENTITY AND INDIVIDUATION: A DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

Agency or the capacity for autonomous action is also an important variable in the process of identity formation, autonomy, and individuation. In each separation and individuation phase, the individual's agency is the most significant factor determining the direction of individuation. According to Cote (1997), the degree of agency determines the direction of individuation, with high agency leading to developmental individuation and low agency resulting in assumed individuation. There is some evidence suggesting a relationship between healthy attachment to parents, high levels of agency, and desirable identity formation (Cote, 1997; 2002; Cote & Schwartz, 2002).

The first separation and individuation phase is a significant milestone in human psychological development. These two concepts are used in some psychodynamic theories in developmental psychology to explain the development of autonomy and independence (Noom, 1999). Psychodynamic theories focus on developmental changes in the parent-child relationship. One of these theories is Margaret Mahler's theory (Noom, 1999). Margaret Mahler introduced the concepts of "separation and individuation" to developmental psychology. The fundamental assumption of Mahler's theory is that "the newborn is born without adjustment to the external world," meaning that "the biological birth of the human infant does not coincide with the psychological birth of the individual." Mahler suggests that the first sense of individuality develops within the first two years of the developmental process, as the child becomes aware of their own desires. This state is referred to as the "separation and individuation crisis." The separation-individuation phase, which indicates the psychological birth of the individual, is a period from the fourth month to the thirty-sixth month, during which the child separates psychologically from the mother and perceives themselves as a separate entity. In this process, the mother functions as an "external ego," protecting the newborn from internal and external stimuli. At the same time, the presence of the mother helps redirect bodily perceptions outward. Thus, the child gradually becomes more aware of the external world. The differentiation between "self" and "non-self" has not yet occurred. However, there is a nascent recognition of the distinction between the "inside" and the "outside." Over time, the child begins to distinguish between the pleasurable and the painful, forming the foundation

for subsequent splitting mechanisms. According to Mahler (1968), normal separation and individuation are the most important prerequisites for the development and maintenance of the "sense of identity." The crisis of "reunion" that emerges during this process is also a universally experienced crisis. The consistency, integrity, continuity, flexibility, and resilience of the individual's individuation process, as well as the development of self-esteem and continuity in self-identity, depend on successfully navigating this crisis.

Building upon Mahler's concepts of separation-individuation, Blos proposed the concept of "individuation in adolescence." This challenging crisis is experienced once again during adolescence. In order to achieve individuation, establish a stable sense of identity, and form mature and healthy relationships with family and non-family love objects, it is necessary to successfully navigate this second individuation crisis during adolescence. The period of adolescence is a time of significant changes and developments that enable a person's transition into adulthood and individuality. Although adolescence is typically defined as the period between the ages of 10 and 18, its endpoint is often uncertain. Completion of adolescence is also delayed, especially due to factors such as completing education. This is because most individuals in this age group are still dependent on their families in many aspects. The most significant characteristic of this period is the occurrence of biological and psychological restructuring, and the initiation of self and identity development. For the adolescent to become an individual, they must relinquish the dependency of childhood and achieve psychological separation from their parents. Successfully separating from the parents enhances the formation of a sense of identity and the ability to take responsibility. Blos (1967) emphasizes that the primary task of adolescence is the "second individuation." This process encompasses two closely related processes: separation and detachment from the primary love objects, which are the parents, and finding alternative counterparts outside the family. Detachment implies the adolescent's abandonment of placing the parents in the position of "authority figure" in the past and present. The most crucial aspect of the second individuation is the abandonment of idealizing parental figures that have been shaped in early childhood (deidealization). This is made possible by resolving the attachment to internalized parental figures. One of the initial emotions that emerges from this detachment is a sense of melancholy following the loss of internal objects. In the second "reunion crisis" experienced during this process, there is a depressive emotional state resulting

from the desire to separate from the mother and the pain of being separate from her. According to Jacobson, intense mourning accompanies the abandonment of dependence on the parents. According to Loewald (1998), the cessation of perceiving parents as authority figures signifies the "killing" of the parental figure in psychic reality (Cote and Schwartz, 2002). The adolescent's formation of their identity and their effort to become a distinct individual, both psychologically and emotionally, are necessary for successful maturation, and parental support is also required for this. Parents who have not resolved their own individuation issues and have not reached a certain level of emotional maturity perceive the child's independent thinking as a threat.

The second reunion crisis leads to variability and contradictions in the adolescent's emotions, impulses, thoughts, and behaviors. The process of individuation or separation from the attached individuals in childhood continues until young adulthood. If the process of individuation progresses healthily, the adolescent can establish a more mature and mutually satisfying relationship with their parent. At the same time, the individual forms new, more fulfilling relationships outside the family. In the object relations theory, the end of adolescence and the resolution of conflicts, discrepancies, and attachments in object relationships depend on the level of reconciliation and integration required by reality. Blos refers to this state as "adolescent closure."

According to Blos, adolescents turn to peer relationships due to the insufficient autonomy in their relationships with their parents, and their emotional dependence on their parents weakens. Blos states that the peer group serves a function in resolving adolescents' conflicts and helping them break free from their dependency on their parents (Steinberg, 2002). Similar to Mahler's views on individuation, Blos believes that adolescents have clear boundaries that set them apart from others. When explaining the development of separation from the parent, which he refers to as the "second individuation crisis," Blos describes how a growing individual assumes increasing responsibilities regarding who they are and what they do. Gradually, a personal state emerges in which they become autonomous from their parents, compete with them, and express feelings of separateness. As a result, the adolescent moves beyond the parent-child bonds they previously had (Rogoff and Morelli, 1989). Gold and Douvan, who further expand on Blos' perspective, state that the need for autonomy can be attributed to societal role

changes, such as no longer being under the dominion of one's family, moving towards the world of adulthood, and assuming the responsibility of self-adjustment (Noom, 1999).

Based on Mahler's concepts of separation and individuation in child autonomy, Hoffman developed the concept of "psychological separation." According to Hoffman, the process of psychological separation during adolescence can be seen in four ways (Noom, 1999). These are:

1. **Functional Independence:** The ability of an individual to organize their personal affairs without the help of their parents.
2. **Attitudinal Independence:** The differentiation among adolescents in terms of attitudes, values, and beliefs, both among themselves and with their parents.
3. **Emotional Independence:** The liberation of an individual from the excessive need for support from their parents.
4. **Conflict Independence:** The liberation of an individual from excessive anger and guilt towards their parents.

The literature also mentions the concept of the third individuation process. The process of separation and individuation continues throughout life because each new function of independence brings with it the threat of at least one object loss. According to Colarusso, the third individuation is "the process that emerges with the maturation and separation of the self from objects, which occurs continuously throughout adulthood." According to Settlege, "the separation-individuation process begins with establishing a social bond with the mother, continues throughout childhood and adolescence with well-known stages, and culminates in the final separation through one's own death." Being a parent forms the core of the third individuation process.

According to Côté (1997), there are two paths in the process of second individuation, which are developmental and default, and the most fundamental factor determining the type of individuation is the individual's ability to act on their own, also known as personal agency. Some young individuals may embrace the life purposes presented by consumer society and popular culture; by imitating the latest trends, they use the "default options" provided to them. This form of individuation is referred to as "default

individualization." This type of individuation relies on limiting the life process to a narrow and specific environment, dependence, and limited choices. It is an imposed way of life where the individual's effort, competence, and agency are significantly restricted (Côté, 2000). In default individualization, individuals are obligated to comply with rules in work relationships, family relationships, and society, and self-control and conformity to society emerge in the early stages of life. In this form of individuation, good and bad, right and wrong are clearly defined; expectations and responsibilities are explicit. Default individualization is generally observed in non-industrialized societies, where interpersonal differences are diminished by society, and the display of individual differences is not allowed. In non-industrialized societies, the provision of information that children need by adults begins in early childhood and continues throughout life. In these societies, most children and young people are under the supervision and control of adults. According to Arnett and Taber (1994), in such circumstances, young individuals learn to care about others in the early years of life, and cognitive activities related to the sense of independence that begins in childhood are similar among individuals. Interdependence and responsibility towards others do not suddenly emerge; they develop over time, and individuals are raised based on the same characteristics. In this form of individuation, individuals are socialized towards dependence and reliance on society and family (Arnett, 1995; Shanahan, Porfeli, Mortimer, & Erickson, 2002). An individual who becomes a "default individualizer" actually overlooks opportunities for self-development. Such an approach leaves individuals unprepared in decision-making regarding important aspects of transitioning into adulthood and identity formation (such as marriage, parenthood, work) that prepare them for adult life and roles (Schwartz, 2005; 2006).

As an alternative to default individualization, young individuals can adopt a lifestyle where they evaluate all possibilities. This lifestyle or method of individuation is referred to as "developmental individualization" (Côté, 2000). Similar to the concept of active individuation proposed by Evans and Heinz (1994), this method encompasses a planned way of life based on continuous growth and development. Developmental individualization is characterized by emotional independence and autonomy from parents, and the uniqueness of personal relationships, but the achievement of autonomy and unique relationships is also dependent on personal developmental events. This

type of individuation is marked by the presence of many choices offered to individuals throughout life, encouragement of independence, and the emphasis on values such as individuality and self-expression. In societies that support this type of individuation, expectations, responsibilities, and punishments are minimal. This type of individuation allows for the expression of individual differences, and individuals' primary focus is themselves. Developmental individualization encompasses a way of life that involves utilizing opportunities for cognitive, occupational, and psychological development, and exploring and experimenting with accessible options. In developmental individualization, the actions of individuals in terms of responsibility and interdependence vary. Behaviorally, developmental individuation manifests itself through personal control and adaptation to social situations. Since developmental individualization signifies the active experience of one's abilities and agency capabilities, it can assist young individuals in making decisions that prepare them for adult roles and resolving the problems they encounter during the transition to adulthood. In developmental individualization, individuals may exhibit a high level of nonchalance. They are presented with numerous options, and there is low societal pressure for conformity. The cessation of nonchalant behavior in broad individuation occurs with the transition into adulthood.

In general, in developmental individuation, individuals are simultaneously more creative, independent, and autonomous, while experiencing high levels of loneliness, increasing social problems, and societal and personal confusion. On the other hand, default individuation is characterized by a stronger communal identity in individuals (Côté, 2002). Studies examining the relationship between individuation and identity development can be found in the literature. For example, Kroger (1985) examined the underlying intrapsychic structures of ego identity statuses, taking into account the separation-individuation pattern. The study included 140 adolescents, and the results showed a relationship between identity statuses and individuation. Positive relationships were found between successful and moratorium-like desired identity statuses and the individuation process, while negative relationships were found with foreclosure and diffusion identity statuses. Côté and Schwartz (2002) examined the relationship between the individuation process and identity formation in a study with a total of 276 first-year university students from different ethnic groups. The study found that identity formation differed according to types of

individuation. There was a positive relationship between developmental individuation and healthy identity formation (successful identity), while there was a negative relationship with unhealthy identity formation (such as avoidance). Additionally, there was a negative relationship between default individuation and successful identity, and a positive relationship with avoidance. Schwartz, Côté, and Arnett (2005) examined agency and identity formation in their study and also explored the relationship between types of individuation and identity formation. The research included a total of 332 emerging adults from different ethnic groups. The results showed that identity formation differed according to types of individuation. There was a positive relationship between developmental individuation and exploration/flexibility attachment, and a negative relationship with avoidance. Additionally, there was no relationship between developmental individuation and commitment/conformity. Furthermore, there was a negative relationship between default individuation and exploration/flexibility attachment, and a positive relationship with avoidance. Additionally, there was no relationship between default individuation and commitment/conformity. Atak (2010) found a positive relationship between developmental individuation and successful and moratorium identity statuses, and a positive relationship between default individuation and avoidance. When examining studies on the relationship between types of individuation and identity in the literature, it can be said that the research results are consistent with each other and that identity formation differs according to types of individuation. In short, it can be stated that there is a positive relationship between developmental individuation and healthy identity formation, as well as between default individuation and unhealthy identity formation.

Since the main subject of this book is identity formation and the concept of sub-identities has gained importance in recent years, it seems necessary to discuss how these sub-identities are formed, and in this section of the book, some of these sub-identities and new concepts have been mentioned.

Forming a coherent sense of identity is a lengthy process. Most researchers working on adolescence and youth believe that identity exploration continues until young adulthood. However, it is probably more meaningful to see it as a series of crises that encompass different aspects of identity and gradually emerge at different points throughout adolescence and

young adulthood, rather than thinking of adolescents as experiencing an identity crisis. According to Erikson (1968), the sense of identity is never gained or sustained all at once. In fact, the sense of well-being related to forming an identity in adolescence often passes quickly, and when the adolescent successfully resolves the identity crisis, it ends in a series of fundamental life decisions, including vocational, ideological, social, religious, ethical, and sexual choices (Erikson, 1984; Schwartz, 2005, 2006; Arnett, 2004; Luyckx, Schwartz, Goossens, & Soenens, 2007).

In this context, the initial studies on identity mostly focused on exploration, style, or status. However, it is observed that in recent years, the focus has shifted towards ethnic, sexual, national, cultural, distress, and other sub-identity issues. Rossan (1987) introduced the concept of "sub-identity," and according to Rossan, identity is a complex set of whole. Therefore, sub-identities need to be well organized and they form the core identity. Along with this prevailing view on identity in recent years, researchers are proposing new models in areas such as ethnic, sexual, national, ideological, religious, and cultural identity (Schwartz, 2005).

For all individuals, integrating ethnic identity with their overall personal identity most likely occurs during late adolescence. Additionally, ethnic identity is as important for individuals as vocational, ideological, or interpersonal identity (Phinney & Alipuria, 1987; Steinberg, 2002). According to Schwartz (2005), ethnic identity has been studied among African American, Mexican American, Native American (Native Indian), Asian American, and White youth (Martinez & Dukes, 1997; Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997; Phinney & Chavria, 1995; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Plummer, 1995; Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990; Stevenson, 1995; Vega, Houry, Zimmerman, Ramirez-Valles, Washienko). In America, White youth generally have a weaker sense of ethnic identity compared to their non-White peers; however, many White adolescents still strongly identify with a particular ethnic group, and their overall sense of self is connected to this identification (Martinez & Dukas, 1997; Roberts et al., 1999; Steinberg, 2002). According to Phinney and colleagues, minority youth have four possibilities when it comes to their interest in their own ethnicity. These are: assimilation, where the individual tries to adopt the norms and standards of the majority culture without accepting the norms and standards of their own group; marginality, where the individual lives within the majority culture but

feels separated and excluded from society; separation, where the individual only interacts with members of their own culture and rejects the majority culture; and biculturalism, where the individual maintains connections to both the majority and minority cultures.

In recent years, one of the areas focused on in the study of identity is sexual identity. Within sexual identity, sub-identities such as feminist identity (Miller, 1986; Schwartz, 2005), gay identity (Case, 1990; Schwartz, 2005), and identity statuses (Atak, 2011), as well as the androgyny model (Bem, 1975; Schwartz, 2005), can be mentioned. However, they are briefly mentioned as it is believed that the topic will diverge. In the literature, there are three basic types of sexual identity discussed. Biological sexual identity encompasses inheritance, organic structure, and their functions that biologically differentiate females from males. Psychological sexual identity involves an individual's attraction to the same or opposite sex and their perception of sexual interactions with others. Sociological sexual identity encompasses the standards, attitudes, and interests that constitute masculinity and femininity in society. The development of sexual identity cannot be limited to adolescence. During this period, with the influence of physical maturity and hormones, sexual urges increase. On the other hand, society has gender roles that it expects from adolescents as either women or men, and adolescents are aware of this. Caught between these two forces, adolescents must somehow form their sexual identity. Similar to other identity formations, an adolescent will either form a sexual identity that society desires and approves, or they will form a sexual identity that is not acceptable to society and won't be recognized.

Gender, like ethnic origin, is an important component of a person's identity. From birth, boys and girls are socialized to behave in "gender-appropriate" ways. In other words, both girls and boys are socialized to conform to society's standards for acceptable masculine and feminine behavior. Strong gender roles are prevalent among children, adolescents, and adults in American society. General personality traits such as being logical, independent, and aggressive are considered masculine, while characteristics such as being gentle, sociable, empathetic, and sensitive are considered feminine (Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1972; Steinberg, 2002). Individuals may differ in the degree of masculinity and femininity. Some may be decidedly more masculine, while others may be

decidedly more feminine. However, some individuals exhibit high degrees of both masculinity and femininity. For example, some individuals may be highly assertive and also highly sensitive. Individuals who have high degrees of both masculinity and femininity are said to have high androgyny (Bem, 1975; Steinberg, 2002; Schwartz, 2005; Schwartz & Pantin, 2006). According to Galambos (2004), androgyny is more beneficial for girls in terms of the positivity of self-image compared to boys.

Many researchers have explored the relationship between gender role stereotypes and adolescent identity development. A study examining gender differences in attitudes toward gender roles in adolescence found that these increases appeared to be more related to chronological age rather than the onset of adolescence itself. The onset of early adolescence may indicate the emergence of new behaviors, which can later lead to greater gender differences. For example, as adolescents start dating, conforming to gender role expectations and behaving in ways consistent with peer group approval may become more important to them. In many ways, gender role identity can be a much more significant aspect of identity in adolescence, already being a significant part of one's self-concept in childhood. The intensified socialization of gender roles during adolescence holds important findings for understanding gender differences in various aspects.

Another orientation in identity is the model proposed by Şirin and Fine (2007), which focuses on how individuals perceive and prioritize their identities. In this model, it is important how individuals prioritize their sub-selves (e.g., woman-American-lesbian-Muslim-Arab). Şirin and Fine (2007) refer to this concept as "hyphenated selves."

As seen, new orientations in identity separate identity into sub-categories rather than focusing on exploration, style, or statuses. Each sub-category is studied independently, and new models and concepts are being proposed. Future identity studies are expected to become more specialized, giving rise to new concepts and models in increasingly specific domains (Schwartz, 2005; Schwartz & Pantin, 2006).

Theories related to identity can be evaluated under the main headings of identity exploration, identity statuses, and identity styles. In this context, theories have been discussed under the headings of identity exploration, identity statuses, and identity styles. Although these theories do not

exclusively focus on one specific area, it can be observed that within the same theory, more emphasis is given to one area compared to others. In this regard, based on Schwartz's (2005) and Schwartz, Cote, and Arnett's (2005) classification, these theories have been placed under one of these sub-areas and explained. To better understand the subject of identity, the following three sections include these theories and dimensions related to identity. Firstly, theories that provide fundamental explanations about identity (Erikson, Marcia, Berzonsky, Waterman, Kunnen, and Bosma) are discussed, followed by theories that address identity (Blos, Arnett, Kegan, Grotevant, Kerperman, and other perspectives on identity).

CHAPTER V

THEORIES ON IDENTITY EXPLORATION

In the field of identity, besides a few fundamental theories, various explanations and models have drawn attention. It can be said that research on identity is quite extensive compared to other study topics. However, it can also be said that all explanations related to identity, in a way, are based on and refer to Erikson's explanations. This section includes theories that provide fundamental explanations about identity exploration (Erikson, Marcia, Berzonsky, Waterman, Kunnen, and Bosma).

Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory

Erikson developed an eight-stage psychosocial development theory based on the concepts of Freud's psychoanalytic theory. While the focus of psychoanalytic development theory is childhood experiences and sexuality, the most significant difference between the two theories is that Erikson's theory encompasses societal elements and all stages of life. According to the psychosocial perspective, maturation brings new competencies to the individual while also imposing new responsibilities. At each stage of maturation, society meets the child's needs, and the care of the primary caregiver, school, social organizations, professions, and values play an important role in maturation. In psychosocial development, the child finds their own life cycle within the societal life cycle, and culture has a significant impact on the child's development (Miller, 1993). Each culture directs, enhances, and shows relativity in the child's psychosocial development according to age, and within a culture, the timing of change (Erikson, 1968). Identity involves accepting oneself and society. The question "Who am I?" is asked in every stage, but it gains intensity during adolescence. Additionally, it can be said that identity is transferred from one stage to another, and the previous form of identity influences the subsequent one.

Erikson formulated his development theory based on clinical observations. This theory is the most comprehensive explanation proposed so far in human development. Erikson's psychosocial development theory is a multidisciplinary approach that considers the cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of development, establishes connections between them, and has an interdisciplinary perspective. According to Erikson (1968), the individual develops throughout life in interaction with the environment. Erikson sees the

individual's development as a relationship between three variables: biological factors, socio-environmental influences, and personal experiences referred to as ego processes. The key concepts in Erikson's theory are explained below.

The Epigenetic Principle. One of the concepts in Erikson's developmental theory is the Epigenetic Principle. According to this principle, an individual develops and matures in predetermined steps and according to a specific design. Similar to the development of a fetus, personality also develops and matures over time, which is referred to as the epigenetic approach. According to Erikson, the term "epigenetic" combines "epi" (above) and "genetic" (genesis), indicating the emergence of one part over another in time and space (Evans, 1981, p.21). The basic design plan mentioned in Erikson's theory involves a sequential and hierarchical development (Erikson, 1968; 1984; Miller, 1993).

Psychosocial crisis. Another concept in Erikson's theory is the psychosocial crisis. In the basic design plan, the individual must resolve the opposing conflicts in the eight stages. Maturation and societal expectations create crises that the child or individual must resolve. Erikson addresses these crises in terms of their positive and negative outcomes, such as autonomy versus shame and doubt. Unresolved crises require lifelong struggle. Each developmental stage builds upon the previous one and influences the subsequent stages (Miller, 1993; Erikson, 1963; 1984).

Zone, organ mode, and social modality. Zone represents a specific part of the body that is relevant to the organism's developmental stage. Organ mode refers to the behavior of the body region corresponding to the developmental stage and its interpersonal relationship pattern. For example, in the early stages of life, the relevant body zone for an infant is the mouth, and the organ mode for this zone is ingestion. Over time, this organ mode expands to encompass all body regions and becomes a behavioral pattern. The social modality pertains to determining the behavior and interpersonal relationship pattern of the body zone corresponding to the developmental stage. In this context, the social modality involves the nature of the giving and receiving relationship between the baby and the caregiver. Through this relational quality, the baby acquires ego skills related to social exchange (Erikson, 1984).

Ego identity. Ego identity is a subjective experience and a dynamic reality. In the early stages of life, there exists a giving and receiving relationship between the caregiver and the baby. Within this relationship, the baby develops various perceptions about themselves. This process forms the initial designs of the ego and the primitive forms of ego identity (Erikson, 1963; 1968; 1984).

Sense of ego identity. Erikson (1968, p. 17) defines the sense of ego identity as a sense of personal sameness and historical continuity. The sense of ego identity involves an individual's confidence in their own identity, which is based on primitive and underdeveloped forms in the early stages of life and subsequently reshaped with new roles and conditions. It relates to the sameness and continuity of the individual's self-perceptions (Erikson, 1984). According to Erikson, three structures are necessary for the formation of identity: experiencing internal coherence, the continuation of internal sameness over time, and experiencing significant societal values (Patterson, Sochting, & Marcia, 1993).

Social identity. Social identity refers to the testing and observation of one's identity and continuity in the eyes of others as a result of interacting with the social sphere (Erikson, 1968).

Personal identity. Personal identity is a perception of sameness and continuity based on one's past and future expectations (Erikson, 1968). Erikson's concepts of personal identity and social identity are not considered as separate concepts but rather components of ego identity.

Psychosocial developmental stages. Erikson formulated an eight-stage developmental theory by incorporating key concepts from psychoanalytic developmental theory. While psychoanalytic theory focuses on childhood experiences and sexuality, Erikson's theory encompasses social elements and all stages of life (Arnett, 2004). Erikson identified two opposing characteristics specific to each stage, resulting in a total of eight stages in life. By going through specific crises unique to each stage, individuals resolve these crises and acquire fundamental qualities. Each stage involves two specific ego characteristics, but what matters is the extent to which these opposing characteristics develop in a positive direction. According to the psychosocial development theory, conflicts experienced in one stage can be overcome by reappearing in a later stage. Erikson, like Freud, emphasizes

childhood development, and the first four stages of the theory largely expand upon Freud's childhood stages. The sixth, seventh, and eighth stages are related to adulthood and old age. Therefore, only the fifth stage, which is relevant to emerging adulthood, is discussed here. Table 1 presents the average age range, psychosocial developmental stage, and corresponding identity sense for each of Erikson's eight stages (Erikson, 1963, p.273).

Table 1. Erikson's Psychosocial Developmental Stages and Corresponding Identity Sense

Life Stage	Psychosocial Developmental Stage	Sense of Identity
Infancy	Trust vs. Mistrust	"I am what I am given"
Early Childhood	Autonomy vs. Shame, Doubt	"I am what I create"
Play Age	Initiative vs. Guilt	"I am what I imagine I will become"
School Age	Industry vs. Inferiority	"I am what I have learned"
Adolescence	Identity vs. Role Confusion	"Who am I"
Young Adulthood	Intimacy vs. Isolation	"We are the sum of those we love"
Adulthood	Generativity vs. Stagnation	"I am what I have produced"
Old Age	Integrity vs. Despair	"I am what I have left behind"

As seen in Table 1, Erikson defines adolescence as a period of identity confusion. The identity sense during this period is described as "Who am I?" For explanatory purposes, it is worthwhile to mention the fifth stage that characterizes the adolescence period in the theory.

Identity versus role confusion. According to Erikson's psychosocial development theory, each stage has conflicts that need to be resolved. In the stage of adolescence, a scattered identity forms the fundamental conflict against the identity sense. Identity, according to Erikson, is the fundamental quality that needs to be acquired during adolescence and is a combination of statuses such as group identity, occupational identity, national identity, cultural identity, and sexual identity. According to Erikson, the identity sense

is the feeling of being at home in one's body, knowing where one is heading, and feeling accepted by the people who are important to oneself (Erikson, 1968, p.16). According to Erikson, identity development is not a process that begins with adolescence or ends with adolescence; it develops and changes throughout life. There are three reasons for the intensification of exploration behavior related to identity in adolescence: physical changes in appearance, developing cognitive capacity, and the time of making important decisions about work, marriage, and the future.

During adolescence, individuals confront societal expectations as a result of cognitive, physical, and psychological changes. On one hand, there is an effort to maintain childhood identifications and self-perceptions and to maintain existing balance. On the other hand, societal expectations necessitate the transformation of adolescence. In this situation, the adolescent must redefine their own identity in order to establish a place within society. Thus, identity crisis emerges. The identity crisis experienced by adolescents during adolescence can result in the acquisition of an identity sense that enables a positive transition to the next stage. Identity crisis can also result in a state of moratorium, identity diffusion, or negative identity. Moratorium is a period of preparation and time gaining for the transition of the adolescent to take on adult responsibilities. According to Erikson, society deliberately grants adolescence the period of moratorium. During this period, the adolescent tries various possibilities before making definitive commitments (Erikson, 1984). According to Erikson (1968, p.203), moratorium is a postponement period granted to individuals who are not yet ready to take on responsibilities.

If adolescents encounter obstacles imposed by society in the process of experiencing options, they may experience identity diffusion. Identity diffusion occurs when a young person is unable to integrate various roles and experiences, and is unable to organize the intense information transferred to the ego. In the state of identity diffusion, individuals may tend to cluster and adhere tightly to the norms and rules of these clusters. The acquisition of the identity sense requires a certain effort. The inability of adolescents to integrate different roles and experiences and to organize external information can lead to the emergence of certain clinical symptoms. This situation worsens and results in identity diffusion (Erikson, 1968; 1984).

Another consequence caused by the identity crisis in adolescence is negative identity. Adolescents in a state of negative identity adopt extreme

(marginal) roles and behaviors by opposing the societal expectations of their assigned roles. According to Erikson (1968), adolescents who do not complete their identity development in a positive and accepting environment may opt for an undesirable or socially unacceptable option instead of being nothing, such as a girl with a police officer father becoming someone who breaks the law or a successful girl from a good family refusing to go to school (Erikson, 1968; 1984; Dereboy et al., 1994; Dereboy et al., 1999).

Erikson employed three methods in his work: direct observation of children, cross-cultural comparisons, and the psychobiographical method. According to Miller (1993), Erikson's theory is based on several fundamental theories. The first is Darwin's evolutionary model, which argues that social institutions assist the physical and psychological survival of species. The second theory, the historical-dialectical model, suggests that the conflict between opposing forces is reflected in developmental periods. In this context, Erikson stated that a child's behavior is influenced by the past and present historical processes as well as the cultural historical process, and that human behavior in different sectors of society is influenced by society. Although Erikson's theory is considered one of the best theories for explaining psychosocial development, it has been criticized in certain areas (Miller, 1993).

One weakness of Erikson's theory is its lack of direct observations, empirical generalizations, and abstract theoretical explanations. Additionally, Erikson does not provide detailed information about how a child transitions from one stage to another. Despite these criticisms, Erikson's theory is one of the best theories for explaining psychosocial development, it has been one of the most important theories for understanding adolescence, and it has garnered significant interest in psychological circles. Erikson rarely focused on specific age ranges in his theory, and it can be said that subsequent theories or models somehow referred to Erikson's explanations.

Identity Exploration in Arnett's Emerging Adulthood Theory

This theory proposed by Arnett explains the transition to adulthood, focusing on the period from the end of adolescence (18-19 years) to the beginning of the thirties. It refers to adolescence and young adulthood while discussing emerging adulthood. It suggests that emerging adulthood is a distinct developmental period with unique characteristics that differ from both

adolescence and young adulthood. This period differentiates itself in three fundamental dimensions of identity exploration: love, work, and worldview (Arnett, 2000; 2004).

Approximately fifty years ago, Erikson stated that role confusion regarding identity formation is the primary issue in adolescence, and this view has been widely accepted. Perhaps for this reason, most studies on identity conducted until today have focused mainly on adolescence. However, Erikson introduced the concepts of "prolonged adolescence" typically observed in industrialized societies and "psychosocial moratorium" provided to young individuals in such societies. According to Arnett (2000; 2007), Erikson (1968) interpreted young adulthood as a time period when individuals try independent roles different from certain parts of society, unaffected by societal pressures, and find an appropriate place for themselves in society.

Nevertheless, in today's context, this situation applies to much younger individuals than Erikson mentioned (Arnett, 2004). If adolescence spans from 10 to 18 years old, and emerging adulthood roughly extends from 18 to the mid-twenties, the search for identity and identity formation occur not in adolescence but in emerging adulthood. Although studies on identity formation generally concentrate on adolescence, numerous studies indicate that identity achievement is rarely attained at the end of high school and that identity development continues through the late teens and twenties (Arnett, 2007). Treating emerging adulthood as a stage of life necessitates addressing identity exploration in three fundamental dimensions: love, work, and worldview (Arnett, 2000). The developmental characteristics related to identity in the domains of love, work, and worldview are more critical for individuals in emerging adulthood than for adolescents. Erikson (1968) defined a developmental characteristic called role confusion in adolescence as an obstacle to identity achievement. If adolescence is assumed to cover the age range of 10-18, the development of identity should not be addressed during this period; instead, identity issues should be explored between the ages of 18 and 25 because development is not yet complete in adolescence (Arnett, 2004). Studies in developmental psychology suggest that research on the subject of "identity" should occur after high school. In this context, some developmental psychologists in Europe and America have recently begun to focus their studies on the period of emerging adulthood while investigating the topic of identity.

Identity formation process involves experimentation and decision-making in various areas of life (Arnett, 2000; 2004). Particularly in the domains of love, work, and worldview, the processes of exploration and decision-making begin in adolescence but become more pronounced in emerging adulthood. For instance, in adolescence, dating relationships are not fully committed and typically last for a few weeks or months. In emerging adulthood, love represents much greater closeness, and individuals attach greater significance to romantic relationships during this period. While dating in adolescence occurs within group settings (e.g., dances, gatherings, and parties), dating in emerging adulthood involves more one-on-one interactions and encompasses both physical and emotional intimacy. In fact, dating in emerging adulthood often leads to sexual relationships. While adolescents seek answers to the question "Whom am I happy being with in the here and now?" in their romantic relationships, emerging adults search for answers to the question "Whom do I want to spend my life with?" In summary, it can be stated that adolescents and emerging adults have different perspectives on love. In society and within relationship networks, emerging adults learn about the qualities that attract them to others as well as those they find unpleasant and bothersome. They also observe how others evaluate them as they seek to understand themselves better.

Despite the explorations of identity, the love and work experiments individuals undergo in emerging adulthood do not always result in positive outcomes. Individuals may experience hopelessness and rejection in their romantic endeavors. In the realm of work, they may experience success, failure, and feelings of inadequacy. Regarding worldview, there are instances where beliefs acquired in childhood are challenged and rejected (Arnett, 2000).

One of the most significant characteristics of emerging adulthood is the pursuit of opportunities in various aspects of young individuals' lives, particularly in love and work. Through the process of seeking and experimenting with opportunities in love and work, emerging adults question their identities, clarify who they are, and shed light on their expectations from life. In other words, this process allows them to learn more about who they are and what they desire. The period of emerging adulthood provides them with the best opportunity for such exploration (Arnett, 2000). Compared to adolescents, emerging adults have more freedom in their family relationships,

and many have already left home (Arnett, 2000b; 2001). However, they have not yet taken on long-term responsibilities typically associated with adult life, such as long-term employment, marriage, and having children. They are not economically dependent on their families, but they have not fully assumed adult roles either. Emerging adults are freer than both adolescents and adults to experiment with different lifestyles and explore various options in love and work (Arnett, 2004; Arnett, Ramos, & Jensen, 2001).

Similar to love, there are differences between the temporary explorations of adolescence and the more serious identity-based explorations of emerging adulthood in the realm of work and employment (Arnett, 2004). Many American teenagers work part-time jobs during their high school years, but most of these jobs last only a few months. They tend to work in service-oriented jobs, such as restaurants and retail stores, which have no connection to the careers they aspire to have in adulthood. They see these jobs during adolescence as a way to earn money in their spare time rather than as preparation for their future careers (Arnett, 2004). In contrast, emerging adults explore job opportunities and educational pathways that will prepare them for their desired careers. They explore important aspects of their identities while investigating questions such as "What am I good at in terms of work? What job would bring me long-term happiness? What should I do to find a job in the field that seems most suitable to me?" Through trying different jobs and exploring different educational options, emerging adults learn more about their abilities and interests, or at least they gain some insights. Additionally, during the period of emerging adulthood, they also learn which jobs they are not good at and do not want to pursue. Just like in the realm of love, there can be failures and disappointments in their work explorations, but emerging adults perceive these negative experiences as new opportunities for growth and learning (Arnett, 2000). Such experiences can help emerging adults understand themselves better and complete their identity development (Arnett, 2007).

The choices and experiences in education for emerging adults also involve similar questions as those related to love and work, and they are comprised of the answers given to these questions. While pursuing their education, they are preparing themselves for many future jobs. University students often change jobs multiple times. For example, during their early years in college, they may focus on one job, then quit and apply for another

immediately afterward. College graduates have even more options. The educational experiences of emerging adults continue until their mid-twenties.

When it comes to identity formation, emerging adults continue to engage in experiments and explorations in areas such as love and work (Arnett, 2000). During this period, individuals often experience relationships that do not result in marriage and engage in part-time jobs. This is because society does not expect them to take on the roles of parents and spouses yet. Similarly, emerging adults are faced with the situation of moving elsewhere for short-term experiences in work and education. This helps them gain experience before transitioning into adulthood.

Perry (1999) has demonstrated through his studies that there are changes in individuals' worldviews during the period of emerging adulthood, and this is a characteristic of emerging adulthood. The source of these changes in worldview is the cognitive changes in individuals. When they start their university education, individuals express their worldviews based on what they learned during childhood and adolescence. With university education, students find themselves in an environment where multiple worldviews exist. Throughout this period, individuals strive to understand all these worldviews. At the end of their university education, they decide on the worldview that suits them best. Research has concluded that higher education facilitates the acquisition and exploration of worldviews and encourages reconsideration. Studies on emerging adulthood have shown that individuals also question the religious beliefs they learned from their families during their higher education (Arnett & Jensen, 2002).

While emerging adults may be more serious and focused on their orientations in love and work compared to the adolescent period, this change occurs over time. During the years of emerging adulthood, most of the identity explorations are simply for fun, a kind of game, and part of gaining broad life experience before transitioning to a regular life and taking on adult responsibilities (Arnett, 2000). Emerging adults realize that during this period, they are free in areas where they won't be free in their thirties and beyond. The period of emerging adulthood is a time for many people who want to experience romantic and sexual relationships since there is reduced parental control and relatively low pressure to get married. Additionally, emerging adulthood is also a time to explore various educational and career opportunities. Many participants in television programs are selected from

among emerging adults because they have the freedom to leave their current place and go somewhere new and they have a tendency to do something different (Arnett, 2004). This characteristic is part of the identity exploration and a way to increase experiences before making longer-lasting and more permanent choices in adulthood.

The theory of emerging adulthood does not differ much from Erikson's explanations regarding identity exploration. It suggests that while identity exploration begins in adolescence, it intensifies in the period of emerging adulthood, emphasizing the need for identity work to be done during this period. In recent years, this theory has received the most attention, but it can be noted that it focuses solely on identity exploration and does not provide explanations regarding identity statuses or styles.

Another explanation that focuses on identity exploration during adolescence is provided by Peter Blos. Blos puts forth the separation-individuation model, which not only explains identity exploration but also relates to identity formation.

Identity Development in Blos' Theory

Blos, building upon Mahler's concepts of separation-individuation, developed the concept of individuation specific to adolescence. According to Blos, adolescents turn to peer relationships due to their insufficient autonomy in their relationships with their parents, and their emotional dependence on their parents weakens. Blos states that the peer group has a characteristic that helps adolescents resolve their conflicts and break free from their dependency on their parents.

Psychodynamic theories focus on developmental changes in the parent-child relationship (Arnett, 2004). Separation and individuation concepts were introduced to developmental psychology by Mahler, one of the psychodynamic theorists. Mahler states that within the developmental process, the child develops the first sense of individuality within the first three years, along with the recognition of their own desires. According to Mahler, as the child transitions from dependent infancy to a self-sufficient play child, they strive to acquire their first sense of individuality. This process is referred to as the "primary separation-individuation crisis." Blos (1967) proposed that a similar process to the primary separation-individuation process also occurs during adolescence. Blos (1967) named this process in adolescence the

"second individuation process" and suggested that the process of identity formation is fundamentally structured around separation (separation) (Arnett, 2000).

Until reaching adolescence, the child internalizes the values of their parents. In adolescence, however, the adolescent tries to break free from the internalized parental figure in order to assert themselves as a separate individual. Seeking new objects of affection externally and freeing oneself from the internalized parental figure are among the most important processes in adolescence. Ego maturation and the adolescent's individuation are directly proportional to moving away from the parent. As a result of individuation, the individual begins to gain awareness in areas such as "who they are and what they should do." In other words, the individual starts searching for answers to the questions "Who am I? What am I?" with the process of individuation. The process of identity exploration begins with the process of individuation (Kroger, 2003). During this process, adolescents often utilize regression and idealization mechanisms in order to become individuals. By establishing a solid balance between themselves and others, breaking free from the influence and power of the superego inherited from the parent, and creating a balance between self-esteem and general mood, the individual successfully completes the second individuation process.

In this theory, the process of individuation begins with the awareness of physical differences (hypothetical identity) and ends with the internalization of being separate from others in all aspects, not just physically (successful identity). In Blos' individuation process, it can be observed that the individual in the stages between successful identity and hypothetical identity has a suspended identity structure. However, it is also emphasized that not every individual may reach the stage of successful identity (Arnett, 2004). Similar to Mahler's views on individuation, Blos believes that adolescents have distinct boundaries that separate them from others. When explaining the development of separation from parents, which he calls the "second individuation crisis," Blos states that as a growing individual takes on increasing responsibilities regarding who they are and what they do, they develop a personal state that gradually emerges with feelings of autonomy, competition with their parents, and separation from them. As a result, the adolescent moves further beyond the parent-child bonds they previously had (Kroger, 1985; 2002; 2003; Kroger & Haslet, 1987).

Apart from Erikson, Arnett, and Blos, there are other theorists who have explanations regarding identity development during adolescence. Within this context, a brief overview of Grotevant, Bosma, and Kerperman's explanations of identity development and the opinions of other researchers is provided.

Explanations of Identity Development by Other Theorists

Grotevant (1985) proposed a model of identity formation consisting of four main components: personal characteristics contributing to the identity process, contexts in which development occurs, the identity process related to specific domains such as work and ideology, and the interconnectedness of different identity domains (Phillips & Pittman, 2003).

Grotevant's process model suggests that identity develops throughout the lifespan in terms of growth, context, and scope. According to Grotevant, the identity process begins with exploration. The adolescent's exploration leads to emotional and cognitive consequences that will integrate their identity into a cohesive sense of self. The integrated sense of identity is then evaluated, aiming to assess to what extent the balance between the adolescent and their environment has been achieved. The results of this identity evaluation determine whether the adolescent will invest more effort into their identity and, if so, how they will go about it. Phillips and Pittman (2003) noted that a noteworthy aspect of Grotevant's process model is its assertion that personal factors such as personality and cognitive abilities interact with contextual factors such as culture, society, family, peers, school, and work to influence the identity process.

In Bosma and Kunnen's (2003) identity model, "commitment" and the resulting "conflict" in the evaluation of commitment play a significant role. Bosma and Kunnen (2003) proposed the "micro-processes model" of identity development to explain identity development during adolescence and adulthood. The basis of this model is the repetitive nature of identity development. Repetition refers to the long-term development of identity through short-term repetitions and continuous restructuring. Micro-level repetitions occur between the individual and the context or between the individual's commitment and the context (Kunnen, 2006). These transitions result in either a compatible outcome with the existing commitment or an incompatible outcome, leading to conflict. It is suggested in this model that

conflict serves as a driving force for identity development (Kunnen & Bosma, 2003; Kunnen & Mirjam, 2003). According to this model, individuals use three types of mechanisms in their identity development: assimilation, accommodation, and avoidance. Assimilation refers to the organization of existing identity structures with new schemas. Avoidance involves individuals avoiding conflicts related to their identity structures and seeking to maintain existing structures. Accommodation is when individuals change their existing schemas in response to new information encountered in their identity development. Bosma (1995) emphasized the importance of commitment in the structure of identity. He states that different psychosocial domains (such as ideology and occupation) hold different levels of significance for individuals of different genders and economic statuses (Bosma, 1995; Kunnen & Bosma, 2003). The importance assigned to these domains may be even greater during the early stages of adolescence compared to later stages. Bosma criticized Marcia's technique and argued for the inadequacy of explanations related to different subdomains in the development of identity statuses. Bosma (1995) also criticized Marcia's notion of constantly changing structures. According to Bosma (1995), structures grow through the incorporation of new commitments and the integration of new elements with existing ones. In this process, attachments can be strong, weak, or equally balanced. The content of commitment depends on individuals' needs, the opportunities provided by society, their age, gender, and socioeconomic level. The structure of identity emphasized in Bosma's work is explained by three variables that influence it. The first variable is the content of commitment, which represents the structural change in identity development. The second variable is the strength of commitment, where strong commitment signifies clarity of identity. The third variable that affects the structure of identity is the level of exploration expended in achieving commitment. This variable represents the synthesis process of the ego and the continuity of identity. Bosma and Kunnen (2003) propose that the content of commitment changes with age. Bosma (1995) suggests that the content and difficulty of commitment change at the beginning and end of adolescence. According to Bosma's model, identity development is not limited to just career, ideology, and sexuality domains as mentioned by Marcia, but it is relevant to every aspect related to individuals. Kerperman's model explains adolescents' identity formation from a micro perspective. When viewed from a general perspective, this model appears to be similar to previous models. However, it brings a different perspective to the views on exploration.

Kerperman used the cybernetic model of control theory to identify the interpersonal and personal characteristics of identity development. In this perspective, identity is seen as a control system that works to minimize the discrepancy between the individual's self-perception and the feedback received about oneself. The identity control system consists of three personal components: social behavior and interpersonal feedback, self-perception, and identity-related standards and comparisons. When an individual's self-perception contradicts their identity standards, the identity control system is activated, and the individual makes cognitive and behavioral efforts to reduce inconsistency. During this process, individuals review and restructure their identity standards (Kerperman, 1962; Philips & Pittman, 2003).

Another approach to identity development is Kegan's structural development model. In Kegan's (1982) model of structural development, identity is seen as a process of giving meaning and interpreting life. Drawing on concepts and theoretical foundations from ego psychology, object relations, moral development, and cognitive development, Kegan (1987) attempted to explain the formation process of identity (Kroger, 1993). According to Kegan (1987), identity is a process of meaning-making. It is a continuous and non-static process. It involves the reconstruction of boundaries between self and others, similar to Blos' model. In other words, it is a process of being lost and reformed. When the balance of constructed meaning begins to destabilize, a new process emerges to redefine and reestablish the boundaries between "self" and "others," resembling cognitive restructuring. The newly constructed meaning is, in fact, a "new" identity, and the process repeats itself continuously (Kroger, 2003).

From the definition and explanation of identity using psychoanalytic concepts to the present, many studies and new perspectives have emerged. However, Erikson's views have had a significant influence on these new definitions. The concept of identity has mostly been approached in conjunction with the concept of self or as a psychological structure related to it. According to Schwartz (2005), some of these views include the following: Hart et al. (1987) propose that there are two elements of identity in the process of identity exploration: "consistency of identity over time" and "uniqueness of self-perception and differentiation from others." Gecas and Mortimer (1987) discuss the multidimensionality of the self-concept and suggest that it can be categorized into two elements: identity exploration and

self-evaluation. Rossan (1987) introduces the concept of "sub-identity." According to Rossan, identity is a collection of complex sets, so the organization of sub-identities is crucial. Major sub-identities include defining characteristics, personal traits, abilities, and body image. Cote and Levin (1987), in an effort to restructure Erikson's theory, focus on the concepts of crisis and identity suspension. They classify suspension forms into technological and human-induced categories. Logan (1986), through a review of Erikson's theory, claims that within Erikson's eight stages, "trust," "identity," and "ego integrity" constitute the essence of the theory, forming three fundamental realms.

The literature reveals the existence of numerous models and theories related to identity development. One of the theorists who brings a new perspective to the field of identity development is Marcia. The following section provides explanations regarding identity statuses.

CHAPTER VI

THEORIES RELATED TO IDENTITY STATUSES

Due to the challenges in operationalizing Erikson's views on identity, Marcia proposed the theory of identity statuses to make Erikson's concept of ego identity measurable and observable.

Marcia's Theory of Identity Statuses

Marcia describes identity using the concepts of sense, attitude, and resolution, but he states that the best term related to identity is "an internal self-construction." According to him, identity is a dynamic organization of an individual's desires, abilities, beliefs, and personal history (Marcia, 1993; 2002a).

Marcia examined the dichotomy of identity diffusion mentioned in Erikson's theory and defined four identity statuses based on the adolescent's attitudes toward crises and commitment to social roles. According to Marcia (2002b), there is a strong commitment/internal investment related to fundamental identity domains such as career or partner choice in the formation of ego identity. The task of identity formation requires a process of exploration, questioning, and decision-making. The exploration dimension involves the adolescent's efforts to recognize options and search for answers. The commitment dimension is a meaningful choice that guides behavior. Exploring options and making decisions in ideological and interpersonal domains facilitate identity development. Ideological domains include religious beliefs, political choices, career selection, and philosophical lifestyle, while interpersonal domains include friendship, dating, gender roles, and leisure activities (Marcia, 2002b).

Marcia (1989, 1994) acknowledged the theoretical importance of Erikson's concept of "ego identity" but suggested the need for a new model due to measurement issues. Marcia (1989, 1993, 1999) proposed two concepts related to identity formation: crisis and commitment. Initially, Marcia embraced the concept of crisis in relation to identity development but later used the concept of exploration of alternatives. Exploring alternatives refers to an individual's questioning or choosing among possible careers, beliefs, and thoughts during adolescence, and exhibiting behaviors based on these choices. Marcia's views are based on the assumption that individuals define their

identities in ideological and vocational life domains, and the sense of identity can be observed through their behaviors in these domains.

Marcia developed the Identity Status Interview Technique, which is an interview method that defines and tests Erikson's theoretical views on identity. This technique aims to measure identity status by revealing the level of commitment to vocational goals, religion, political beliefs, and attitudes. It is a semi-structured interview lasting 15-30 minutes (Kimmel and Weiner, 1985). Each participant is evaluated based on the degree of commitment and the presence or absence of crisis. Based on the responses to the interview questions, individuals are considered to fall into one of four identity statuses. These statuses are diffuse, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement. Diffuse and foreclosure statuses are considered low statuses since they lack exploration or investigative behavior, while moratorium and achievement statuses are considered high statuses (Marcia, 1989; 1994; Patterson, 1992; Muuss, 1988; Dusek, 1987; Coleman and Hendry, 1995; Muuss, 1990). The four identity statuses are explained below.

Identity diffusion. In this status, individuals engage in random exploration in identity domains but do not commit to any particular direction. Individuals in identity diffusion have not formed personal attachments in areas such as career choice, religious beliefs, or political views. While individuals with identity diffusion have explored various options, they have not yet established a specific direction in their lives. Individuals in identity diffusion have not yet committed to any religion, politics, philosophy, gender roles, or professional or personal behavioral criteria. These individuals have not experienced an identity crisis or exploration phase, reevaluated their options, or evaluated alternatives. This least developed identity status is often observed during early adolescence. Research on individuals in identity diffusion does not yield consistent results due to the various behaviors and personality structures encompassed by this status. Individuals in identity diffusion are open to external influences due to their lack of attachment to anything and therefore tend to evaluate the opportunities they encounter aimlessly. Prolonged identity diffusion can lead to identity foreclosure and can cause psychopathology. No research or decision-making is conducted in this status. Some adolescents avoid forming an identity by remaining in identity diffusion. They are dissatisfied with their current situation but are unable to develop a new identity that seems right to them. These young people

who appear to be lost may turn to escape behaviors such as drug or alcohol use (Adams and Gullota, 1989). Research has shown that individuals with identity diffusion have lower levels of self-esteem and autonomy compared to those with moratorium and achieved identities. They also use less complex cognitive methods in moral reasoning, either pre-conventional or traditional level. They are cold and distant in interpersonal relationships and are constantly labeled and excluded by others (Kroger, 1989).

Moratorium. Individuals in moratorium explore options and engage in trials but do not make any permanent commitments. These individuals constantly try new roles. Moratorium is a period where orientations begin to emerge vaguely, and it is an exploration phase. According to Marcia, moratorium is a prerequisite for achieving a successful identity. When a person is in moratorium, the world appears to the adolescent as fixed, controllable, and pleasant. Individuals in moratorium often want to change everything, including the government, politics, and education.

Adolescents in the moratorium stage according to Marcia are in the middle of the identity crisis, and while the crisis continues, these adolescents postpone making important decisions. During this time, they explore numerous options. Research has shown that individuals in the moratorium status are more anxious, skeptical, flighty in relationships, and avoid the necessary attachment for close relationships compared to those with achieved and foreclosed identities (Kroger, 2003).

Identity achievement. Individuals in identity achievement actively go through the process of exploration, experimenting with various roles, and forming commitments. An individual in this status has gone through a period of exploration, examining different options, and has made specific commitments. Individuals in identity achievement have successfully resolved the conflict between identity and identity diffusion. Identity achievement enhances ego strength. Individuals in identity achievement are in harmony with themselves, accepting their capacities, limitations, and thoughts.

Those in this identity status have overcome an identity crisis and made personal decisions about what they believe in and what goals they will pursue. These young people have explored and struggled with vocational, political, and religious issues and have come to conclusions by making decisions in all areas. They are comfortable with their decisions and are confident that their

values and behaviors will be approved by others, and their paths are clearly defined (Adams & Gullota, 1989). Research has shown that individuals with identity achievement consistently score higher on autonomy scales and show less reliance on others' opinions when making decisions. In terms of cognitive capacities, they have been more successful, creative, logical, rational, and used more planned decision-making strategies compared to individuals in other statuses under pressure. In many studies, no significant differences have been found between statuses in terms of intelligence levels. Individuals in identity achievement can establish close relationships and exhibit androgynous characteristics in gender role attitudes. While contradictory results have been obtained in self-esteem measurements of women and men, significant differences have been found in "fear of failure." Fear of failure is very low in men and quite high in women. Individuals in identity achievement generally have higher levels of moral development and can establish more secure attachments (Kroger, 1993). The success of identity development requires a certain level of separation from parents. It has been observed that individuals in this status come from families that support their children's autonomy (Adams, 1995).

Foreclosure is a term used to describe individuals who make commitments without engaging in any exploration. In this status, individuals form their identity based on the expectations of parents, relatives, or other significant individuals. The roles and values determined by peer groups can also contribute to the formation of a foreclosure identity without any questioning by the adolescent. Foreclosure identity status refers to adolescents who tightly cling to their childhood values without conducting any research on alternative options or conducting very little research. Adolescents in the foreclosure status often attach themselves to various occupations and ideologies without experiencing any crisis; however, these attachments are based on choices offered by their parents rather than choices they have made through their own investigations. For example, joining a religious community at a young age or starting work under the guidance of a master can be among the behaviors of individuals in this status.

Adolescents in the foreclosure status have an identity that is provided by others and is not matured. They decide to become what others want them to be without going through an identity crisis. Those in the foreclosure status are generally content, feel secure, are often self-satisfied, and have strong

family bonds. They respect laws and order and prefer to follow a strong leader. Research has shown that individuals in the foreclosure status, regardless of gender, exhibit authoritarian attitudes, have a need for approval, act according to others' opinions, and score low on autonomy scales. This group is the least anxious and the least open to new experiences among the identity statuses. They use very few complex cognitive methods and their moral reasoning is at the preconventional or traditional level. They are agreeable and compliant in interpersonal relationships, but exhibit a skeptical attitude (Kroger, 1993; 2000).

According to Adams and Gullotta (1989), in Marcia's approach to identity statuses, successful and moratorium statuses are considered higher statuses, while foreclosure and diffusion statuses are considered lower statuses. Developmental changes occur in identity statuses. It has been observed that as class or age progresses, the number of young people in the identity achievement and moratorium statuses increases, while the number of young people in the foreclosure and diffusion statuses decreases. Marcia initially described identity statuses as categories reflecting differences among adolescents, but later argued that identity statuses should not be seen as static qualities and should be approached as a variable structure and from a developmental perspective.

Marcia stated that the development of identity statuses progresses in different ways. Adolescents can remain in one of the four statuses, transition from lower statuses to higher ones, or transition from higher statuses to lower ones. Identity achievement is not the final point of development. Different transitions between statuses can occur during development (Meeus et al., 2002; Marcia, 1989; 1994). Marcia has demonstrated that identity development progresses piece by piece over time and is not a fixed point. Marcia argued that there is a connection between identity and psychological well-being. When ranked from low to high based on psychological well-being, the order is moratorium, diffusion, foreclosure, and identity achievement. Marcia claimed that individuals in the identity achievement status have the highest level of adaptation to their environment, making it the healthiest status. Moratorium is often the least stable status due to prolonged identity conflict. Identity achievement, foreclosure, and diffusion statuses are more stable (Kroger, 2003). The position of identity statuses based on the exploration of options and commitment criteria is shown in Figure 2.

Table 2. Position of Identity Statuses Based on Exploration of Options and Commitment Criteria

	Identity Achievement	Moratorium	Foreclosure	Diffusion
Exploration	Yes	Yes	No	Yes or No
Commitment	Yes	No	Yes	No

(Source: Marcia, 1993, p. 11).

In conclusion, despite receiving various criticisms, Marcia's identity statuses model can be considered the most widely used approach in the literature. Erikson's theory was developed by Marcia through clinical experiences and an effort to understand individuals in sociocultural contexts.

Waterman's Identity Statuses Model

One of the models of identity development is Waterman's model, which sees identity as the optimal psychological functioning. Waterman emphasized that identity statuses are not completely static and that there are sequential transitions between statuses. Research on identity statuses also supports the idea of sequential transitions.

According to Waterman (1992; 1999), an individual in a diffuse identity status can start exploring multiple identity options seriously and transition to a moratorium status. They can accept the first option that comes their way without considering others and get stuck in a foreclosure identity status, without seriously addressing their identity issues and remaining in a diffuse identity status. An individual in a foreclosure identity status can start questioning their previous commitments, consider other options, and transition to a moratorium status. They can continue to adhere to the goals and values of authority and maintain their foreclosure identity, or if their previous commitments become increasingly meaningless and they embark on new searches without questioning them, they can regress to a diffuse identity status. An individual in a moratorium identity status can either establish a meaningful and strong commitment to specific goals and values and transition to a successful identity status, or they can abandon the search for worthwhile commitments and regress to a diffuse identity status. An individual in a successful identity status can maintain their commitment to goals and values

established during the identity crisis and continue to stay in a successful identity status. However, if their previous solutions become unsatisfying, they can relapse into a crisis and regress to a moratorium status, or if their previously established commitments start losing their value without triggering a new crisis, they can regress to a diffuse identity status.

Waterman (1982; 1992; 1995; 1999) added expressiveness as a third variable to the exploration and commitment variables when determining identity statuses, building on Marcia's model. Expressiveness refers to individuals defining themselves and living in accordance with appropriate selves. Expressiveness allows individuals to evaluate whether their identity elements are well-chosen. With the addition of expressiveness, Waterman expanded Marcia's identity statuses to seven. The first one is "expressive identity achievers" who, after exploration in identity domains, form commitments that align with their abilities, attitudes, and beliefs. The second one is "nonexpressive identity achievers" who perceive their established commitments as beneficial after exploration in identity domains, but these commitments are not integrated with their abilities, attitudes, and life goals. "Moratoriums expressive" individuals in the model show high exploration behavior in identity issues but lack commitments. "Nonexpressive moratorium" individuals lack external anchors to resolve their identity crises. "Expressive foreclosures" are individuals who form commitments without exploration, seriously considering the first option presented to them. "Nonexpressive foreclosures" are individuals who shape their identity commitments without considering options, and the function of these commitments is not related to abilities, attitudes, or life goals. The final identity status in Waterman's model is "diffuse identity status," where individuals do not make any commitments and are not concerned with identity formation tasks. Waterman assumes that expressiveness is not present in this status.

Waterman (1992) emphasized the relationship between identity and expressiveness in his model of identity development. According to Waterman, the positive or negative nature of identity indicates the usefulness of optimal psychological functioning. Waterman identified four criteria for determining optimal psychological functioning. Firstly, optimal psychological qualities should lead to a sense of personal well-being. Secondly, optimal psychological qualities enable individuals to achieve their self-determined

goals. Thirdly, optimal psychological qualities should ensure social acceptance. The final benefit of optimal psychological functioning is that it should serve social purposes. Kroger (2000) states that Waterman's model is the most appropriate model for identity.

Luyckx, Goossens, Soenens, and Beyers' Identity Status Model

Model

Luyckx, Goossens, Soenens, and Beyers (2006a; 2006b) proposed a new identity status model by considering Cote's (2000) and Cote and Levine's views on identity and agency. According to this model, there are individuals who cannot be classified into any of the identity statuses in Marcia's (1966) four identity model. In this context, Luyckx and colleagues (2006a) proposed six identity statuses: reflective exploration in breadth, ruminative exploration in breadth and commitment making that form a commitment formation cycle, and reflective exploration in depth, ruminative exploration in depth and personal identification with commitment that form a commitment evaluation cycle. Figure 1 presents a diagram of the model.

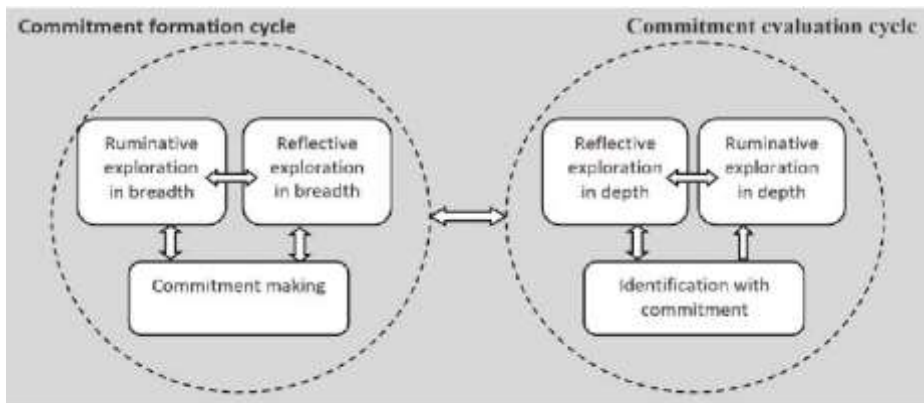


Fig. 1 Diagram of the proposed model

According to Cote (2002), during the pre-modern period, foreclosure was prevalent in identity statuses, while during the early modern period, achievement was emphasized, and in the post-modern period, diffusion became dominant. In the pre-modern period, society expected individuals to adopt the values determined by the community in their identity development, whereas in the early modern period, individuals were expected to actively construct their identity structures. In the post-modern period, individuals shape their identities through consumer culture, adapting to rapid changes,

and seeking the satisfaction of others. The characteristics of the post-modern period include consumer culture, orientation towards others, competitiveness, chaos, and less supportiveness.

Due to these reasons, some individuals move away from their internal self-constructs and enter into a perpetual moratorium process. In previous identity theories, the exploration of options is generally seen as a functional and positive dimension of identity. However, in this model, the exploration of options is not seen as functional. Functional exploration of options is characterized by openness to new options, curiosity, and a high level of perspective-taking, while rumination (maladaptive exploration) of options is characterized by anxiety, depression, and a low level of perspective-taking (Koen, Schwartz, Berzonsky, Soenens, Vansteenkiste, Smits, & Goossens, 2008). Individuals with high scores in rumination of options struggle to answer identity questions. These individuals constantly keep asking themselves the same identity questions, leading to a sense of uncertainty and inadequacy. The continuous attempts to resolve identity issues and their resulting inadequacy and uncertainty lead to stress and a low level of well-being.

Luyckx and colleagues (2006a; 2006b) divided the variables of "exploration of options" and "commitment" used by Marcia to determine identity statuses into sub-dimensions in their approach to identity development. Exploration of options is divided into three sub-dimensions: exploration in breadth, exploration in depth, and rumination of options. Exploration in breadth represents the degree to which adolescents engage in exploring different identity options before making a commitment. For example, engaging in behaviors to gather information about a person from various sources before making a commitment to a relationship indicates exploration in breadth. Exploration in depth refers to individuals' deep exploration of the appropriateness of the commitment they have made in the present. For example, discussing the chosen field of study with university classmates reflects exploration in depth. Rumination of options indicates the extent to which individuals become stuck in the processes of exploration and experimentation that make it difficult for them to reach commitment. For example, being unable to decide on a university major and continuing to contemplate different possibilities is an example of rumination of options.

Luyckx, Goossens, Soenens, and Beyers (2006a; 2006b) also divided the commitment variable into two dimensions: commitment making and identification with commitments. Commitment making represents the degree to which individuals make decisions regarding identity-related issues. Identification with commitments indicates the extent to which individuals, after evaluating their commitments, feel a sense of emotional identification with their commitments. In this type of commitment, adolescents feel a sense of unity with their internal selves when evaluating the commitment they have made.

Other Views on Identity Statuses

La Voie (1994) proposed that different identity statuses can exist in different life domains, and the identity formation a person engages in various life domains determines their overall identity status. For example, an individual may have a foreclosure identity status in terms of religious beliefs while having an achieved identity status in terms of romantic relationships. Van Hoof (1984) argues that Marcia's identity statuses do not fully reflect the structural aspect of Erikson's identity concept. Additionally, Van Hoof suggests that the concepts of strong and weak identity statuses are not appropriate (Berzonsky & Adams, 1998).

Bosma (1985, 1992) pointed out limitations in Marcia's identity status approach regarding the selected domain in identity status interviews and the limited view of adolescence as solely a decision-making process. Coleman (1974) suggests that adolescence consists of several different periods in which adolescents encounter different options and require different commitments. Additionally, Bosma criticizes the reliance on research results from male university students aged 18-25 when determining identity statuses and the negative impact of identity status research on girls. Another limitation is that categorizing individuals into one of the four possible categories is useful for assessing inter-individual differences but not suitable for capturing intra-individual differences. Dereboy and colleagues (1999) argue that in Marcia's approach, the diffuse identity status corresponding to identity diffusion becomes apparent through crisis and a lack of commitment, which does not align with Erikson's ideas and clinical observations. They suggest that identity diffusion is nothing more than the deepening and unresolved appearance of identity crisis.

When examining the literature, it can be seen that there are several models and theories related to identity statuses. The following section briefly explains the explanations related to identity styles.

CHAPTER VII

THEORIES RELATED TO IDENTITY STYLES

Berzonsky's Social-Cognitive Identity Styles Model

The first model regarding identity styles is Berzonsky's model, which takes into account social and cognitive processes in identity development. Berzonsky (1992) proposes that different social-cognitive processes underlie identity statuses. According to this model, individuals employ different strategies in problem-solving, decision-making, and dealing with identity issues. These strategies are "information-oriented," "norm-oriented," and "avoidance-oriented" (Berzonsky, 1989; 1990; 1994; 1992).

Norm-oriented identity style. Individuals with a norm-oriented identity consider the expectations and desires of their families or individuals valued in society. These individuals correspond to the foreclosure identity status in Marcia's classification of identity statuses. In the process of problem-solving and decision-making, individuals with this orientation take into account the expectations and approvals of others. Individuals with a norm-oriented style tend to be closed to new information and perceive new information as a threat to their values and beliefs. They evaluate themselves based on social identity consciousness and adopt problem-solving strategies focused on others (Berzonsky, 1992; Berzonsky & Ferrari, 1996; Berzonsky & Adams, 1998).

Information-oriented identity style. Individuals with an information-oriented identity seek, evaluate, and utilize self-relevant information before making decisions and commitments related to identity. These individuals belong to the successful or moratorium identity status in Marcia's classification. The information-oriented identity style is positively related to various social-cognitive dimensions, openness to new thoughts, and openness to value and action (Berzonsky & Ferrari, 1996; Berzonsky & Adams, 1998).

Avoidance-oriented identity style. Avoidance-oriented individuals avoid facing personal problems and decisions and postpone making choices. These individuals correspond to the diffuse identity status in Marcia's classification. There is a negative relationship between avoidance orientation and cognitive function requirement, openness to thoughts, and introspection (Berzonsky, 1992).

In Berzonsky's social-cognitive theory of identity development, individuals systematically evaluate options and consequences before making decisions. Berzonsky emphasizes that the decision-making and identity formation process is dynamic and ongoing. Individuals evaluate consequences and options systematically before their commitments and decisions. According to Berzonsky, commitments generate new information and inputs, disrupting the existing identity structure, leading to reevaluation and accommodation, resulting in a new structure. Therefore, it should not be inferred that all aspects of the outcomes are predictable and always satisfactory. According to Berzonsky (2003, 2005), cognitive schemas emerging as a result of psychosocial interactions in the process of identity formation create individual differences. Berzonsky's model of identity formation has brought a new approach to research.

Other Perspectives on Identity Styles

Frances and Ruble (1987) focused on the development of self-consistency, which forms the basis of identity, and emphasized the importance of cognitive development. Lewis (2003) examined identity in the context of social cognition and social development. Three fundamental developmental stages within the life cycle are mentioned: identity acquisition, socialization, and reproduction.

Many theories and models have been developed concerning the topic of identity. Considering the above explanations, the theories of Erikson, Marcia, and Berzonsky primarily attract attention in the field of identity. All other theories and perspectives have been proposed while taking these theories into account. In general, these theories explain how individuals answer the question "Who am I?" and describe the process and structures they use. Numerous studies have been conducted on the subject of identity based on these theories. It is worth mentioning these studies

CHAPTER VIII

EPILOGUE

In this book, the concept of identity, identity formation, related theories, and conducted research are presented. In its most basic sense, identity consists of the answers to the question "Who am I?" or the responses to that question. Identity formation can be divided into three parts: exploration, commitment, and style, and theories can be classified into one of these categories. It can be said that environmental factors such as family, culture, and socioeconomic level are influential in identity formation. Additionally, it is attempted to demonstrate in this report that studies on identity can also be grouped according to this classification of identity formation. Furthermore, when looking at the recent studies on identity, it is noticeable that researchers are no longer focusing heavily on identity statuses, but rather dividing identity into sub-concepts (such as ethnic, sexual, national) and proposing new models. All the theories, models, and perspectives on identity formation are presented in the following table.

Table 3. Classification of Identity Formation Theories, Models, and Perspectives

Identity Exploration	Identity Statuses	Identity Styles
Erikson	Marcia	Berzonsky
Arnett	Waterman	Frances and Ruble
Peter Blos	La Voie	Lewis
Grotevant	Van Hoof	
Bosma and Kunnen	Bosma	
Kerperman	Luyckx, Goossens, Soenens, and Beyers	
Kegan		
Hart et al.; Gecas and Mortimer; Rossan; Cote and Levin; Logan; Slugoski and Ginsburg		

Identity is a psychosocial structure, and in this context, Erikson argues that identity development is an ongoing process throughout life, involving the individual's effort to establish a balance between oneself and others, and that identity development is not limited to adolescence but encompasses the entirety of life (Erikson, 1968; Bosma, 1985; Arnett, 2000; 2004). Erikson

(1968) identified eight stages in his theory of identity. How one stage is resolved is related to how the previous stages were experienced. During adolescence, teenagers need to resolve the conflict of role confusion in relation to their sense of identity. How this conflict is resolved is connected to how the previous stages were experienced. In Erikson's theory, the fifth stage begins with the onset of adolescence, as individuals strive to define their societal role as a social requirement, and it typically ends with the completion of education, entering a job, and selecting a partner. According to Erikson, this stage is a period where many aspects of an individual's identity are resolved. If an individual cannot successfully navigate this period, their identity development will result in psychosocial moratorium. Erikson suggests that industrialized societies allow individuals a temporary period of psychosocial moratorium (Shanahan, Porfeli, Mortimer, & Erickson, 2002).

According to Marcia, based on Erikson's theory, he defined four identity statuses. Although Marcia's status model has been criticized by some researchers (such as Bosma and Kunnen) for potential errors, it is widely accepted that secure attachment, according to Marcia (1989; 1993; 1994), facilitates successful development of identity status because these adolescents will feel secure and free to explore their environment. They have a solid foundation to discuss and talk about their experiences and attitudes with their families. On the contrary, adolescents with insecure attachment patterns have limited or no exploration behavior, which may lead them to either diffuse identity status or foreclosure identity status.

Despite criticism of the identity statuses model, it has been shown to be related to many variables. Both individuals in successful identity and identity moratorium take more responsibility for their own behaviors compared to individuals in diffuse identity status. Individuals in foreclosure identity status have the lowest scores in personal autonomy and require social acceptance (Muuss, 1988). Individuals in moratorium and diffuse identity statuses are more prone to drug use. Those in diffuse identity status use drugs and alcohol to escape crises, alleviate loneliness, and avoid complexity and confusion. Individuals in moratorium identity status use drugs because they are open to new experiences (Muuss, 1990).

Numerous studies in the literature primarily examine identity development in terms of identity statuses (Schwartz, 2005). These studies consider personal and social attributes such as age, class, gender, academic

achievement, socioeconomic level, place of residence, living in a foster home, type of school attended, employment status, experiencing vocational indecision, perceived level of social support, and participation in leisure activities.

Among personal and social attributes, age, class, and gender are the most commonly investigated variables related to identity development. Regarding age, research findings indicate that the sense of identity becomes more integrated with advancing age. Generally, it is concluded that identity development increases with age (Adams & Jones, 1983; Archer, 1982; 1985; Forbes & Ashton, 1998; Gavas, 1998; Kağan, 1999; Kartal, 1999; Oflazoğlu, 2000; Uzman, 2002; Varan, 1992; Wires, Barocas, & Hollanbeck, 1994). However, there are also studies suggesting no significant difference in identity development with age, indicating that adolescents are more likely to be in diffuse and foreclosure statuses during early and middle adolescence (Adams & Jones, 1983; Allison & Schultz, 2001; Eryüksel, 1987; Oflazoğlu, 2000; Süslü, 2002; Watson & Pnotinsky, 1991). These findings confirm that adolescents experience identity crisis and undergo changes in identity statuses consistent with the explanations of psychosocial development theory.

Regarding gender, overall research findings indicate that males and females show similar patterns of identity development. While no significant differences are generally found based on gender (Archer, 1982; 1989; Başkan, 2000; Çeçen, 2001; Köker, 1997; Oflazoğlu, 2000; Süslü, 2002; Streitmatter, 1993; Varan, 1992), some studies examining specific identity domains reveal gender differences (Archer, 1985; Çakır, 2001; Pastorino, Dunham, & Kidwell, 1997; Solmaz, 2002). Erikson's theory has received criticism for inadequately explaining female development, and new perspectives suggesting differences in identity development between females and males have emerged.

Studies that investigate the relationship between family, sociocultural environment, and identity demonstrate that the individual's environment, family, and culture are significant variables influencing identity development. Findings concerning the relationship between family attributes and identity development are inconsistent when it comes to the parents' education level. While some studies suggest that the mother's education level creates differences in identity development (Uzman, 2002), other studies indicate no significant impact (Kağan, 1999). It has been found that family relationships

(Papini, Sebby, & Clark, 1989), parental attitudes (Çakır, 2001; Çeçen, 2001; Taylor & Oskay, 1995), and parenting styles (Çelen & Kuşdil, 2000) are significantly related to identity development. On the other hand, it has been observed that family structure does not affect identity development (Çakır, 2001).

The topic of identity has been examined in conjunction with many other variables such as proximity, substance use, and adjustment, suicide, and weight issues, emphasizing the importance of environmental factors in identity formation. Academic achievement (Allison & Schultz, 2001), number of siblings (Özgen, 1999), social support (Meeus, 1996; Uzman, 2002; Ünlü, 2001), sports activities (Pugh & Hart, 1999; Shaw, Kleibr & Caldwell, 1995), living in a foster home (Ofıazođlu, 2000), vocational indecision (Vondarek et al., 1995), employment (Özkamalı, 2000), urban residence (Nurmi, Poole & Kalakoski, 1998), and the type of school attended have been found to have significant relationships with identity development. However, research findings regarding the relationship between school type and identity development are contradictory. While some studies find no differences in identity development based on school type (Gavas, 1998; Köker, 1997), other studies suggest the presence of differences (Kartal, 1999; Oskay, 1997).

When examining the relationship between identity development and cognitive thinking, it can be said that individuals integrate, use, and relate information about themselves and their environment through abstract thinking, and abstract thinking is associated with identity development. It has been found that there is a relationship between self-disclosure (Gültekin, 2000) and self-exploration (Lucas, 1997; Akt. Arnett, 2004) with identity development. While some studies do not find a relationship between self-monitoring and identity development (Kumru, 2003), other studies do find a relationship (Oskay, 1997).

Considering the literature from the perspective of identity formation, it is observed that many studies focus on identity statuses, while very few studies focus on identity styles. This situation can be attributed to the fact that identity is considered a psychosocial structure rather than purely cognitive by many researchers. Similarly, it can be noted that most studies in the field of identity in Turkey are related to identity statuses, which may be attributed to the influence of Western psychology.

In recent identity studies, it is noticeable that identity statuses are no longer the focus, and identity is being studied by dividing it into subdomains. This situation can be likened to the formation of personality through the integration of identities. Similarly, there are opinions (Schwartz, 2005) that state how sub-identities come together to form an individual's identity. Additionally, some researchers (Galambos, Arnett, Cote, Schwartz, Kroger) who adopt another approach to identity suggest that studies on identity should be conducted in emerging adulthood or primarily after adolescence, and some empirical evidence supports this view.

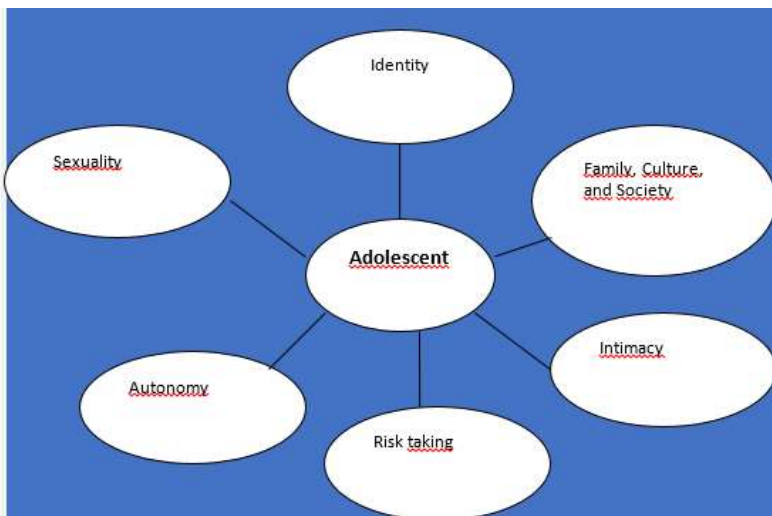


Figure 2. Identity formation and adolescents

Overall, considering all studies and theoretical explanations, it can be said that identity formation is related to some fundamental psychological characteristics, and it is an important psychological structure associated with autonomy and closeness. It is also worth noting that identity studies in Turkey are inadequate.

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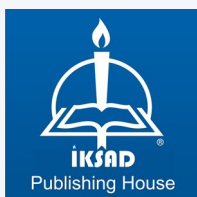
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