

Academic identity of university students
A field study at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational
Sciences, University of Constantine (02)

Soufi naima

universite Abdelhamide Mehri – constantine2
naima.soufi@univ-constantine2.dz

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Abstract:

The study aimed to know the academic identity of the university student. The number of sample members reached (82 students) from the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at the University of Constantine -02-. To achieve the objectives of the study, the academic identity scale of (DeCandia) was applied. (Decandia, 2014), by following the descriptive approach, the results of the study showed that the level of academic identity among university students ranged between average and high, the level of orientation towards the future among most university students was high, the level of self-efficacy among most university students was average, the level of confidence in academic abilities among most university students was high, and the level of perseverance among most university students was average.

Keywords: academic identity, university student

1- Problematic introduction:

Identity is a topic that has received significant attention in both the humanities and social sciences. Identity is generally expressed in light of the set of characteristics, social relations, roles, social, religious, cultural and ethnic affiliations, all of which come together to define a particular individual or group of individuals. The use of identity has expanded and taken a great turn in the diversity of its meanings and complex uses, and it has appeared in different forms

that include, for example, personal, social, national, religious, ethnic, professional, ideological, athletic and academic identity, all of which are defined within the scope of the field in which they grow and are active.

Ericsson was(Erikson, 1968) The first to see that identity is an important issue in human life, according to Erikson's opinion(Erikson, 1968),Identity formation is the main task of adolescence. It appears as the adolescent adapts to social demands, developmental challenges, and attempts to give meaning to his or her life choices and commitments. Identity is the organization of the self into multiple parts related to different roles and positions within society. Identity is thus linked to the meaning that is maintained by being a member of a group, or by the roles that are performed within a social group or society.(Al-Zubaidi, 2019).

Identity is not a one-dimensional construct, but rather it is composed of many aspects. Erikson acknowledged that(Erikson, 1968) There are components of identity that include: the ego dimension, the personal dimension, and the social dimension. The ego dimension refers to the continuity of personality, personal identity refers to the behavior that distinguishes the individual from other individuals, and the social dimension includes the individual's relationships with others.

Although some researchers agree on the integration of these three distinct elements of identity, others only acknowledge the existence of personal and social identity. The construct of academic identity has not been clearly defined in psychology. Some researchers describe it as related to the professional development of individuals in the context of higher education, and some researchers have used other terms that indicate that this construct includes identity associated with the university, educational identity, student identity, and identity associated with the school. Welch and Hodges defined(Welch & Hodges, 1997) Academic identity is defined as the personal commitment to a standard of excellence, the desire to persist in the

face of challenge, progress, excitement, and frustration that are essential elements in the learning process. Based on this definition, Graham and Anderson emphasized:Graham & Anderson, (2008))Academic identity is just one dimension of the broader self-concept. They suggested that academic identity is essential and central to academic performance and motivation to achieve, similar to the concept of self-efficacy. They acknowledged that academic identity formation occurs when a student perceives himself as capable of successfully completing academic tasks. (Ahmed Mahasneh, 2018) Identity may be based on a person's feelings and perception of everything that makes him different from others, that is, it is a person's sense of himself, his distinction, the ability to make decisions, clarity of perceptions, steadfastness in commitment to values, and the specificity of his goals in life.(Sultan, 2009).

Erikson spoke About the conflict and crisis, which he called the identity crisis, where the conflicts of the personality meet and come together either towards normality or towards uncertainty, identity, dissolution in others, and the feeling of alienation and the psychological and social symptoms that result from it. He assumed:EriksonEvery psychological and social stage is accompanied by a crisis, which is a turning point for the individual, arising from physiological maturity and from the social demands that the person must respond to at that stage. The different components of the personality are determined as a result of the way these crises are dealt with. (Al-Fattah, 2016)The process of identity formation, including academic identity, is considered an educational process, as the individual is influenced by the society in which he lives. Identity formation is influenced by the nature of society and its culture, lifestyle, and environment in which the individual lives, as well as by the past history of the individual's personality, and by factors related to the individual's view of the future, such as his goals, hopes, and ambitions, and factors related to the individual's present, such as standards, values, and prevailing conditions in society, such as transformations and crises.(Ahmed Mahasneh, 2018).

Since the student belongs to this educational environment that is subject to controls and laws to organize the lives of its members, his commitment to these controls, learning skills, implementing and completing certain educational tasks gives him a sense of self that is influenced by this environment, which constitutes an important factor in self-acceptance and the feeling of others of that self from management, professors and colleagues, so this feeling is strengthened and contributes to a large extent to the individual's psychological, social and academic development.

This is what made us ask the following question:

-What is the level of academic identity of university students?

2- **Study hypotheses:**

-The academic identity level of university students is average.

-The level of future orientation of university students.

-The level of self-efficacy of university students is average in

-The university student's level of confidence in academic abilities is average.

-The level of perseverance of university students is average. .

3- **Study objectives:**

The research aims to:

-Knowing the academic identity of the university student.

-Knowing the level of future orientation of university students in.

-Knowing the level of self-efficacy of university students.

-Knowing the level of confidence in the academic abilities of the university student.

-Knowing the level of perseverance of the university student.

4- Importance of the study:

The importance of this study lies in its shedding light on a topic that is absent in the Algerian university community, due to the scarcity of studies in this field despite the noticeable trend towards academic identity in global university community.

This study also derives its importance from its consideration of a type of individual identity, namely the academic identity of the university student.

Perhaps the most important thing that gives this study its importance is its focus on four dimensions of academic identity, which, according to the study tool, are: orientation towards the future, self-efficacy, confidence in academic abilities, and perseverance.

5- Theoretical framework of the study:

5-1-Theoretical concepts:

- Academic ID:

The construct of academic identity has not been clearly defined, with some describing it in relation to the professional development of individuals in the context of higher education, and others terming it university-related identity, educational identity, student identity, and school-related identity.

Identity formation is a continuous negotiation process between the individual and the environment or social context, with particular attention paid to the power relations at play in culture. From this perspective, identity is a continuous negotiation process during social interaction. This is particularly relevant to academic situations where individuals are exposed to a rich and interactive social environment where learning takes place. Therefore, students work to define their identities as learners based on the work and social situations they encounter at university.

According to Crocker(Kroger, 2000) The process of forming an adolescent's identity is greatly influenced by the academic context during middle adolescence, and at this time, adolescents' life trajectories are greatly influenced by the decisions they make regarding their education.

Ericsson commented, (Erikson, 1968)He also touched on the role of education in the process of identity formation, pointing to the crisis of productivity versus helplessness that children face between the ages of seven and twelve, which results when students are faced with the opportunity to learn skills and abilities, practice them with others, and explore them intellectually. (Al-Zubaidi, 2019).

- DeCandia's theory (Decandia, 2014)For academic identity: She believes that academic identity consists of four components: future orientation, self-efficacy, confidence in academic abilities, and perseverance.

-Looking towards the futureFuture Orientation: It refers to one's ability to imagine one's future life circumstances. It is believed that future orientation may be a motivator or deterrent towards learning and setting goals, which in turn may affect one's self-efficacy and emotional state.

-self-efficacy :Self-efficiency **:**It measures an individual's beliefs in his or her ability to perform a task, accomplish a task, or reach a goal. Self-efficacy is similar in structure to self-concept, but there are several differences that distinguish them. Specifically, self-concept includes cognitive and emotional components of self-evaluation, while self-efficacy includes only the cognitive component.

In addition, self-concept is created by comparing oneself with others, while self-efficacy is developed by comparing one's past performance with one's present performance with an emphasis on personal mastery.

-Confidence in academic abilities

Confidence in Academic Abilities :It is related to self-efficacy but differs from it. As is the case with self-concept, this construct is derived in part through social comparisons, while self-efficacy is derived from personal mastery. Sanders and Sander explained:(Sanders and Sander 2003) The concept of academic confidence, how students differ in the strength of their belief, firm confidence, or certain expectation regarding one's educational experiences.

-perseverance**Perseverance :**Known as Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly

(Duckworth, Peterson, Marrhews, and Kelly 2007)

Perseverance is defined as persistence and passion for long-term goals. They hypothesized that this construct is one of several factors that explain why some individuals achieve more than others when the intelligence variable is held constant. Perseverance is a personality trait rather than a cognitive or emotional factor. They suggested that perseverance can contribute to success in many skills and professions, including academics. (Al-Zubaidi, 2019).

We have adopted the theoryDeCandia's theory(Decandia, 2014)For academic identity .

5-2-Procedural concepts of the study:

- Academic identity: is the score obtained by students in the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Abdelhamid Mehri University Constantine 2 by answering the academic identity scale prepared in this study.
- University student: is the person whose academic competence has allowed him to move from secondary school to university by means of a certificate that qualifies him for that. In this study, he is the student belonging to the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Abdelhamid Mehri University Constantine -02-.

1-Study methodology:

Based on the previously mentioned presentation of the study problem and the importance of the subject, it is clear that the study method is the descriptive method. This type of study is based on describing the phenomenon with a complete and accurate description, with the collection of data and information in order to analyze it quantitatively and qualitatively, and to conclude by providing explanations for the phenomenon under study.

2-Study community and sample:

The study research community is represented by university students of different genders and academic levels. The study sample consisted of 82 students from the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Abdelhamid Mehri University Constantine 2. We relied on the random sample, which gives equal opportunities to the study community's components to appear, without the researcher interfering or placing considerations or characteristics that determine the sample.

3-Study tools:

We relied on the academic identity scale. Decandia (Decandia, 2014) Translated by Abdul Azim Hamza Khair Al-Zubaidi and verified by the translation procedures. This scale consists of four sub-scales:

1-Looking towards the future Future Orientation :whose items were taken from the Malo scale of temporal orientation (Mello Time Orientation) It consists of 14 paragraphs.

2-self-efficacy Self-efficacy: Which paragraphs were from the general self-efficacy of Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) (Schwarzer and Jerusalem,) It consists of 9 paragraphs.

3-Confidence in academic abilities Confidence in Academic Abilities : which was developed on the basis of the scholastic confidence scale of McCue and Herley (1997) (Macue – Herlihy,) It consists of 18 paragraphs.

4-perseverance Perseverance Its paragraphs were from the scale of Duckworth et al. (Duckworth, Peterson, Marrews, and Kelly 2007)

It consists of 12 paragraphs.

After arbitration, the scale now contains 40 items measuring 4 dimensions through:

- From paragraph 1 to 10, it measures the future orientation.
- From paragraph 11 to 20, it measures the dimension of self-efficacy.
- From paragraph 21 to 30, it measures the degree of confidence in academic abilities.
- From paragraph 31 to 40, measure the degree of perseverance.

6-Psychometric properties of the instrument (validity and reliability):

- Honesty:

The validity of the academic identity scale was verified by presenting the scale to a group of psychology specialists, and their comments were taken into account regarding the linguistic formulation of the paragraphs in terms of structure and language.

- Stability:

The reliability of the academic identity scale was determined using the Cronbach's alpha equation using the system SPSS. We found the value of Cronbach's alpha as follows:

Cronbach's alpha	Number of paragraphs
9,53	40

From Table No. (01), we note that the total stability value of the scale is equal to 0.953, which is a high value of stability that reassures the stability of the tool’s results if it is reused in the main study.

1-Presentation and discussion of the results of the study questions:

After retrieving the academic identity scale that was distributed electronically to students at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at the University of Constantine 02, the data was unloaded and processed statistically using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.SPSSThe study results reached:

-Presentation and analysis of the results of the first question: What is th

It does not apply to me		It rarely applies to me.		Often It applies to me		It applies to me perfectly.		Paragraphs
Percentages	Repetitions	Percentages	Repetitions	Percentages	Repetitions	Percentages	Repetitions	
1 8.3	5	3 .7	8	1 9.5	1 6	5 8.5	48	Paragraph No. 01
2 0.7	7	6 .1	5	1 4.6	1 2	5 8.5	8	Paragraph No. 02
6 9.5	7	3 .7	8	8 .5	7	1 8.3	15	Paragraph No. 03
1 9.5	6	7 .3	5	2 4.4	2 0	4 8.8	40	Paragraph No. 04
1 8.3	5	6 .1	5	2 9.3	2 4	4 6.3	38	Paragraph No. 05
1 8.3	5	6 .1	5	2 4.4	2 0	5 1.2	42	Paragraph No. 06
1 5.9	3	1 2.2	0	1 7.1	1 4	5 4.9	45	Paragraph No. 07
1 5.9	3	7 .3	5	2 3.2	1 9	5 3.7	44	Paragraph No. 08
4 5.1	7	1 8.3	5	1 2.2	1 0	2 4.4	20	Paragraph No. 09
1 5.9	3	2 .4	2	3 .7	3	7 8.0	64	Paragraph No. 10
	2 1.1		5		1 4.5		40.4	Arithmetic mean

e level of future orientation among university students?

Table No. (02): Shows the frequencies, percentages, and arithmetic mean of the level of orientation towards the future among university students.

We note from the results of Table No. (02) that 78.0% Of the students, paragraph 10 “I believe that I will obtain a university degree” from the academic identity scale applied to them, and 29.3% Among them, paragraph number 5 often applies to them: “I believe that I will achieve my dreams.”%18.3% of them rarely meet paragraph 9: “There is no point in thinking about what will happen in the future,” while 69.5%%Of the students, paragraph 3 did not apply to them: “I do not want to think about my future.”

We note from the table above that the highest arithmetic mean was for the alternative “applies to me completely” which was estimated at (40.4), which means that most of the students had a high level in the future orientation dimension of the academic identity scale.

-Presentation and analysis of the results of the second question: What is the level of self-efficacy of the university student?

It does not apply to me		It rarely applies to me.		Often It applies to me		It applies to me perfectly.		P aragraphs
p ercentages	R epetitions	p ercentages	R epetitions	p ercentages	R epetitions	p ercentages	R epetitions	
1 1.0	9	1 2.2	1 0	3 1.7	2 6	4 5.1	3 7	Pa ragraph No. 11
9 .8	8	1 5.9	1 3	2 9.3	2 4	4 5.1	3 7	Pa ragraph No. 12
1 7.1	1 4	1 3.4	1 1	3 7.8	3 1	3 1.7	2 6	Pa ragraph No. 13
1 1.0	1 9	1 4.6	1 2	4 3.9	3 6	3 0.5	2 5	Pa ragraph No. 14
1 2.2	1 0	4 .9	4	1 9.5	1 6	6 3.4	5 2	Pa ragraph No. 15
1 5.9	1 3	1 4.6	1 2	3 6.6	3 0	3 2.9	2 7	Pa ragraph No. 16
8 .9	7	2 9.3	2 4	3 6.6	3 0	2 5.6	2 1	Pa ragraph No. 17
1 3.4	1 1	2 0.7	1 7	4 1.5	3 4	2 4.4	2 0	Pa ragraph No. 18
2 4.4	2 0	2 9.3	2 4	3 5.4	2 9	1 1.0	9	Pa ragraph No. 19
1 1.0	9	2 5.6	2 1	3 5.4	2 9	2 8.0	2 3	Pa ragraph No. 20
	1 1		1 4.8		2 8.5		2 7.7	ar ithmetic mean

Table No. (03): Shows the frequencies, percentages, and arithmetic mean of the level of self-efficacy among university students.

From Table No. (03) we note that 63.4% Of the students, paragraph 15 completely applied to them: “I can solve problems if I invest my efforts to the fullest extent,” and 43.9%Of these, paragraph 14 often applied to them: “I am confident that I can deal well with unexpected events,” and 29.3%Of them, paragraph 24 rarely applied to them: “I can understand the information presented in the scale,” and 24.4%Paragraph 19 “I can write a high-quality scientific report” did not apply to them.

We note from what was mentioned in the table above that the highest arithmetic mean was for the alternative “often applies to me” which was estimated at (28.5), which suggests that most of the students had an average level in the self-efficacy dimension of the academic identity scale.

-Presentation and analysis of the results of the third question: What is the level of confidence in academic abilities among university students?

It does not apply to me		It rarely applies to me.		Often It applies to me		It applies to me perfectly.	
pe rcentages	R epetitions	pe rcentages	R epetitions	pe rcentages	R epetitions	pe rcentages	R epetitions
9, 829	8	12 .2	10	36 .6	30	41 .5	34
3. 7	3	17 .1	14	43 .9	36	35 .4	29
7. 3	6	25 .6	21	31 .7	26	35 .4	29
7. 3	6	14 .6	12	39 .0	32	39 .0	32
8. 5	7	30 .5	25	34 .1	28	26 .8	22
12 .2	10	18 .3	15	29 .3	24	40 .2	33
12 .2	10	3. 7	3	17 .1	14	67 .1	55
14 .6	12	8. 5	7	20 .7	17	56 .1	46
9. 8	8	8. 5	7	30 .5	25	51 .2	42
11 .0	9	9. 8	8	32 .9	27	46 .3	38
	7. 9		12 .2		25 .9		36

Table No. (04): Shows the frequencies, percentages, and arithmetic mean of the level of confidence in academic abilities among university students.

From Table No. (04) we note that 67.1% Of the students, paragraph No. 27 “I am respected by the teacher” applies to them completely, while 43.9% Most of them are Paragraph 22 applies to

them: “I can understand the lesson I read in books and references.”

and 30.5%Among them, paragraph 25 “I participate in the discussion of the scientific material” and 14.6 rarely apply to them.%Among them, paragraph No. 28 does not apply to them: “I am consistent in attending the tests.”

From the table above, we note that the highest arithmetic mean for the alternative is “applies to me completely”, which was estimated at (36), which means that most of the students had a high level in the dimension of confidence in academic abilities from the academic identity scale.

-Presentation and analysis of the results of the fourth question: What is the level of perseverance among university students??

It does not apply to me		It rarely applies to me.		Often It applies to me		It applies to me perfectly.		P aragraphs
p ercentages	R epetitions	p ercentages	R epetitions	p ercentages	R epetitions	p ercentages	R epetitions	
8 .5	7	1 4.6	1 2	3 5.4	2 9	4 1.5	3 4	P aragraph No. 31
1 8.3	1 5	2 4.4	2 0	4 1.5	3 4	1 5.9	1 3	P aragraph No. 32
2 0.7	1 7	1 3.4	1 1	2 4.4	2 0	4 1.5	3 4	P aragraph No. 33
9 .8	8	1 8.3	1 5	4 2.7	3 5	2 9.3	2 4	P aragraph No. 34
1 8.3	1 5	2 6.8	2 2	3 4.1	2 8	2 0.7	1 7	P aragraph No. 35
1 2.2	1 0	1 3.4	1 1	3 1.7	2 6	4 2.7	3 5	P aragraph No. 36
1 5.9	1 3	2 4.4	2 0	3 2.9	2 7	2 6.8	2 2	P aragraph No. 37
2 3.2	1 9	3 0.5	2 5	2 6.8	2 2	1 9.5	1 6	P aragraph No. 38
8 .5	7	1 4.6	1 2	3 2.9	2 7	4 3.9	3 6	P aragraph No. 39
2 9.3	2 4	1 3.4	1 1	2 5.6	2 1	3 1.7	2 6	P aragraph No. 40
	1 3.5		1 5.9		2 6.9		2 5.7	a rithmetic mean

Table No. (05): Shows the frequencies, percentages, and arithmetic mean of the student's level of perseverance.

From Table No. (05) we note that 43.9% Of the students, paragraph No. 39 "I complete every task I start" applies completely to them, while 42.7% Among them, paragraph 34 often applies to them: "Setbacks do not weaken me," and 30.5.%Of them, paragraph 38 rarely applies to them: "I have difficulty maintaining my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete," and 29.3%Paragraph 40 "I accomplished goals that took years of work" rarely applies to them.

We note from the table above that the highest arithmetic mean was for the alternative "often applies to me" which was estimated at (26.9), which means that most of the students had an average level in the perseverance dimension of the academic identity scale. Discussion of results:

Through the results obtained after applying the scale to a number of university students in the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Abdelhamid Mehri University Constantine - 02-, and in light of the quantitative and qualitative analysis, the results of the study reached:

-The level of academic identity among university students ranged between average and high, which explains the relative fulfillment of the general hypothesis.

-The level of future orientation among most university students is high. This explains why the first partial hypothesis was not met.

-The level of self-efficacy among most university students is average. This proves the validity of the second partial hypothesis.

-The level of confidence in academic abilities among most university students is high, which explains why the third partial hypothesis was not met.

-The level of perseverance among most university students is average, which suggests that the fourth partial hypothesis is met.

2-Suggestions and recommendations:

-Preparing scientific studies and research on the concept of academic identity among different age groups and tracking its development over time to gain a broad understanding of the development of the sense of academic identity.

-Preparing studies and research on the concept of academic identity and linking it to other factors such as motivation, academic achievement, etc.

-Developing programs to enhance the concept of academic identity among university students and schoolchildren, to develop their sense of belonging to the academic field, especially in light of the Corona pandemic, which will be reflected in raising their level of achievement.

-Holding scientific and educational seminars that guide students and encourage them to develop their sense of academic identity in times of crisis.

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