



## Presenting a structural model of resilience prediction based on identity styles mediated by adaptive motivational structure in students

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### ABSTRACT

**Background and Aim:** Developmental psychology points of view suggest that the period of adolescence and young adulthood is important for the integrity of human personality and development and is one of the most critical periods. Therefore, young people need to promote themselves in this era and raise their position in the social system, and achieving identity is an answer to their need to separate and distinguish themselves from others. Therefore, this research was conducted with the aim of presenting a structural model of resilience prediction based on identity styles with the mediation of adaptive motivational structure in students. **Methods:** The present research is a correlational cross-sectional study. The statistical population of this research was made up of all the students of Islamic Azad University of Tehran in 2019; from among them, 400 people were selected by multi-stage cluster sampling method. In this research, tools of resilience (Connor & Davidson, 2003), identity styles (Brzezunsky, 1999), and motivational structure (Cox & Klinger, 1995) were used, all of which had acceptable validity and reliability. In order to analyze the data, SPSS-V23 and Lisrel-V8.8 software were used; Also, in order to respond to the research hypotheses, structural equation modeling was used. **Results:** The research results showed that the model has a good fit. Also, the results showed that identity styles have an indirect effect on resilience with the mediating role of adaptive motivational structure. In general, it can be concluded that some personality traits such as tolerance, forgiveness, adaptability, hard work, curiosity, and decisiveness in relationships can help people to experience higher levels of identity styles, resilience, and motivational structure. **Conclusion:** Therefore, the findings of this research have been discussed theoretically and practically in the light of the existing research process, and suggestions have been presented in both theoretical and practical areas.



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## Introduction

One of the most sensitive and important periods of human life is the youth period, this period has its own symptoms, effects and consequences (Rosenberg, 2015). Spear (2013) considers this period of people's life as a period of rapid changes and growth, which includes important effects such as risky behaviors. The viewpoints of developmental psychology suggest that this period is important for the integrity of human personality and development, and it is one of the most critical periods. Young people need to promote themselves in this era and raise their position in the social system, and achieving identity is an answer to their need to separate and distinguish themselves from others. Resilience is one of the topics that has gained increasing importance in evolutionary psychology in the last two decades. Resilience is one of the important and influential factors in young people (Angar & Theron, 2020). Resilience is resistance to serious life changes and the ability to return to the first place and maintain one's original form when threatened by traumatic shocks (Oginska-Bolik & Zadorna-Cyslak, 2018). Connor (2006) concluded in his research that we are all born with innate resilience and capacities to improve characteristics that are mainly seen in resilient people, such as: 1. Social ability including cultural flexibility, empathy, kindness and communication skills; 2. Problem solving skills including planning, help seeking, critical thinking and creativity; 3. Self-management skills including sense of identity, self-efficacy, self-awareness, mastery of tasks and adaptive withdrawal from negative situations, sense of purpose and belief in a bright future (Mahdavi et al., 2018). Resilience occurs at any age and at any level and is a cognitive construct that can be taught, that is, resilience is not an inherent phenomenon but is achieved through practice, education, learning and experience. Today, people are facing many changes in their life and environment, and this causes people to be in unpredictable situations. This unpredictable situation sometimes puts a person in great challenges. Therefore, human capabilities and the manifestation of his strengths can lead to his adaptation and optimal performance and bring well-being to man. Resilience helps a person to recover from social, financial, or emotional challenges and reflects the person's ability to adapt to grief, trauma, adverse conditions, and

stressful life factors (Athota et al., 2020). Therefore, this variable has been investigated in this research.

Another variable that is examined in connection with resilience is identity. Studies have shown that resilience is one of the important variables related to identity (Koskio et al., 2015). A study has shown that the amount of resilience is higher in people who have a normative identity style than others (Kumari, 2018). According to Erikson, identity is defined as self-perception, which is the coherence between past, present, and future experiences. Finding identity, along with physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, is of particular importance. To regulate and manage life, people need to create a meaningful and stable identity structure. As a result, they can continue their sense of connection in all times and places and provide a reference framework for decision-making, problem solving, interpretation and interpretation of their experiences and information (Aramon & Ebrahim Qavam, 2018). Berzonski (2008) is one of the theorists of the transformation approach by examining the social-cognitive foundations, who has introduced three identity styles (informational, confused/avoidant, normative) and identity commitment. People with an informational identity style consciously and actively search for information and evaluate, and then use the appropriate information. Clear career and academic goals have high academic performance and internal motivation (Didhor & Wada, 2020). People with a normative identity style conform to the expectations and orders of important people and reference groups in facing identity issues and decisions; They accept and internalize values and beliefs without conscious evaluation and have little tolerance for confronting new and ambiguous situations (Hosseini Sadr et al., 2022). People with confusion/normative identity style have a lot of procrastination in all cases and try to avoid addressing identity and decision issues as much as possible; If this delay is long-term, situational and environmental demand will cause behavioral reactions in them. Beside these styles, Berzonsky also emphasizes the basic factor of "commitment" or identity structure. He believes that commitment plays an important role in distinguishing identity processing styles (Kursanguz, 2016).

On the other hand, Cox and Klinger (2004) stated that a person's goals and ways of depending on them show his motivational structure, which can be adaptive or maladaptive. People who have a maladaptive motivational style try to arouse their excitement in unhealthy ways and have avoidant goals and show minimal hope to achieve their goals. Other characteristics that can be mentioned for these people are the least discomfort from not reaching the goal, the feeling of time distance from the goal, the least commitment to the goals, the feeling of low control over the goal, and the least information about the goals. On the other hand, people who have an adaptive motivational structure spend their resources and energy on healthy stimuli and seek more positive goals; They have a lot of commitment to their goals, they enjoy achieving their goals, and they get upset if they don't reach their goals; They are optimistic about their success and have minimal conflict between their goals (Farshbaf-Zivari & Bakhshipour Roudsari, 2021; Lamei et al., 2014). In a research conducted by Salehi Federdi (2013) on students, the results showed that resilience and adaptive motivational structure are negative and significant predictors for high-risk behaviors. Also, the results of Soleimaniyan et al. (2015) showed that there is a significant difference between people with a non-adaptive motivational structure, as well as the common characteristics of resilient people and people with an adaptive motivational structure.

Therefore, adaptive motivation is one of the important structures in educational psychology. It is said that students who have more adaptive motivation have a positive perception of their internal characteristics and value their abilities and motivations, which can indicate signs of resilience in them (Wu et al., 2020). The present research can play a significant role in the research literature related to resilience because it clarifies the mechanism of the impact of each identity style on resilience. In other words, the mediation plan of adaptive motivation in the relationship between identity styles and resilience leads to the richness of existing knowledge in the field of resilience. This research will also be promising for educational environments, in the sense that if university teachers and professors try to create and improve motivation in students and consider

individual differences in education, they can improve their resilience. In this way, the wastage of financial resources is prevented and the mission of education, which is to prepare worthy people to enter society and university, is fulfilled. The importance of the current research is because, contrary to the relative stability of identity styles and adaptive motivation, it is considered as a structure that can be increased and improved, and considering the mediation of adaptive motivation, programs can be prepared to improve students' resilience by increasing their adaptive motivation. Therefore, the present study seeks to fill such a gap and seeks to answer the question of what is the relationship between identity styles on resilience and the mediating role of adaptive motivation? Does the proposed model have a good fit? Thus, the main problem in the current research is to examine a causal model in which identity styles are studied as exogenous variables, adaptive motivation as a mediating variable, and resilience as an endogenous variable.

### Method

The design of the current research is a correlation design through structural equation modeling, which is a multivariate correlation method. The statistical population of the present study included all the students of Islamic Azad University of Tehran who were studying in the academic year 2018-2019. A multi-stage cluster random sampling method was used to select the sample. For this purpose, the list of units of Islamic Azad University of Tehran province was determined. Then, eight universities: Central Tehran, North Tehran, South Tehran, Roudhan, Damavand, Shahr Quds, Islam Shahr and Safadasht were randomly selected. Then, according to the geographical dispersion of the faculties of each academic unit and the heterogeneity between groups, the faculties of each unit were considered as the next clusters. The researcher randomly selected a number of faculties in each university according to the number of faculties and finally the questionnaires were distributed among the students of these faculties according to the number of students in each university. Technori-Coff and Marcolides (2014) suggest that to determine the sample size in structural equation modeling, it is better to determine between 5 and 35 people for each parameter. Questionnaires were administered to students in

groups for 60 days. After completing the questionnaires, all of them were checked and analyzed. According to the estimation of the sample size in studies based on structural equation modeling, which Klein (2011) divides into three types: simple, quantitative and complex, the current research is of the type of complex models for which a sample size of at least 400 people is suggested.

### Materials

#### 1. Resilience Connor and Davidson (2003).

This questionnaire was prepared by Connor and Davidson (2003) by reviewing the research sources of 1979-1999 in the field of resilience. The psychometric properties of this scale were investigated in six groups, the general population, primary care patients, psychiatric outpatients, patients with generalized anxiety disorder, and two groups of patients with post-traumatic stress disorder. The producers of this scale are of the opinion that this questionnaire has been able to distinguish resilient people from non-resilient people in clinical and non-clinical groups and can be used in research and clinical situations. This questionnaire has 25 questions that are scored on a Likert scale between zero (completely false) and four (always true). The average score of this scale will be 52, so that the higher the subject's score is, the more resilient he is, and the closer his score is to zero, the less resilient he is. DASS has shown sufficient internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.84 to 0.92 (Weizman and Beck, 1997; quoted by Lotfi Kashani, 2008). Beck (1997) reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.80 for DASS subscales. Two examples of the questions are as follows: It is difficult to feel happy unless one is good-looking, smart, rich and creative, and happiness depends more on my attitude about myself than on the attitude of others about me. In Iran, its reliability was reported as 0.93, and construct validity (using factor analysis and convergent and divergent validity) was established by the test creators in different normal and at-risk groups (Samani et al., 2007).

#### 2. Berzonsky's identity styles questionnaire (1999).

Berzonsky's (1999) identity style questionnaire is a 40-question scale, 11 of which are related to the informational scale, 9 of which are related to the normative scale, 10 of which are related to the confusion or avoidance scale, and 10 of which are related to the commitment scale. Subjects' answers to the

questions are in the form of a 5-point Likert scale, which includes completely disagree (1) to completely agree (5). To check the dominant style in this questionnaire, it will be based on the standard scores, so that the higher standard score (Z) will indicate the dominant style of the individual's identity. This questionnaire examines 4 normative, informative, confused and avoidant components. Berzonsky (1992) reported the internal reliability (coefficient alpha) of the information scale of 0.62, the normative scale of 0.66, and the confusion or avoidance scale of 0.73. The results of Ghazanfari's research using the method of factor analysis, construct validity and reliability, showed that Berzonsky's identity style questionnaire has high construct validity, reliability and internal consistency (Ghazanfari, 2003). An example of the items of this questionnaire are: 1. I have knowledge and awareness about my religious beliefs.

#### 3. Motivational structure of Cox and Klinger (1995).

This 10-question questionnaire was designed by Cox and Klinger in 2004 to evaluate the motivational structure, and its completion is done in three stages. Participants were asked to rate specific concerns on a scale of 0 to 10 in 11 life domains, including: 1) Achieving goals without effort: balance of tendency or desire to achieve the goal; 2) Avoidance: preventing or avoiding reaching the goal; 3) Control: the degree of control over that target; 4) amount of information about how to achieve goals; 5) Probability of success in case of attempt; 6) Chance: the participant's belief in the chance to achieve goals without making efforts; 7) Satisfaction in the event of achievement, which is expected to be achieved by achieving the goals; 8) Displeasure in case of reaching the goal; 9) discomfort resulting from not reaching the goal; 10) commitment: the degree of being determined to reach the goal; 11) The possible duration of time required to achieve the goals. Each person should consider his most important hobby, desire or goal in each of these areas, and an index is obtained for that goal by completing this questionnaire and calculating the scores of each dimension. Finally, a motivational profile can be drawn for each person. From the factor analysis of these dimensions, two general factors have been obtained. The first factor is the adaptive motivational structure that indicates the existence of necessary elements to reach a



satisfactory solution to personal concerns, and the second factor is the maladaptive motivational structure that indicates indifference in achieving personal goals (Cox et al., 2003). The results of factor analysis in Ebrahimi's research showed that the motivational structure scale has adequate construct validity and reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for adaptive and non-adaptive motivation structure was 0.73 and 0.77, respectively (Ebrahimi et al. 2008). In the research of Salehi Federdi (2011), a summary of motivational structure with ten indicators was conducted on a sample including students and substance abusers. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated as 0.77 for students and 0.75 for substance abusers.

### Implementation

The analysis of the information obtained from the implementation of questionnaires was done

through Spss-V23 and Lisrel-V8.8 software. Also, in order to test the research hypotheses, the structural equation model was used.

### Results

In order to investigate the influence of "identity styles" on "resilience" with the mediating role of "adaptive motivational structure" in a model, the confirmatory structural equation model was used. After drawing the model structure in LISREL software, adding model constraints and choosing the maximum likelihood method, the following figures' implemented model and fitting path diagram were obtained. The standardized parameter estimates in the figure below show that all indicators are statistically significant and their factor loadings are at a high level. Examining the results of the fit indices indicates the appropriate fit of the model.

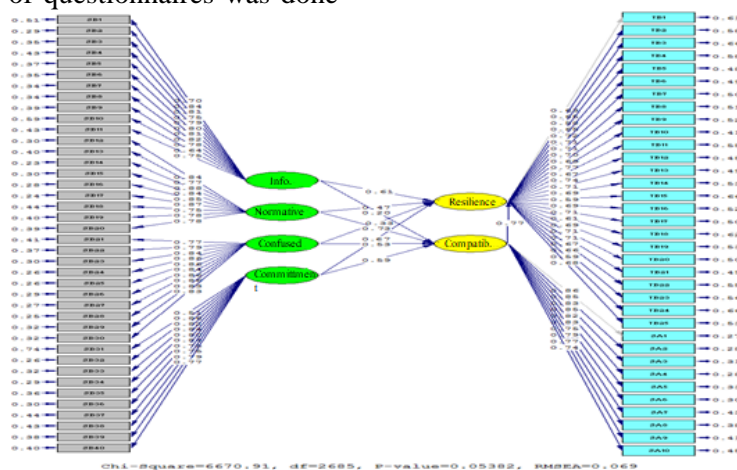


Figure 1. Standard coefficients of the model of the influence of identity styles on resilience with the mediating role of adaptive motivational structure

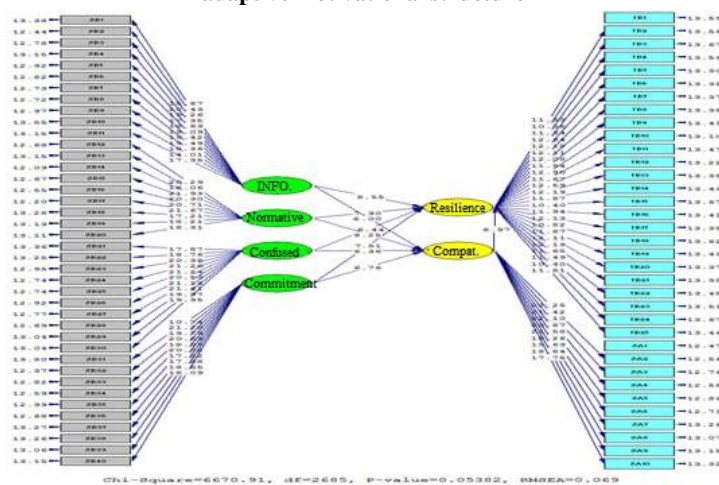


Figure 2. t values of the model of the influence of identity styles on resilience with the mediating role of adaptive motivational structure

As shown in the above figures, all parameter values related to the model are shown along

with factor loadings and path coefficients. According to the values of standard coefficients

and significant t coefficients obtained in the above figures (t values higher than 2.58), it can be concluded that there is a direct relationship between the factors. As the chi-square and

RMSEA indices show, the model provides a better fit to the data. The outputs of the model are analyzed in the table below.

**Table 1. Fit indices of model path analysis**

Index	Value	Acceptable fit
<b>Chi-square/df</b>	2.48	Less than 3
<b>RMSEA</b>	0.069	Less than 0.1
<b>CFI</b>	0.97	Greater than 0.9
<b>NFI</b>	0.97	Greater than 0.9
<b>GFI</b>	0.93	Greater than 0.9
<b>AGFI</b>	0.91	Greater than 0.9

As can be seen, the fit indices of the model are in a favorable condition. In the table below, path

coefficients are given along with significant values. As can be seen, all routes are accepted.

**Table 2. Path coefficients, significant values and their status**

Path	Path coeff.	T	Condition
<b>Informational</b> to <b>Adaptive</b>	0.50	8.55	Approved
<b>Normative</b> to <b>motivational</b>	0.73	8.25	Approved
<b>Confused or avoidant</b> to <b>structure</b>	0.53	6.36	Approved
<b>Commitment</b> to <b>structure</b>	0.59	6.76	Approved
<b>Adaptive motivational</b> to <b>Resilience</b>	0.77	8.97	Approved
<b>Informational</b> to <b>Resilience</b>	0.61	8.55	Approved
<b>Normative</b> to <b>structure</b>	0.47	7.90	Approved
<b>Confused or avoidant</b> to <b>structure</b>	0.33	6.36	Approved
<b>Commitment</b> to <b>structure</b>	0.67	6.76	Approved

In order to check the direct and indirect effect of independent variables on the dependent variable, it is necessary to present the total,

direct and indirect effects for the endogenous variable of the model, which can be seen in the following tables.

**Table 3. Separation of direct, indirect and total effects in the research model**

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Effect		
		Direct	Indirect	Total
<b>Informational</b>	<b>Adaptive</b>	0.50	----	0.50
<b>Normative</b>	<b>motivational structure</b>	0.73	----	0.73
<b>Confused or avoidant</b>	<b>structure</b>	0.53	----	0.53
<b>Commitment</b>	<b>structure</b>	0.59	----	0.59
<b>Adaptive motivational structure</b>	<b>Resilience</b>	0.77	----	0.77
<b>Informational</b>	<b>Resilience</b>	0.61	0.38 = 0.77 * 0.50	0.99
<b>Normative</b>	<b>structure</b>	0.47	0.56 = 0.77 * 0.73	1.03
<b>Confused or avoidant</b>	<b>structure</b>	0.33	0.41 = 0.77 * 0.53	0.74
<b>Commitment</b>	<b>structure</b>	0.67	0.45 = 0.77 * 0.59	1.12

As can be seen in Table 3, the impact of each identity style on resilience with the mediating role of adaptive motivational structure is given in the last column of the above table. Therefore, it is inferred that the mediating role of adaptive motivational structure supports the impact of identity styles on resilience. As can be seen in Table 3, the impact of each identity style on resilience with the mediating role of adaptive motivational structure is given in the last column of the above table. Therefore, it is inferred that the mediating role of adaptive motivational structure supports the impact of identity styles on resilience.

### Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the aim of presenting a structural model of predicting resilience based on identity styles with the mediation of adaptive motivational structure in students. The results showed that identity styles have a direct and significant effect on resilience. In line with the results obtained by Durakva (2018), he conducted a research titled the relationship between resilience and identity styles in Native American students. The results showed that among the identity styles, normative orientation and commitment orientation are positively and significantly and avoidance orientation are negatively and significantly related to the resilience of Native American students. In explaining the obtained results, it can be said that the normative style of identity is based on imitating and following the important people in one's life and includes a closed-minded perspective, inflexible commitment and a fixed self-concept that suppresses exploration. The closedness and inflexibility of people in this style prevents them from experiencing enjoyable and meaningful life events. It puts them in a situation where, when faced with stressful and destructive events, they cannot act creatively to solve their problems, and as a result, they give up on these problems. In this case, the person does not show any flexibility and the level of resilience of the person decreases. On the other hand, individuals with an informational identity style consciously and actively search for information and evaluate it, and then use appropriate information; They are skeptical about their identity structure and when faced with inconsistent feedback, they tend to test,

revise and adapt their structure to new information and conditions. Therefore, it can be said that these people have a flexible personality that can be more resilient against psychological problems, people who use this style of identity are more prepared than others to solve specific problems and problems (Mal Virani, 2017). According to Berzensky's point of view, people who use the informational identity style have an internal source of control and a high need to be recognized for cognitive complexity and facilitating anxiety (Aramon & Ebrahim Qavam, 2018). Researches show that in the state of confusion and procrastination, the feeling of success is certainly less and the more the person's identity moves to the informational style, the more the person's resilience can increase.

Also, the results showed that identity styles have an indirect effect on resilience with the mediating role of adaptive motivational structure. In line with Avishi et al. (2018), they showed that there is a significant negative relationship between the personality trait of neuroticism and resilience. They also showed that there is a significant positive relationship between the personality traits of extroversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and conscientiousness with resilience. Thomas (2019) showed that new developments and modern technologies have brought fundamental changes in the structure of identity, personality and the organization of social relations. Hasani (2014) also showed that there is a direct and significant relationship between the scores of informational, normative and identity identity styles with adolescent resilience and identity styles can predict the level of resilience in adolescents. Mirzaei et al. (2016) also showed that not only the resilience of learners can be directly predicted by the perception of competence, but this relationship is also mediated by adaptive motivation.

No matter how we interpret identity, it will play an incomparable role in a person's resilience and motivation. Identity formation is a lifelong process. The development of the concept of self gradually leads to the formation of personal identity, which is a psycho-social construct. That is, it includes both the way of thinking and opinions that represent the person and the way the person communicates with others. Self-

consistent identity is the most important aspect of psychosocial development. Erikson (1968) proposed the creation of identity as the most important personality development during adolescence and considers it a vital step towards reaching a happy and productive adulthood. Therefore, among the identity styles, the informational identity style is the most adaptive identity style and involves coping mechanisms in daily situations. Therefore, it is concluded that people with informational identity style have high resilience and use an adaptive motivational structure in their work. Regarding the informational identity style, maybe independence in judgment, openness in experiences and complexity of knowledge of these people are the reason for this result. In fact, it can be said that identity is established when a person responds to his problems and his environment in a coordinated, independent, balanced and without avoidance and confusion. Through identity, people come to a compilation of themselves that explains how they behave and think about themselves and their surroundings.

Among the limitations of this research is the limited sample of students, which cannot be a good and sufficient representative of the society. Therefore, it is reasonable and possible to generalize the results only to the target population. For other levels, we should do this with caution. The data were prepared using self-report questionnaires, which may have response biases. Regarding the presentation of guidelines derived from the research results, we can mention the following: Since the family plays an important role in creating favorable conditions for the development of personality and identity, the educational system and the educational system of the society must act to provide awareness to parents. Considering the importance of the variables of this research, it is suggested that these variables be investigated with other variables such as social skills, self-confidence, self-concept and emotional intelligence. This research will be done longitudinally so that it is possible to compare the results at different times.

### Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article has no financial sponsor or conflict of interest.

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