Identity Development As A Predictor Of Academic Engagement Among Undergraduate Students In Kenya

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Abstract
Academic engagement is a major aspect of education at all levels. University education aims at empowering students with growth experiences, knowledge, skills, and education. However, low academic engagement in academic tasks affect the achievement of this goal. Identity development is a major developmental task through adolescence to adulthood and it is crucial to understand the association between identity development and academic engagement. The current study aimed at determining the predictive weight of dimensions of identity development on academic engagement among undergraduate students in Kenya. Characteristics among university students in Kenya that suggest low academic engagement included; missing classes, poor preparation for examinations, engaging in unhealthy lifestyles, engaging in substance use, low academic performance, delayed graduation and dropping out of university. The study used the Five-dimensional Model of Identity Formation and predictive correlational research design. A sample of 415 students from public universities in Kenya were selected using multistage sampling – purposive, simple random and stratified sampling. Quantitative data were collected using Dimensions of Identity Development scale. Data were analysed using SPSS (v.24). Data were entered, coded and analysed using Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis. Identity development had a positive statistically significant prediction on academic engagement (r (413) = .39, p < .05). A multiple regression analysis further revealed that Dimensions of identity development significantly predicted Academic engagement, (F (1,413) = 74.95, p < .05) which indicates that Dimensions of identity development can play a significant role in shaping Academic engagement (β = .51, p < .05). The study concluded that an increase in the identity development variable was associated with an increase in academic engagement. The study findings led to the recommendation that, all the stakeholders should promote identity development among the university students so as to increase academic engagement and consequently academic success.

Key words: *Identity development, academic engagement, undergraduate students.*

I. Introduction

Academic engagement is a construct that stresses students' investment, commitment, active participation and identification with school-related activities to increase students' performance. Researchers agree that academic engagement is multidimensional and encompasses three aspects, behavioural, cognitive, and emotional engagement all operating together to enhance students' learning (Alrashidi et al. 2016; Carter et al., 2012; Phan, 2014; Zhoc et al., 2019). The behavioral dimension includes student's involvement in both extracurricular and academic activities. Behaviourally, engaged students attend all classes, concentrate and do their school work on time. Participation in extra-curricular activities and socialisation in school lead to psychological wellbeing (Pachucki et al., 2015; Reis et al., 2015). The cognitive dimension explains student's mental effort to gain proficiency in difficult skills. This dimension directly impacts on academic engagement. Finally, the emotional dimension suggests student's reactions to other students, school and teachers. Students who are not emotionally engaged are restless, irritable, lack concentration and are basically disinterested in school.

Creating conditions that promote student engagement in higher education is paramount for higher retention and overall academic success. Success in university education requires from the student time and hard work, the government also invests a lot of money to run the universities. Student engagement is thus an important construct to explore in pursuit of a detailed, expansive and holistic understanding of what the students go through

in the university and a pertinent factor for learning outcomes in higher education (Delfino, 2019). Low academic engagement is present among undergraduate students in Kenya. Studies have cited absenteeism, high number of examination resits, examination cheating, low completion rates and high dropout rates among university students in Kenya. Though many factors may be attributed to low academic engagement the current study sought to determine the relationship between student identity development and academic engagement.

II. Literature Review

A correlational study done in USA by Kayanan (2017) sought to find out the association between readiness for change and college student identity development. Theories applied were; Chickering's model for identity and Erwin Identity Scale and the level of Readiness for Change concerning alcohol use. A convenience sample was drawn from students referred to a clinic at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. Findings of the study showed that readiness for change was interrelated with college students' level of identity formation. However the present correlational study strived to establish the interrelations between student identity development and academic engagement. Destin and Williams (2020) did a review on identities and outcomes associated to academic persistence and posit that during adolescence and young adulthood, young people develop and explore their identities. Different elements of these developing and dynamic identities serve as a road map for students on how to pursue their goals and navigate the world including how they deal with academic challenges and opportunities. The identity-based motivation framework was used to explain the associations between academic persistence and student identities. On the contrary the current study sought to determine the relationship between student identity development and academic engagement.

A study done in Europe by Christiaens et al. (2021) assert that there are disparities between secondary and tertiary educational identity in the Netherlands. A longitudinal survey was done on a sample of 685 students (47% female). Data from adolescent biannual surveys were used in collecting data from the final year of secondary school. Results showed that during transition, development of reconsideration and identity commitment was best grouped into four classes. These were, Stable Self-Certainty, Increasing Self-Certainty, Enduring Uncertainty and Post-Transition Uncertainty. Identity development patterns of the adolescents were also related to individual, academic, relational and sociodemographic characteristics. The ongoing study determined the correlation between student identity development and academic engagement among undergraduate students and utilized the five dimensional model of identity development by Luyckx et al. (2008).

Li (2019) sought to determine the association between identity and student engagement among engineering undergraduate students. The study recognized the importance of multidimensional nature of student engagement and that there existed a dearth of research about the relationship between student engagement and engineering identity. Identity formation theory guided the study and a validated and adapted Utrecht-Management of Identity Commitments was used to quantify identifying with engineering and to determine how identity relates with student engagement (measured by course choice, effort and persistence). Results indicated that engineering identity had a significant relationship to student engagement. Unlike the foregoing study the current study researched on student identity development and academic engagement among undergraduate students in Kenya.

In Kenya Ireri (2015) conducted a study with a major objective to establish the relationships among achievement goal orientation, academic identity status, and academic achievement. The 3 x 2 version of achievement goal orientation and identity status theory were used. The research utilized explanatory sequential mixed methods design. The research was done in Mbeere South, Embu County with 390 secondary school students selected for data collection. Academic identity was measured by an adapted scale and an achievement goal orientation questionnaire were used for data collection. Results indicated that only achieved academic identity status correlated significantly and positively with academic achievement. Research in Kenya on student identity development is scarce. Ireri's study used academic identity status, a construct that is informed by identity status theory (Marcia, 1966) and based on adolescent identity development by Erikson (1968). Unlike the reviewed study that used identity status the current study used dimensions of identity development informed by five-dimensional model of identity formation also an extension of Marcia's and Erikson's ideas.

Objective of the Study

To determine the predictive weight of dimensions of identity development on academic engagement among undergraduate students in Kenya.

Theoretical Framework

The Five-dimensional Model of Identity Formation was used. Proponents of identity describe it as a dynamic process with five dimensions; commitment making, ruminative exploration, identification with commitments, exploration in breadth and exploration in depth (Luyckx et al., 2008). These aspects explain two stages in identity development. In the initial round, adolescents make initial commitments by exploring different options during formation. In the second round, adolescents will either begin a new commitment formation round

or identify with the initial commitments after exploring these particular options in depth. Exploration in-breadth involves considering multiple options in the investigation process before arriving at a suitable option for commitment, exploration in-depth refers to the concentrated and thorough investigation of one identity option. Ruminative exploration is characterised by engaging in deep thought leading to sadness and anxiety without being able to decide what you want. Identification with commitments is attained when the person has solved the identity issues by making commitments to goals, beliefs, and values after an extensive exploration of different areas.

Five-dimensional prototype of identity formation has been instrumental, useful and effective in explaining developmental processes. This theory has been used by Mastrotheodoros and Motti-Stefanidi (2017) among Greek students to test the longitudinal scale invariance and the suitability of Dimensions of Identity Development (DIDS) and Persigan et al. 2014 to describe identity processes in Filipino late adolescents and young adults. Although this theory is used mainly to explain the concept of dimensions of identity development it also explains students' mental health (Keles et al., 2020; Pfeifer & Berkman, (2018). If students record low scores in dimensions of identity development then it will lead to low academic engagement.

The current situation in Kenyan universities is characterised by low class attendance, absenteeism, low academic performance, delayed graduation and dropping out of university. Other common problems are unhealthy lifestyles, alcohol and substance abuse and in extreme cases suicide. It was important to explore the links between the dimensions of identity development so as to determine the relationships and predictive weight to academic engagement so as to provide local empirical data that was the missing connection needed to address issues of low academic engagement. The study hypotheses will be formulated based on the five dimensions and the above theory.

III.   Method

Participants and Procedure

This study was predictive correlational by design. The study involved a stratified random sample of 415 (219 male and 195 female) undergraduate students from four purposively selected public universities in Kenya. The participants' average age was 22.48 years (range 20-28; *SD* = 1.32). Participation in the research was voluntary and participants were not compensated for their participation. Authority was obtained for the study from the respective administrative offices (in charge of research) of each university. Dates and times of data collection were agreed upon by researcher, deans of schools and chairs of departments. The researcher got informed consent from the participants before the questionnaires were filled. Data were entered, coded and analyzed using t-test for independent samples, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis. Hypotheses were tested at p = .05.

The study received approval from the National Council for Science Technology and Innovation (License No: NACOSTI/P/21/13035) and Kenyatta University ethics review board (PKU/2404/11538). All participants gave an informed consent for participation in the study.

Materials

Dimensions of Identity Development Scale (DIDS)

The DIDS (Luyckx et al. 2008) is a self-report scale for measuring student identity development. This scale consists of 25 items 5 of which measure exploration in breadth, 5 for exploration in depth, 5 for commitment making, 5 for ruminative exploration and 5 items for measuring identification with commitment. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. Each aspect of DIDS was quantified independently. The expected range of scores was from 5 to 25. Reliability was satisfactory with a Cronbach's Alpha value of α = 0.79.

University Student Engagement Inventory (USEI)

The USEI (Maroco et al. 2016) was used to assess academic engagement. The scale has 15 items that measure the emotional behavioral and cognitive aspects of academic engagement among university students. It was rated on a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1= *never* to 5 = *always*. The scores ranged from 15-75 with higher scores of above 45 indicating high academic engagement. Internal reliability tests yielded estimates of a Cronbach's α = 0.75.

Statistical Analyses

The data were sorted, and screened to check for missing values, errors, and outliers. The reliability of the scales was established using Cronbach's alpha. According to the good practice guideline by Boateng et al. (2018), an alpha of .70 or higher is acceptable.

The correlational and predictive relations between the study variables were established using Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient and regression analysis. The study used predictive correlational research design. This design is used to quantify and explain the magnitude of association between two or more variables

and identify predictive associations between the independent and the dependent variable (Kalan & Luca, 2022). The target population was all undergraduate students in Kenya. The accessible population was undergraduate students in four counties in Kenya. Multistage sampling was used, that is, purposive sampling to select four counties, stratified to get the number of students in each university and random sampling to select students in a university. Questionnaires were filled by 415 (219 male and 195 female). The participants' ages ranged from 20-28 years, and average age of 22.48 years. Data analysis was done using Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient and regression analysis and the results were presented in tables. Consent form for data collection was filled by the participants and permissions sought from the universities.

IV.   Results

This section has four areas: the descriptive statistics of identity development and academic engagement and their domains, hypothesis testing, findings, and the discussion of the findings.

Description of Participants

Student identity development was measured by analysing the respondents' scores in the identity development items in the DIDS scale. Student identity development was measured by a 25 item scale. This scale had 25 items; 5 items for measuring exploration in breadth, 5 for exploration in depth, 5 for commitment making, 5 for ruminative exploration and 5 items for measuring identification with commitment. All items had a 5-point Likert rating scale, rated from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. Each aspect of DIDS was measured independently. The range of scores was be from 5-20 points.

The participants' student identity development scores were analysed to obtain the, percentage above and below 50%, standard deviation, mean, skewness and kurtosis. The findings are summarised in Table 1

Table 1

Description of Participants DIDS Scores

	M	*SD*	*Sk*	*Kur*
DIDS	70.49	13.29	-.39	1.82
AE	39.41	10.31	-.19	-.45

Note. N = 415. Sk = Skewness; Kur = Kurtosis; SD = Standard Deviation

The obtained outcomes in Table 1 indicated that the minimum score was 0 while the maximum score was 100. The mean of the scores was 70.49 (SD = 13.29).

In order to establish the relation between identity development and academic engagement a bivariate correlation analysis using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was done. The findings are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2

Correlation Matrix for Student Identity Development and Academic Engagement

		AE
DIDS	Pearson Correlation	.39**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	415

Note. N = 415; DIDS Dimensions of Identity Development Scale; AE Academic Engagement; **Correlation is Significant at P <.05 (2-tailed)

Table 2 reveals a positive and significant correlation (r (413) = .39, p < .05) between student identity development and academic engagement. The results indicate that when DIDS scores go up, there is an increase in the academic engagement scores. The results imply that pupils who have a high DIDS are likely to have a high academic engagement score. Based on these results, the null hypothesis was therefore accepted. Consequently, regression analysis was undertaken and the outcomes tabulated in Table 3.

Table 3

Description of Student Identity Development Subscales

	+50%	-50%	M	SD	Sk	Kur
DIDS	94.9	5.1	70.49	13.29	-.39	1.82
CM	90.1	9.9	15.39	3.67	-.97	1.74
EB	93.3	6.7	15.47	3.13	-.79	1.49
RE	65.1	34.9	12.06	4.64	-.42	-.12
IC	85.5	14.5	14.59	3.93	-.81	.73

ED	73.0	27.0	12.99	4.16	-.50	.20

Note. N = 415; SD = Standard Deviation; DIDS = Dimensions of Identity Development; CM = Commitment Making; EB = Exploration in Breadth; RE = Ruminative Exploration; IC = Identification with Commitment; ED = Exploration in Depth; Sk = Skewness; Kur = Kurtosis

The highest mean was found in the subscale EB (M = 15.47, SD = 3.13), whereas the lowest mean was found in the subscale RE (M = 12.06, SD = 4.64). The standard deviations were moderately low ranging from (SD = 4.64) for RE to (SD = 3.13) for EB, which showed that the scores were closely spread over a range of values. The participants' DIDS subscales scores were further used to classify to high, moderate, or low identity development. Scores one standard deviation below the mean and one standard deviation above the mean were classified as low and high identity development respectively. Further, scores within one standard deviation close to the mean were considered as moderate identity development.

The findings in Table 3 indicated that most of the respondents (94.9%) were classified as having high levels of identity development, while (5.1%) had below half (10/20) score in the scale. Having analysed and interpreted the students' stress scores, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient bivariate analysis was calculated to determine the interrelations among the commitment making subscales.

Hypothesis Testing
In order to determine the relationship between student identity development and academic engagement, the following null hypothesis was advanced:
H$_{01}$: There is no significant relationship between student identity development and academic engagement.

To verify these hypotheses, data were run in a bivariate correlation analysis using the Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient. The findings showed that student identity development had a positive and statistically significant correlation with academic engagement (r (413) = .67, p < .05). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. These findings failed to support the null hypothesis, and it was adduced that student identity development was significantly related to academic engagement.

Further analysis was done based on the following supplementary hypotheses:
H$_{01.1}$: There is no significant relationship between commitment making and academic engagement.
H$_{01.2}$: There is no significant relationship between exploration in breadth and academic engagement.
H$_{01.3}$: There is no significant relationship between ruminative exploration and academic engagement.
H$_{01.4}$: There is no significant relationship between identification with commitment and academic engagement.
H$_{01.5}$: There is no significant relationship between student exploration in depth and academic engagement.

Based on the five subscales of student identity development bivariate correlation analysis using the Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was used to determine the associations among student identity development subscales and academic engagement. The findings are shown in Table 4

Table 4
Correlation Matrix of Subscales of Student Identity Development and Academic Engagement

	AE	ED	IC	RE	EB	CM
AE	-					
ED	.36**	-				
IC	.41**	.57**	-			
RE	.07	.26**	.02	-		
EB	.23**	.37**	.40**	.28**	-	
CM	.30**	.39**	.60**	.02	.53**	-

Note. N = 415; AE = Academic Engagement; ED = Exploration in Depth; *IC = Identification with Commitment; RE = Ruminative Exploration*; EB = Exploration in Breadth; CM = Commitment Making.

H$_{01.1}$: There is no significant relationship between commitment making and academic engagement.

The hypothesis tests of commitment making (CM) carries a significant relationship on academic engagement (AE). The dependent variable AE was regressed on predicting variable CM to test the hypothesis H$_{05.1}$: CM significantly predicted AE, F (1,413) = 39.41, p < .05, which indicates that the CM can play a significant role in shaping AE (β = .83, p < .05). The results clearly direct the positive affect of the CM.

Moreover the $R^2 = .09$ depicts that the model explains 9% of the variance in AE. Table 5 displays a summary of the results.

Table 5
Description of Regression Weights of DIDS Subscales and Academic Engagement

Hypothesis	Regression Weights	β	R^2	T	F	P	H_0 Accepted
$H_{01.1}$	CM-AE	.11	.09	6.28	39.41	.00	No
$H_{01.2}$	EB-AE	.11	.05	4.72	22.24	.00	No
$H_{01.3}$	RE-AE	.03	.00	1.45	2.09	.15	Yes
$H_{01.4}$	IC-AE	.15	.16	8.99	80.88	.00	No
$H_{01.5}$	ED-AE	.15	.13	7.85	61.63	.00	No

Note. Dependent Variable: Academic Engagement t-scores; Predictors: CM = Commitment Making; EB = Exploration in Breadth; RE = Ruminative Exploration; IC = Identification with Commitment; ED = Exploration in Depth; Standard Error of the Estimate = 2.52

The findings in Table 4 showed that commitment making had a statistically significant positive correlation with academic engagement *(r (413) = .30, p < .05)*.

$H_{01.2}$: There is no significant relationship between exploration in breadth and academic engagement.
　　　　The hypothesis tests if exploration in breadth (EB) carries a significant impact on academic engagement. The dependent variable AE was regressed on predicting variable EB to test the hypothesis $H_{01.2}$: EB significantly predicted AE, $F (1,413) = 22.24$, $p < .05$, which indicates that the EB can play a significant role in shaping AE ($\beta = .75$, p < .05). The results clearly direct the positive affect of the EB. Moreover the $R^2 = .05$ depicts that the model explains 5% of the variance in AE. Table 5 depicts the synopsis of the findings.

The results in Table 4 showed that exploration in breadth had a statistically significant positive correlation with academic engagement *(r (413) = .23, p < .05)* with academic engagement.

$H_{01.3}$: There is no significant relationship between ruminative exploration and academic engagement.
　　　　The hypothesis tests if ruminative exploration (RE) carries a significant impact on academic engagement. The dependent variable AE was regressed on predicting variable RE to test the hypothesis $H_{01.3}$: RE did not significantly predicted AE, $F (1,413) = .07$, $p > .05$, which indicates that the RE played a non significant role in shaping AE ($\beta = .03$, $p > .05$). The results clearly shows no relationship between RE and AE. Moreover the $R^2 = .00$ depicts that the model explains 0% of the variance in AE. Table 5 depicts a recap the findings.

The findings in Table 4 showed that identification with ruminative exploration had a non significant correlation with academic engagement *(r (413) = .07, p > .05)* with academic engagement.

$H_{01.4}$: There is no significant relationship between identification with commitment and academic engagement.
　　　　The hypothesis tests if identification with commitment carries a significant impact on academic engagement. The dependent variable AE was regressed on predicting variable IC to test the hypothesis $H_{01.4}$: IC significantly predicted AE, $F (1,413) = 80.88$, $p < .05$, which indicates that the IC can play a significant role in shaping AE ($\beta = 1.06$, $p < .05$). The results clearly direct the positive affect of the IC. Moreover the $R^2 = .16$ depicts that the model explains 16% of the variance in AE. Table 5 depicts a recap of the results.

The outcomes in Table 4 showed that identification with commitment had a statistically significant positive correlation with academic engagement *(r (413) = .41, p < .05)* with academic engagement.

$H_{01.5}$: There is no significant relationship between exploration in depth and academic engagement.
　　　　The hypothesis tests if exploration in depth (ED) carries a significant impact on academic engagement. The dependent variable AE was regressed on predicting variable ED to test the hypothesis $H0_{1.5}$: ED significantly predicted AE, $F (1,413) = 61.63$, $p < .05$, which indicates that the ED can play a significant role in shaping AE ($\beta = .89$, $p < .05$). The results clearly direct the positive affect of the ED. Moreover the $R^2 = .13$ depicts that the model explains 13% of the variance in AE. Table 5 depicts a recap of the outcomes.

The findings in Table 4 showed that exploration with depth had a statistically significant positive correlation with academic engagement *(r (413) = .36, p < .05)* with academic engagement.

Table 4 shows that RE use does not significantly predict academic engagement. However, EB, CM, ED, IC significantly predicts Academic Engagement. From Table 5, a resultant model of prediction was identified and represented in an equation.

Equation

$\hat{y}$= (17.97 + .11 (EB) (R^2 = .05) p < .05) + (17.97 + .11 (CM) (R^2 = .09) p < .05) + (17.97 + .13 (ED) (R^2 = .13) p < .05) + (17.97 + .16 (IC) (R^2 = .16) p < .05)

Where $\hat{y}$ is the predicted academic engagement score and EB, CM, ED, are the participants' exploration in breadth, commitment making, exploration in depth and identification with commitment score.

It is observed from the equation that the best and significant predictor of academic engagement was identification with commitment (R^2 = .16, p < .05). The results means that for every standard deviation change in identification with commitment, academic engagement scores increased by 0.16 points. The model explains that identification with commitment accounted for 16% variance in academic engagement scores. The next significant predictor was exploration in depth (R^2 = .13, p < .05). The results means that for every standard deviation change in exploration in depth, academic engagement scores increased by 0.13 points. The model explains that exploration in depth accounted for 13% variance in academic engagement scores. This was followed by commitment making (R^2 = .09, p < .05). The results means that for every standard deviation change in commitment making, academic engagement scores increased by 0.09 points. The model explains that commitment making accounted for 9% variance in academic engagement scores. Finally, the least significant predictor was exploration in breadth (R^2 = .05, p < .05). The results means that for every standard deviation change in exploration in breadth, academic engagement scores increased by 0.05 points. The model explains that exploration in breadth accounted for 9% variance in academic engagement scores.

These results imply that apart from exploration in breadth (which accounted for 5% of academic engagement scores), commitment making (which accounted for 9% of academic engagement scores), exploration in depth (which accounted for 13% of academic engagement scores) and identification with commitment score (which accounted for 16% of academic engagement scores), there were other factors affecting academic engagement scores of students.

V.   Discussion

The objective of the study sought to establish the relationship between student identity development and academic engagement among undergraduate students in Kenya. Bivariate correlations indicate a significant positive association between dimensions of identity development and academic engagement. A multiple regression analysis further revealed that Dimensions of identity development significantly predicted Academic Engagement, (F (1,413) = 74.95, p < .05) which indicates that DIDS can play a significant role in shaping AE (β = .51, p < .05). DIDS explained 15% of variance in academic engagement among undergraduate students in Kenya.

Further analysis that tested the subscales of dimensions of identity development showed that exploration in breadth, identification with commitment and exploration in depth had significant correlations on academic engagement. Ruminative exploration had non-significant relationship with academic engagement. The beta coefficients of the subscales of dimensions of identity development revealed that identification with committment had the highest positive significant predictive weight on academic engagement, followed by exploration in depth and finally exploration in breadth. Ruminative exploration had a zero predictive weight on academic engagement. The Five-dimensional Model of Identity Formation was instrumental, useful and effective in explaining developmental processes. If students record low scores in dimensions of identity development then it will lead to low academic engagement.

The study results were consistent with previous studies that report significant correlations between dimensions of identity development and academic engagement in Kenya (Ireri 2015) and China (Li et al. 2019), among others. Though few studies relate the two variables; student identity development and academic engagement, many studies can be a reference for inference to the same results. These include studies by Ireri (2015) who conducted a study with a major objective to establish the relationships among achievement goal orientation, academic identity status, and academic achievement. Results showed that only achieved academic identity status associated significantly and positively with academic achievement.

The current research results also corroborated the outcomes of a study by Li, (2019). The purpose of the study was to determine the correlation between identity and student engagement in engineering undergraduate students. Findings of the study showed that different dimensions of engineering identity had independent impacts on different areas of student engagement.

Similarly, Destin and Williams, (2020) in an investigation on identities and academic persistence posit that students in adolescence and young adults start to explore and get a deep understanding of their identities. The different facets of these developing dynamic identities are a foundation for how students pursue their goals

and navigate the world, including how they tackle academic challenges and opportunities. If students had well developed identity then they would be academically engaged.

VI.   Limitations, Conclusions and Recommendations

It is clear that identity development is a strong positive predictor of academic engagement. Therefore the researcher recommends that the stake holders of education should promote identity development among undergraduate students. This would reflect in increased academic engagement.

Conflicts of Interest Statement
There is no conflict of interest at all.

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Data Availability Statement
The raw data supporting the findings of this study will be made available by the author.

Ethics Statement
Letters of permission were availed by all participating universities. The researcher assured the participants of confidentiality in handling their responses.

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