

Investigating the relation between critical thinking in the dimensions of creativity, cognitive maturity and mental involvement and the religious identity of Educational Sciences and Psychology students of Isfahan University

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relation between critical thinking and dimensions of religious identity of Educational Science and Psychology students of Isfahan University. Since this study addresses a regularly, actually and objectively description of an object, this study is a kind of descriptive study and because it investigates the relation between critical thinking with religious identity among students of Isfahan University, this study is a kind of correlation. The finding indicates that the level of critical thinking of students in the cognitive maturity dimension was higher than average level. And the level of critical thinking of students in the mental involvement is higher than average level and it means that students accept the good leaders who listen to different opinions, also students are looking for opportunities to solve problems and they are interested in many subjects, test results showed that there is not any significant relation between the level of critical thinking and religious identity and cognitive-belief dimension among students in the 0.05 alpha level. While there is a significant and positive relation between the critical thinking skills with experimental-emotional and ritual-religious dimensions of religious identity in the 0.05 alpha levels, it means that by increasing the students' critical thinking skills, the scores of experiential- emotional and ritual-religious identity skills increases.

Keywords: Critical thinking, religious identity, student, Isfahan University.

1. Introduction:

Today, in the globalization space, maintaining the national and religion identity become more important and it is considered an effective participation of religious and human culture among the world. Questions such as Who am I and the origin and end of life and ... which occupy the minds of all young people's; indicates this people thirst for self-cognition and knowing more about history and collective and common destiny. On the other hand, the young people of each country that is the dynamic and motivated body and the best human resources in social environment and they have an effective contribution in ensuring national-cultural life of nations. Obtaining the successful identity in personal, national, religious dimensions in youth raises the hope for the future and it is the base of trust in public institutions, particularly the government institutions and their role in the collective guarantee at the future decades. So the quality and degree of religious and national identity can play an effective role in the development of national and religious culture and their lifestyle. Their main concerns of communities and their educational system are to obtaining the goals and ideas of religious education. In fact the religious identity as a collective identity implies the religiosity level which is consistent with collective "we" or religious community or nation. In fact, the religious identity indicates the sense of belonging of youth to religion and value-basing and commitment to religion and religious community. In this regard, investigating the educational goals of educational systems and the educational charter of younger generation shows that one of the aspirations of the educational system, training a generation that believes in the principles and religious values is conducting the commandments and god principles and having individualities and moral virtues. Based on this, many skills have a relation with religious identity in younger generation and it is expected to be considered. So the organized thinking may be a constructive part in the curriculum content. Due to the stimulus factor, the critical thinking skills acts differently. While it is affected by personal motivation often skillfully manipulates the ideas in order to serve the person or group and when it is affected by the logical and rational mind, it exports the highest intellectual judgment. The quality of critical thinking depends to the depth individual experience in the area of desired questions, intelligence and kind of information. These skills can have important function in all ages especially the youth who seek an "identity" for themselves. By the studying of sample population and also using

the internal and external books, this study intends to investigate the critical thinking dimensions and its relation with religious identity and in this context, these questions will be discussed:

1-Is there a relation between the creativity dimensions of critical thinking and religious identity and its dimensions among the students of educational sciences and psychology in Isfahan University?

2- Is there a relation between maturity cognition dimension of critical thinking and religious identity and its dimensions of educational science and psychology's students of Isfahan University?

3-Is there any relation between mental involvement dimension of critical thinking and religious identity and its dimension among the students of educational science and Psychology in Isfahan University?

2. Methodology

Since the present study addresses a regularly, actually and objectively description, it is descriptive and since this study addresses the relation between critical thinking and religious identity among the students of educational science and psychology of Isfahan university, it is a correlation study. The statistical population of this study consists of all students of educational science and psychology of Isfahan University in the year of 1392-03 and according to the collected data, there are 1600 people. In this study, the sampling method is a kind of simple randomly sampling and based on the volume formula Cochran sampling, about 311 people were chosen as the sample. Information gathering in the first part is library which is done by referring to the relevant internal and external resources. Since in the second part, and since this method is the most common means of information gathering in the questionnaire, so for information gathering, the religious identity questionnaires' and tendency to develop critical thinking was prepared and by referring to the educational science and psychology of Isfahan university, these information were given to them, randomly. After gathering, the questionnaires were analyzed. The characteristic of two questionnaires are as follows:

A) Religious identity questionnaire

Religious identity questionnaire is designed by a story (1388). This questionnaire consists of 3 components of belief-cognitive, experimental-emotional and ritual-values. And in total, it has 35 questions with 5-level Likert spectrum. The belief-cognitive component has 11 questions and experimental-emotional component has 11 questions and ritual-value component has 13 questions.

Reliability and validity of measuring tool:

To determine the reliability of the religious identity questionnaire, the specialist's idea of the relevant subject matter has been applied that the experts confirmed the content validity of questionnaire items. Also to determine the reliability of the tool, throughout an initial study, questionnaire was carried out on 30 persons. The resulting data was calculated by using the Cronbach's alpha and its reliability was about 0.85 (Dastani, 1388). Also, in this study, the validity of this research was calculated by using factor analysis and it was about 0.928 and its reliability was calculated by using Cronbach's alpha and it was about 0.932.

B) Disposition inventory to the critical thinking

Disposition inventory to the critical thinking (Ricketts, 2003) is a self report toll that measured the tendency to critical thinking. Critical thinking is a kind of thinking which raises the probability of obtaining the desired outcome by using the cognitive skills or strategies. This questionnaire consists of 33 items and three subscales: creativity (11 items), maturation cognitive (9 items) and mental involvement (13 items). After Moore, Rudd and Penfield (2003) obtained important and different results about the California Critical Thinking Dispositions Inventory (CCTDI), this scale was designed. Ricketts tried to prepare a shorter; more impressive and more stable disposition inventory to critical thinking is made based on Facione critical thinking scale (1990). The test should identifies a 5-point Likert scale (highly disagree=1 to highly agree=5), and he should identifies the agreement or disagreement of all items. Ricketts (2003) conducted the disposition questionnaire to critical thinking on 60 students in order to normalization. That the reliability coefficients of subscales were reported as follows: creativity subscale=0.75, maturity subscale=0.57 and mental involvement subscale=0.86. in the present study, the validity of the disposition questionnaires' of the critical thinking was calculated by using the factor analysis and it was about 0.792 and by using the Cronbach's alpha reliability, its reliability was 0.804.

Theoretical Framework

Thinking is a way of making meaningful relations between events, concepts, principles and objects and critical thinking is thinking about self- thinking style. So, they introduced the objectively analysis of information and experience as a critical thinking. In the field of critical thinking, the effective factors on behaviors and attitudes are first identified and evaluated. And it is tried to use the thinking skills more than past and in total this type of thinking is utilization of cognitive strategies and skills in order to enhance the efficiency of the desired behavior. So by using the critical thinking, the reform investigating and evaluating of a problem will be possible (Ghasemi Far, 1383/45). So today, "critical thinking" is an important issue in the training process, to collaborating with the improvements of new era of communication and information in today's changing world; good thinking can be an important element in human success in various aspects of human life and this condition changing require new outcomes such as critical thinking based on education. The main purpose of education should be encouraging people to thinking. Finding right solution is the basis of learning the thinking method and it should be taught to learners. One of the critical thinking strategies (Jordan, 2007) is have liberal attitudes, so a person can be critically think about important issues, and he cannot believe everything that he reads and he can collaborating with others priorities, values. We can consider three approaches for the thought training. The direct teaching of thinking skills: for the direct training, thought should be considered as a skill in curriculum planning, and a special place should be considered for it, so it can regain its rightful place as a sovereign subject.

Education for thinking: this approach considers thought as an essential part of education and it emphasizes that thinking activities should be noted as a part of daily training in all subjects. And thinking skills is necessary to success of any educational activity.

Training in the field of thinking: in this approach, the students are asked to think about their thinking and met cognitive skills. (ShabaniVorki, 1374). Since the real fruit of education should be a thought process which comes from a course study, not from gathering information and this issue is so important that teaching is not only providing information to students, but its purpose is helping to student, so he can generalizes information and makes them meaningful; Nals believes in order to making social development, educators should re-think about their role. And they should concentrate their skills on activities training and methods which young people need them to do independent research (Myers, 1374). Thus, considering the factor that creates thinking and its dimensions in education planning is one of the policies in education system. In particular categories, these factors can be divided into these dimensions:

Knowledge: if person wants to think about something which he has no understanding or knowledge about it, he cannot analyzes the subject.

Manners: based on this factor, person will reach to this mood to consider problem with a reasonable doubt and act about each subject without any particular issues and trends.

Authority: thinker must be strong because the critical thinkers are disputant and noisy peoples, they actually bring the social car everywhere and they can difficultly walk between the probing lines and risking. (Shabani, 1382:89). Due to these leading factors, it is clear that critical spirit is not separable from thinking and an important part of education is thinking. With this introduction, the place of critical tending in thinking is so obvious and it forms the critical thinking.

Identity means the Divine, Universe and what led to identifying the person (Moién, 1387: 5228). And also it is noted to the meaning of an object or a person who have the substance characters. The identity means everything caused to person identifying (Amid, 1389: 1265). So the identity means all characteristics and behavioral patterns and acquired identifiers that distinguish the person, people, nation from other peoples, nations and civilizations. From the beginning of debate, five approaches can be described in this trend (Kroger, 2000: 15). These five approaches are identified as follows:

A-Historical Approach:

This approach focuses on the changing of historical conditions that influences on identity formation; for example, changes in Western societies over the past decades have led to change the type of employment and attitude on many issues. Industrial development and the incremental trend of science and technology growing and phenomenon such as information bursting and expanding the internet networks change the process of identity formation. It is obvious that other countries, including the third world countries, in addition to their own

changes, they influenced from the technology expanding in developed countries. In this perspective, the role of social structures in identity formation is so important. This view can be criticized due to ignoring or less important the individual differences in identification process (Kroger, 2000).

B-Stage-Structural approach:

This approach focuses of the changes of internal growth structures which gives meaning to life experience. In this view, the internal structure of individual psychology considers a sequential and predictable pattern of growth. A change which is caused from childhood to adulthood in humans, merely it is not mean addition of new information to prior knowledge, but its meaning constructs for different phenomena are different; in other words, understanding and interpreting life experiences may vary over time for him. The experts in this field include Jane Loevinger (1996), Robert Kegan (1994), Robert Selman (1980), Sharon Parks (1986) and James Fuller (1981). There is a criticism on this approach and it is considering pale effect of group on the process of identity development.

C- Sociocultural Approach to identity:

In this approach, it is emphasized to the role of community in providing conditions and essential variables for identity formation. Peoples such as Kuta (1996) and Gorgen know the identity as the result of cultural possibilities and limitations. Mead is one the experts who believe that persons describe themselves according to the other's feedback. According to Kuta, many sociologists believe that there is no identity without community (Kroger, 2000).

D- Psychosocial approach to identity

In this approach, it is tried to make a unity between the role of community and psychological internal changes. In other words, if we put the social-cultural approach in a one side of spectrum and put the structural approach in the other side, it can be said that psychosocial approach placed in the middle of these two factors. Because it considers both internal factors and social factors and give value to social factors. In this view, society has different roles in human transition from adolescence to adulthood and aging stage. In addition the biological aspects of individual, the psychological defense and cognitive processes are matured in this section. So the person's feeling about his identity is restructured. Meanwhile, according to Ericsson, it is essential that there is a stable sense over time and this factor is essential for identity development. (Kroger, 2000).

F. Narrative approach to identity:

Doran (1983) has introduced two modern and postmodern approaches in the field of identity conceptualizing and theorizing. Modern approach defines identity with natural, psychological or social factors and it includes theories in two fields of sociology and psychology. Postmodern approach considers identity formation and definition away from the interface of environmental, psychological and social factors and mainly it is influenced by literature, linguistics and semantics. This approach is known as a "discursive theory". The source of postmodern approach is investigating the story (narrative). Story obtains its today characteristics from the long traditions, storytelling, oral history, personal memories and a range of literary genres (including historical writings, stories and reviews of scientific changing in time intervals). In the story approach, the conversation of the person about his/her life is important and according to the process of story formation, meaning making and phenomena are studied. According to Adams (1998), we tell stories about our life, and these stories make our identity and we write the story the same way we live. In this perspective, identity is considered as a general factor. When a person tells the story of his life, according to the relation and unity which can be seen in different parts, it can be found that to what extent a person achieves a coherent identity (Doran, 1983: 22-65). An important point in this description is the coherence and continuity in time. In this approach, not only the past is considered but also we consider future. The basic question "who am I?" is not just about the past; therefore, the person is asked to state the life plan for future and it is studied in story approach as identity, religious identity. From the story perspective, a person who has religious identity, his/her life story is about thinking, activities and experiences. And he defines the beyond material points. When a person tells his life story, if he uses beyond facts to create continuity in story, it can be say that he has a religious-story identity. According to Ricoeur, identity formation is a hermeneutic process. Thus, the story of one's life can be interpreted by using the popular stories in his/ her culture. In the formation of religious identity, common religious stories are effective. A person enters the religious stories in his religious-private life and he/she considers that religious customs and stories are effective in his/her current life. The religious ability to create a unit philosophy in life is the subject of person and his

religious book from Alport and it is one of the original books in psychology religion. According to Alport, religion and religion feeling can bring an integrity sense in human. Religious feeling create a part of human's personality and it can lead the life core into an infinite concept (Emmons, 1999: 118). There are unity and coordination in human's character and its dimensions and we consider the identity concept from a story perspective and also it is in Erikson theory that we consider it on the next sections. And we can find these concepts in religious text as "essence of balance in the different aspects of human existence". Motahari noted in the book titled perfect man that human excellence is in his balance. Human moves toward perfection and he should not tend toward a particular talent and he should not leave other talents. It means that the development of all human's talent should be matched to each other. Therefore, a perfect person is a person that all of his talents are coordinated grown (Motahari, 1374, P. 41). And peoples who still do not reach to that level, it is necessary for them to observe harmony and balance in their talents growing to create consistency and conformance in various aspects of their personalities.

Religious Identity

In facing with related debates to identity especially in story approach, there are basic questions which are related to life philosophy. Questions such as: Who am I? Where did I come from? What I want to do? Where should I go? And etc. his question rooted in human nature and it leads from his creation and existence essence. It is a fact that human is created naturally God-seeking and he had tendency to God. In other words, from the inherent teaching which interprets to nature are divided into three dimensions knowledge, intent (the religious sense) and competence. There are sense to Deism and God-seeking and God nearness ability that are deposited in human body. As God in Quran says to Prophet (SAW): "Remind them, for thou art but a remembrance," (Al Ghashie, verse 21). This verse clearly states that human has an identity for God-seeking and any human's identity is mixed with his faith and belief in God. Of course, this potential manner and needs to flourish and actuality, as there are requirements between theology and self-seeking. Also, there is requirement between self-forgetting and God-forgetting and this shows the innate knowledge and knowledge of God's presence. In other words, religious identity is rooted in human nature and it can have positive results by developing and flourishing in the social and individual field; such as commitment and responsibility sense in facing with values and beliefs and directing the person and community and these factors have positive feedback and it has effectiveness in different personal, social, cultural, economic and political transparency fields (religious identity as a self-building and human-building school). Religious identity for the younger generation means to strengthen the hope and joy spirit for future; also, religious identity can direct the individual and community life and draw for him a purposeful and God-oriented life, not a machine and human-oriented life. On the other hand, the history says this fact that religion and religious identity always constructed civilization (Huntington, 1378:71). If religious identity strengthens it can cause social acceptance, because modifying the relation with God leads to correct relation with others and saves him from nihilism and purposeless; it means that the meaningful life and individual and community purposeful life is formed in the light of faith in God and his religion, because this person knows himself, responsible and he should respect to rights of Allah, Rights of spirit and rights of human. And we respect to legal and ethical values and make them as norms. So, the religious identity can do the normalization process and stabilize the norms within a society. Disruption in religious identity can bring the individual as offenders and opposition. Thus, the occurrence of the religious identity crisis, person will be a purposeless and apathy person and in this situation, personal and social problems appears on after another. The relation between human and religion and its proportion is explainable in terms of religious identity. Samuel Huntington believes that religion has convincing answers for those who are faced with such questions. Religious identity is an innate need and tendency to love and worship. It means that person, independent of any learning process fells tendency to worship and serve God. And its effects are obvious in the religious behavior (Sharafi, 1379:25). According to some psychologists, religious identity is a sense of commitment and responsibility towards the school's values and beliefs. Some scholars consider commitment as the cornerstone for this capability and according to this empowerment; religious identity is a reason to benefit from life. Samuel Huntington writes that religion becomes modern in new world and directs it. Also, Ronald Dor believes that valuing traditional religion is a demand which respect to the culture of dominant nation. And often simultaneously, ruling class is in conflict with nations that has adapted its values and lifestyle with its dominant culture. (Ghasami, 1388: 51). According to what was said, it can be said that religious identity as the most important determinant dimension. Also, religious identity can be considered as one of the most important identities that our behavior and ideas are formed based on it. So we can consider a desired individual, culture, national identity to establish this identity in life. And certainly there is something that is dedicated to identity that death, heaven and hell cannot separate them from human. So, Quran reminds three basic elements "Faith, ethics, and acts" and it is one constructive elements of the human identity. And peoples who possess the key elements, it means that one who is faithful and implement morality in his lives. And he can act based on faith and moral, in the culture of Quran, Man is able to find his identity.

3. Study the relation between the dimensions of critical thinking and religious identity

Study of the first question in research

"Is there a relation between the creativity dimension of critical thinking and religious identity and its dimension between the students of education and psychology, Isfahan university?" to answer the above question, the Pearson correlation test was used. The results of test showed that: there is a relation between the creativity dimension of critical thinking with the overall religious identity and its experimental-emotional and ritual between students of Faculty of education and Psychology, university of Isfahan in alpha level 0.05 as a significant and positive correlation. So by increasing the creativity dimension in critical thinking of students, experiential- emotional scale scores and the scores of religious identity and ritual value also increases. However, a significant relation was not observed between the scores of creativity dimension of critical thinking and conviction-religious dimension of religious identity among students of Science faculty of Psychology of psychology university of Isfahan. (Table 1).

Table 1: the correlation coefficient test between the creative dimension of critical thinking and religious identity and its dimensions

variables	Correlation coefficient	Significant level
Creativity dimension of critical thinking with religious identity	0.130	0.036*
Creativity dimension of critical thinking with cognitive-faith dimension	0.019	0.755
Creativity dimension of critical thinking with feeling-experience dimension	0.511	0.0001**
Creativity dimension of critical thinking with ritual-value dimension	0.157	0.008**

*Significant at the level of 5%

** Significant at the level of 1%

Study of the second question of research

"is there a relation between maturation cognitive of critical thinking with religious identity and its dimensions at the students of Science faculty of Psychology of University Isfahan?" to answer this question, the Pearson correlation test was used, test results showed that there is a negative and significant relation at the 0,05 alpha level between maturation cognition of critical thinking with the religious identity and faith-cognitive dimensions and experimental-values dimensions between the students of Faculty of education and psychology in Isfahan university. In other words, there is a relation between the maturity cognitive of critical thinking and faith-cognitive and experimental-value of religious identity and total maturity cognition of critical thinking of students and their religious identity an inverse relation. But between the scores of maturity cognition of critical thinking and their ritual-value dimension of religious identity, a significant relation was not observed at the alpha level 0.05. (Table 2).

Table 2: the correlation coefficients test between the maturity cognitive of critical thinking with religious identity and its dimensions

Variables	Correlation coefficient	Significant level
Maturation cognitive dimension of critical thinking with religious identity.	-0.154	0.010*
Maturation cognitive dimension of critical thinking with faith-cognitive dimension	-0.184	0.002**
Maturation cognitive dimension of critical thinking with empirical-emotional dimension	-0.250	0.0001**
Maturation cognitive dimension of critical thinking with ritual-value dimension	-0.086	0.138

*significant at the level of 5%

**significant at the level of 1%

Investigating third question of research

"is there a relation between mind involvement of critical thinking with religious identity and its dimensions in students of faculty of education and Psychology of Isfahan university?" . To answer the desired question, the Pearson correlation test was used, the results showed: there is a significant and positive relation on the 0.05 alpha level between the mental involvement of critical thinking with religious identity and experimental-emotional dimensions and ritual-value dimensions in the science faculty of psychology of Isfahan university. Thus, in the case of increase the students' scores in the mental involvement dimension of critical thinking, their scores on the experimental-emotional dimensions and ritual-value dimensions of religious identity, and overall increase in religious identity. However, there was no significant relation with alpha level 0.05 between the scores of mental involvement of critical thinking with the faith-cognitive dimension of religious identity of students. (Table 3).

Table 3: correlation coefficient test between the mental involvement dimension of critical thinking with religious identity and its dimensions

Variables	Correlation coefficient	Significant level
Mental involvement dimension of critical thinking with religious identity	0.129	0.033*
Mental involvement dimension of critical thinking with faith-cognitive dimension	0.007	0.909
Mental involvement dimension of critical thinking with experimental-emotional dimension	0.736	0.0001**
Mental involvement dimension of critical thinking with ritual-value dimension	0.171	0.003**

*significant at the level of 5%

**significant at the level of 1%

4. Conclusion

The first question of this research considers this issue that "is there a relation between the creative dimension of critical thinking with religious identity and its dimensions among the students in the faculty of education and psychology in Isfahan University?" To answer this question, the Pearson correlation test was used. The results of this test showed that there is a positive and significance relation between the creativity dimension of critical

thinking with religious identity and the dimensions of experimental-emotional and ritual-value between students at the 0.05 alpha levels. Thus, by increasing the creativity dimension of student's critical thinking, the scores of religious identity and experimental-emotional and ritual-value also increases. It can be said that if students be creative, they can to place in higher level of the emotional-experimental of religious identity it means that if the creativity of students be higher, they have more tendency to do a good work. And they will be faithful and they feel comfort with prying also, it increases the people's creativity and respect to rituals and religious values and it causes that students only worship God and seek his help and be faithful to his covenant and... however, there was not a significant relation between creativity dimension of critical thinking and faith-cognitive dimension of religious identity and so it is necessary to do more research to show the reasons of such results. The second question is that "is there a relation between the maturate cognitive of critical thinking with religious identity and its dimension on students of faculty and psychology of Isfahan university?" to answer this question, the Pearson correlation test was used. The results showed that there is a negative and significant relation with alpha level of 0.05 between the maturate cognition of critical thinking with the religious identity and its faith-cognition and experimental-value. Also the religious identity is one of the important identities that many behaviors can be formed based on it. In fact, according to the results of this question, whatever students are in a higher level in terms of maturate cognition, their religious identity decreases. Therefore, there was not a significant relation between the maturate cognition of critical thinking with the dimensions of ritual-value of their religious identity. Also, this result was not expected and for its acceptance we should be aware and other factors such as student abuse and etc. and they may effective on results and by more and more research in this area and by repeating it in other communities, we can increase the reliability and genera ability. The third question studies this question that "is there any mental involvement of critical thinking with religious identity and its dimension on the students of faculty of education and psychology, Isfahan university?" to answer this question, the Pearson correlation test was used. The results showed that there is a relation between the mental involvement of critical thinking with religious identity and emotional-experimental and ritual-value dimensions among students in the alpha level 0.05. Thus, in the case of increase the score in the mental involvement of critical thinking skill, their scores on experimental-emotional and ritual-value dimensions of religious identity and overall, the religious identity will be increase, in fact, we can say that if students involve their mind to issues and in all cases listen to different ideas and they seek opportunities to solve the problems and show more interest to different subjects and they can be in high level in the emotional-experimental dimension of religious identity and if the mental involvement of students is so many and it causes that when students do a work willingly, they feel comfort with any religious worship...and also it increases the mental involvement of students, respect to ritual and religious values and it causes that they only worship God and seek his help and be faithful to his covenant and however there was not any significant relation between mental involvement of critical thinking and the faith-cognition dimension of religious identity and so again it is necessary to study more in this area and as mentioned before it was due to this issue that in the faith-cognitive dimension of religious identity if it has critical thinking less important than other dimensions of religious identity (experimental-emotional, ritual-value) and surrounding people play a pervasive role and they strengthen the student's religious identity of faith-cognitive dimension.

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