

## DEVELOPMENTAL PRECURSORS OF IDENTITY STYLES FORMATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON YOUNG ADULTS' ADJUSTMENT IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*Transition and adjustment to university presents young adults with considerable academic, social and emotional challenges owing to their unstable sense of identity, linked to the influences interacting variables within their social environment. In the light of this, the study investigated developmental precursors of identity styles formation and its implications on young adults' adjustment in the University of Lagos, Nigeria. The study adopted mixed method explorative sequential design. The population of the study comprised of all undergraduates in the University of Lagos. Random and purposeful sampling procedure was used respectively to select 200 undergraduates and four (4) counselors involved for this study. Structured questionnaire and KII guide were research instruments used for data collection. The structured questionnaire recorded:  $r=0.888, 0.761, 0.937, 0.886$  and  $0.774$  for developmental precursors using Crombach Alpha technique. The KII was analysed using thematic analysis. The study revealed that developmental precursors reliably predicted identity styles formation of the young adults which had profound effects on their adjustment. The study concludes that diminishing family values, structures and social relationships resulted in the use of maladaptive coping identity styles making it difficult for students' adjustment in the university. It was therefore recommended that parents must play an active role as reflective agents in their children's development as major part of which is identity formation. Parents need to deliberately reassess their parental roles and choose the environment for their children carefully that will provide them with a vision of their aspirations will in turn have an impact on their adjustment in the university.*

**Keywords:** Developmental precursors, Identity styles, Formation, Undergraduates

### **Introduction**

Adjusting successfully to the university is a challenging experience that involves significant life changes and adaptation to a variety of demands. According to Paechter, Carrie, Alex, & Anna (2021), the degree to which one is able to successfully adjust to university life occurs in the context of a person's background characteristics, personal variables, interactions with the immediate environments and the more distant environments, all of which constitute the developmental precursors of identity styles, and it includes parental care, parental level of income, 'family-intact', peer group influence,

university support services and cultural practices. Hence, students' university experiences and adjustments may vary significantly due to differences in the impact of these levels which may affect their well-being, academic performance and whether they persist with their course of study.

The concept of identity styles relates to the approaches and strategies young adults employ for searching, processing, assessing and using information related to themselves in the exploration process before making identity-related decisions. In this study, the construct 'identity styles' is captured in terms of active seeking of information, self-reflections, informative orientations, constantly learning new things, sceptical thinking, openness to new information, reflective awareness, reflective consciousness and flexibility. These identity styles according to Abassi (2016), results from the interactional, relational processes that occur within young adults home and immediate environmental contexts of development that provides beliefs, values and norms for behavior which ultimately determines the style(s) adopted. Hence, this study uses identity styles as the structure that conceptually precedes and shapes the formation of identity.

Thus, the developmental precursors of young adults are important variable to consider owing to their possible effects in determining the type of identity styles young adult adopt as a basis for forming their identity as well as determining their adjustment to the university. This has become necessary in view of the deteriorating social environment of today where exposure to certain chaotic and disruptive home environment characterised by lack of parental care, absence of warmth, love and acceptance and negative peer group relations, often impacts negatively the extent to which young adults are successful in finding their own uniqueness in life, which invariably affect their adjustment in the university.

The concern of this study is that the norms guiding transition to young adulthood have weakened considerably, thus producing greater variability and vulnerability in their pathways to development. This has a disturbing consequence for the society as large numbers of these young adults engage in self-destructive behaviours (Unaogu, Onu, Itেকে, Tukur, & Oka, 2017). As social and cultural conditions of the environments continues to experience rapid changes, the legitimacy of institutional values are being questioned, hence the need to resolve identity crises and achieve sense of identity has come to be seen as a necessary prerequisite for young adults' successful adjustment to the university (Adegoke, 2015).

However, Adeyeye (2018) noted that today's environmental contexts which forms the main source from which individuals build the core of their value systems, is becoming less structured making it difficult for young adults to adopt appropriate identity styles needed to explore options before making commitments. Furthermore, Branje (2022), affirmed that the foundation of the family as a social institution are being challenged leading to significant distortions in family functioning, particularly in their upbringing role with prevalent rise in number of broken homes, a developmental risk factor in young adults' quest to form a stable sense of identity. Consequently, the struggle to commit to life choices that define young adults' sense of identity has become a daunting task.

As noted by Anderson, & Koc (2020), unlike centuries past, when one's identity was largely developed within a context of home and environmental factors embedded in shared rich cultural values that were essential to young adults' well-being and development, today's young adults are increasingly becoming alienated from mainstream social institutions of family, school, community and cultural environments that have traditionally provided them with value references and normative environmental support for identity formation. Thus, the struggle for identity is therefore deepened by the inevitability that all young adults will have to deal with in terms of complicated home contexts and environmental factors such as negative peer group influence, rise in cultism and absence of norms and breakdown in moral and cultural values which have a profound impact on their quest to form identity and adjust to university settings (Fadjukoff, Pulkkinen, & Kokko, 2016).

The young adults are thus facing an expanding crisis in identity with many of them displaying worsening outcomes of inflexibility, rigidity, inability to actively seek for relevant identity-related information, owing to the breakdown in the ties between the home and environmental contexts. Thus, due to lack of parental care, widening income inequality, disruptive family structures, prevalence of negative peer group influence and absence of sound cultural practices, all of which negatively impact on their ability to commit to a career path, life's goals or personal philosophy that put them at risk for a host of problems throughout life.

As Denney (2022) indicated, identity has a central role in research on education, since under certain conditions it may influence school choice, classroom behaviors, career performance, and the disposition of young adults towards adjustment in university. Since it is expressed in commitments, the exploration process that preceded these decisions is also critical to identity formation (Berzonsky, 2016). Subsequently, the current research study focuses on the role that developmental

precursors may play in explaining variations and different identity styles young adults may undertake to explore their identity beliefs before commitments are made, which are vital to adjustment to university.

Despite much research work and literature on the nature of different identity styles, detailed research on the specifics of how the use of each style can relate to individuals' interpersonal outcomes is lacking. This research intends to fill this gap by focusing on the influence of developmental precursors of identity styles such as parental care, level of income, 'family-intact', peer relation, university support services and cultural practice; which are the independent variables of the study; and determine how these interactive influences predict the styles young adults adopts in forming identity, a significant prerequisite to adjusting to the university. The increasing proportion of many young adult undergraduates with unstable sense of identity has continued to generate a lot of worry and concern. Difficulties in defining one's identity has been linked to the use of maladaptive coping strategies, which are the outcomes of the complexity of influences and interactional relationships of young adults' developmental precursors such as a dysfunctional home and disruptive social environment. These deficiencies show themselves especially in young adults' inability to adjust to the university due to their involvement in anti-social behavior, lack of self-discipline, inability to provide self-direction, and subsequent adjustment difficulties in the university.

Failure to commit to identity goals can be detrimental to various aspects of university life, resulting in poor academic performance, often leading to a heightened confusion, prolonged uncertainty that interfere with the normal adaptive functioning which overwhelms students' capacity to adapt and adjust, thus leading to high rates of dropouts. This is deeply worrisome as the consequences of having large numbers of university dropouts because of adjustment issues, has negative implications on economic growth of a nation, as both individual potentials and social capital are lost, leaving affected students vulnerable to psychological trauma and distresses with serious implications for learning outcomes.

In light of the widespread repercussions of high rates of student dropout as a result of unresolved identity crisis, the current research study investigates the effects of developmental precursors of young adults on their identity styles and its implications on their adjustment. The specific objectives of this study are to ascertain the influence of parental activities on young adults' ability to actively seek for new information vital to their adjustment in the university; Examine the ways in which parents' income level predicts young adults' constant learning of new skills which

aids young adults' adjustment to the university; Assess the extent to which 'intact-family' develops young adults' sceptical thinking and its implications for adjustment in the university and to determine how peer group relations influence reflective awareness among young adults and how these factors affect adjustment of young adults in the university. The study adopted mixed method of explorative sequential which combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques. This design was deemed appropriate for this study because the design is an analytical survey research which focused on the understanding of cause-effect relationships between and among the understudy variables. The strength of this approach enabled the researcher to explore and explain the reason the developmental precursors of young adults predict young adults' identity styles, which in turn determine the adjustment of young adult undergraduates in the university of Lagos, Nigeria. The population of the study consists of two groups. First, all undergraduates in the University of Lagos, within the age bracket of 15-24 years. The population also included all the counsellors in the counseling unit of the University. Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for this study. The procedure is divided into 2 stages. Stage 1-Selection of counsellors in the University. Four counsellors were selected from the counseling unit through purposeful random sampling technique. Stage 2-Selection of undergraduate students in the universities. The selection of undergraduate students was based on students who must have completed first session during 2020/2021 academic session and currently in year 2; and year one students who have finished their first semester in the current academic session of 2021/2022 academic session within the age range of 15-24 years. The NUC data on university undergraduate enrollment in 2019-2020 was used. This data allowed the researcher to use the total number of undergraduate students enrolled in the selected universities.

This was conducted for the four counselors. This tool provided information about the phenomenon under study. The Key Informant Interview was used because it provided a means of collecting information from those directly in contact with the students in the Universities, mostly in the students' Support Services, counseling units, and student affairs office. The reliability is concerned with the consistency with which the instrument measures what it is designed to measure. The reliability of the research instrument (questionnaire) was determined during pilot study using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient technique. In order to assess the influence of developmental precursors on the identity style formation of young adults, data were collected using the following Research instruments titled "Developmental Precursors of Young Adult Identity Style Scale (DPYAISS) and it was divided

into 4 sections (A-D) using modified 4 point Likert scale. The four (4) sections are as follows: Section A: Consists of the bio-data information of the respondents such as University of study, gender, age, level of study, and department. Section B: Deals with items designed to capture the developmental precursors as predictors of young adult of identity formation styles. Section C: In the third part, the researcher adapted and modified Berzonsky's identity style Inventory (ISI) to measure Young Adults identity styles formation. Section D: This last section consists of items that measure the commitment level of the respondents. The ISL was important as it showed respondents classification with regard to the identity style adopted in the process of forming identity. In addition, the scale provided a better cronbach Alpha for the test of reliability (Cresswell, 2012).

The reliability tests of the instruments of Home, Environment and Young Adults Identity Style Scale (HEYAISS) is obtained by using Cronbach's Alpha. The results indicate that all the Cronbach's alpha values are  $> 0.70$  threshold value, respectively. The validation of the reliability results of the instruments is carried out using analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test if there is significance variation on how the respondents were scored in the instruments. The results suggest that there is no variation on the scoring of respondents at F-values, since ( $p < 0.05$ ) respectively. The results are supported by the Coefficient of Variation (CV) values which are  $< 0.50$  threshold value respectively; implying strong homogeneity on how the respondents were scored. Hence, there is an internal consistency of the answers provided by the respondents; therefore do not violate the assumption of reliability in each instrument. A pilot study of 40 university undergraduate students (age 18–24) was conducted to pilot test the questionnaire and determine the reliability of the instrument using students from Lagos State University. This was done to test the reliability of the instruments as well as to identify where necessary some potential methodological and logistic problems that could threaten the internal and external validity of the main study. It also helped the researcher to check the suitability of the statistical tools and procedures to be employed in the main study to ensure their adequacy for the study. The test-retest method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instruments. The results were collated using Cronbach Alpha to test the reliability coefficient at 0.05 level of significance. The analysis was done with the aid of Statistical Package for Service Solutions (SPSS).

## Results

**H0 1:** Parental activities will not significantly predict young adults' ability to actively seek for new information relevant to their adjustment in the university.

Simple Regression Analysis effect of Parental activities on young adults' ability to actively seek for new information.

| Group                                | Model          | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig. |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                                      |                | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| Intact, high income family with care | (Constant)     | 2.541                       | .223       |                           | 11.416 | .000 |
|                                      | Identity style | .516                        | .218       | .513                      | 2.246* | .030 |
| Non-intact, low level devoid of care | (Constant)     | .589                        | .700       |                           | .842   | .420 |
|                                      | Identity style | .695                        | .268       | .635                      | 2.598* | .027 |

Dependent Variable: identity style formation (ability to actively seek information)

Intact, high income & care: Model Summary: adjusted  $R^2 = 0.395$  (Goodness-of-fit Index)  
ANOVA: F-value = 5.121 (p-value = 0.030)

Non-intact, low income without care: Model Summary: adjusted  $R^2 = 0.403$  (Goodness-of-fit Index)  
ANOVA: F-value = 6.750 (p-value = 0.027)

The model result revealed goodness of fit indexes of  $R^2 = 0.395$  (39.5%) and 0.403 (40.3%), indicating model fit is significant at F-value = 5.121 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and F-value = 6.750 ( $p < 0.05$ ) significant level for both groups. Hence the model is acceptable for further analysis. To determine the effect of parental care on identity style formation, simple regression analysis method is used. Identity formation style represents the dependent variable while parental care represents the independent variable. The result of the analysis revealed that the level of influence of parental care is significant for both intact, high level and caring home and non-intact, low level devoid of care home students at  $t = 2.246$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) and  $t = 2.598$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). Hence, the hypothesis is rejected at 95% confidence interval since  $p = 0.030 < 0.05$  and  $p = 0.027 < 0.05$  significance levels respectively; therefore, parental care will significantly directly influence identity style students utilized in identity formation outcomes which will in turn determine the level of adjustment of undergraduate students in the university of Lagos, Nigeria.

**H0 2:** Parent's income level will not significantly predict young adults' constantly learning new skills and determine their adjustment at the university.

Simple Regression Analysis effect of parent's level of income on identity style formation Outcomes (constantly learning new skill) to adjustment in the university.

| Group                              | Model          | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig. |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                                    |                | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| Families with high level of income | (Constant)     | 2.170                       | .101       |                           | 21.563 | .000 |
|                                    | Skill learning | .157                        | .034       | .669                      | 4.593* | .000 |
| Families with low level of income  | (Constant)     | 2.192                       | .096       |                           | 22.744 | .000 |
|                                    | Skill learning | .101                        | .042       | .607                      | 2.417* | .036 |

Dependent Variable: identity formation

Homes with high level income : Model Summary: adjusted  $R^2 = 0.448$  (Goodness-of-fit Index)  
ANOVA: F-value = 21.095 (p-value = 0.000)

Homes with low level income: Model Summary: adjusted  $R^2 = 0.369$  (Goodness-of-fit Index)  
ANOVA: F-value = 5.842 (p-value = 0.036)

The model result revealed goodness of fit indexes of  $R^2 = 0.448$  (44.8%) and 0.369 (36.9%), indicating model fit is significant at F-value = 21.095 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and F-value = 5.842 ( $p < 0.05$ ) significant level for both groups. Hence, the model is acceptable for further analysis. To determine the effect of parent’s level of income on identity style formation, simple regression analysis method is used. Identity style formation represents the dependent variable while parental level of income represents the independent variable. The result of the analysis revealed that the level of influence of parent’s income level is significant for both groups at  $t = 4.593$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) and  $t = 2.417$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). Hence, the hypothesis is rejected at 95% confidence interval since  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$  and  $p = 0.036 < 0.05$  significance levels respectively; therefore, parent’s level of income will significantly directly influence identity style of students utilised in identity formation outcomes as well as determine adjustment of undergraduate students in University of Lagos, Nigeria.

**H03:** ‘Family intact’ will not significantly predict young adults’ sceptical thinking and adjustment in the university.

Simple Regression Analysis effect of ‘intact family’ on identity styles utilized for identity formation Outcomes



| Group            | Model               | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig. |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                  |                     | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| intact Homes     | (Constant)          | 2.793                       | .352       |                           | 7.939  | .000 |
|                  | Sceptical thinkingt | .069                        | .138       | .198                      | 2.500* | .021 |
| Non-intact Homes | (Constant)          | 3.351                       | .632       |                           | 5.302  | .000 |
|                  | Sceptical thinking  | .355                        | .236       | .529                      | 3.501* | .016 |

Dependent Variable: identity style formation (skeptical thinking)

Protective Homes: Model Summary: adjusted  $R^2 = 0.310$  (Goodness-of-fit Index)  
ANOVA: F-value = 4.250 (p-value = 0.021)

Risk Homes: Model Summary: adjusted  $R^2 = 0.484$  (Goodness-of-fit Index)  
ANOVA: F-value = 6.253 (p-value = 0.016)

The model result revealed goodness of fit indexes of  $R^2 = 0.310$  (31.0%) and 0.484 (48.4%), indicating model fit is significant at F-value = 4.250 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and F-value = 6.253 ( $p < 0.05$ ) significant level for both groups. Hence, the model is acceptable for further analysis. To determine the effect of 'intact family on identity styles formation students utilised in identity formation, simple regression analysis method is used. Identity formation adjustment represents the dependent variable while 'intact family' represents the independent variable. The result of the analysis revealed that the level of influence of 'intact family' is significant for both intact and non-intact homes at  $t = 2.500$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) and  $t = 3.501$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). Hence, the hypothesis is rejected at 95% confidence interval since  $p = 0.021 < 0.05$  and  $p = 0.016 < 0.05$  significance levels respectively; therefore, 'family-intact' will significantly directly influence identity styles (skeptical thinking) utilised in the identity formation outcomes and thus predict their adjustment of undergraduate students in University of Lagos, Nigeria.

**H0 4:** Association with peers will not significantly predict young adults' reflective consciousness and flexibility which are significant in university adjustment.

Multiple Regression Analysis effect association with positive peer relations on identity style formation (reflective onsciousness and flexibility)

| Group                             | Model         | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig. |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                                   |               | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| Intact family, high income & care | (Constant)    | .830                        | 1.144      |                           | .725   | .475 |
|                                   | Parental care | .102                        | .201       | .073                      | .508   | .616 |
|                                   | Income level  | .562                        | .124       | .734                      | 4.525* | .000 |
|                                   | Intact        | .014                        | .380       | .006                      | .037   | .970 |
| Non-intact, low income, no care   | (Constant)    | 2.299                       | 3.142      |                           | .732   | .485 |
|                                   | Self-Esteem   | .680                        | .847       | .233                      | .803   | .445 |
|                                   | Self-Efficacy | .134                        | .124       | .303                      | 1.085  | .310 |
|                                   | Self-Concept  | .828                        | .632       | .375                      | 1.310  | .227 |

Dependent Variable: identity style formation  
 Intact homes: Model Summary: adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.553 (Goodness-of-fit Index)  
 ANOVA: F-value = 9.909 (p-value = 0.000)  
 Non-intact, absence of care: Model Summary: adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.420 (Goodness-of-fit Index)  
 ANOVA: F-value = 1.928 (p-value = 0.204)

The model result revealed goodness of fit index of R<sup>2</sup> = 0.553 (55.3%) is significant at F-value = 9.909 (p<0.05) significant level for intact family with adequate parental care while goodness of fit index of 0.420 (42.0%) is not significant at F-value = 1.928 for non-intact homes. To determine the effect of association with positive peer on identity style formation, multiple regression analysis method is used. Identity formation represents the dependent variable while association with peer represents the independent variables. The result of the analysis revealed that association with positive peer is significant in intact homes at t = 4.525 (p<0.05). Hence, the hypothesis is rejected at 95% confidence interval since p = 0.000<0.05 significance level. Therefore, association with positive peer will significantly influence identity style outcome (reflective consciousness and flexibility) of undergraduate in university of Lagos, Nigeria. In addition, based on standardized coefficient, association with positive peer has the greatest direct influence on identity formation of undergraduate students at 0.734 (73.4%). For non-intact homes, the hypothesis is accepted since none of the association with pro social peer is significant at 5% significance level.

### **Discussion of Findings**

From all indication, the findings of the present study suggest that the identity styles young adults adopt in forming identity is influenced by the developmental precursors, which are the factors in the family and immediate environments. Such home and environmental factors that is high on demandingness and responsiveness and set clear standards for young adults' behavior and conduct fosters individuality, self-regulation and social responsibility as values and traits which defines the identity structure that is reflected in the following identity styles of acting seeking of information, self reflections, information orientation, flexibilities and openness to new information. These identity styles bring out high levels of commitment, open mindedness, and self-reflection in young adults, and are vital to adjustment at the university as they play key and fundamental role in students' successful adjustment to the rigorous of campus life.

Findings of the study also revealed that there is a relationship between parental activities and young adults' ability to actively seek for new information. This position supported the findings of Klimstra & Schwab (2021), who in their separate studies affirmed that parental activities have strong links to young adults' ability to actively seek information regarding identity related issues, which in turn are instrumental to successful adjustment in terms of social and emotional adjustment. Parental level of income predicted young adults' constantly learning new skills. The result was in line with the findings of Hoffman (2018), who submitted that wealthy parents provide adequate alternatives for their children to constantly learn new things. In a similar view Lile (2015) claimed that students from affluent families are always exposed to learning of new skills. The views of the counselors who participated in the key Informant Interview was also in line with this as they are of the opinion that successful adjustment to university environment is greatly influenced by these factors. 'Family intact' affected young adults' sceptical thinking regarding the question on identity. This finding is consistent with the position of Lilgendahl, (2015) & Crocetti (2017), who in their separate studies stressed the impact of broken homes on the skeptical thinking of young adults. This result also lends credence to the works of Nwoke, Ogba, & Ugwu (2012). They stated that separated family possessed a risk factor in identity formation as a result of the doubts, fears and anxieties from such home environment. These factors adversely affect their adjustment ability as most students suffer from fears, anxieties and lack of self-beliefs.

The question on whether association with peers influences reflective awareness among young adults revealed that peer association was instrumental to young adults' ability to critically reflect on identity related issues before committing to identity. In support of this findings, the opinions expressed by the counselors interviewed suggested an affirmation that there is a strong relationship between the two variables. Students who are able to adjust and settle to university life tends to form association with pro social peers while those involved with negative peer group influence tends to have issues with adjustment.

The findings of the study also revealed the roles of University Support Services in young adults' openness to new information and skill development which lends support that the University environment as providing great avenue for students' interactions for openness to new information which are vital and critical to academic adjustment. This was supported by the works of Brooks and O'Shea, eds. (2021), who indicated that there is a strong level of correlation between the two variables and students who are able to adjust to the rigours of academic environments are those who have been exposed to the various support services of the university.

The study also revealed that the role of cultural practices such as respect for elders, domestic chore grooming, training and discipline predicted reflective consciousness and flexibilities with regard to identity styles are more likely to adjust to university settings. In support of this finding, Anderson, & Koc (2020), affirmed that young adults from such cultural background tend to be reflective and flexible concerning identity-related issues. This finding was however against the results of Akingbade & Emmanuel (2018), who reported that young adults from such cultural practices tend to internalized values of parents and are therefore rigid and inflexible in their styles of identity formation which in turn affect their ability to associate and socialize with peers.

## **Conclusion**

This study investigated the role developmental precursors variables may play in explaining variations in the adoption of identity processing styles young adults use to engage in, or avoid the task of identity formation. Findings revealed that how young adults approach the task of identity construction was related to the values that motivate and direct their lives, which in turn determine the success rate of adjustment in the university. These values define the identity structure that provides a conceptual frame of reference for making identity-related decisions. These findings also showed that the identity

structure which provides a conceptual frame of reference for making decisions is the outcomes of social interactions of young adults' home and environment factors, which in turn has a direct influence on the identity style young adults adopt in their quest to form identity as well as define their adjustment level. This is a key research direction because it emphasizes the consequences-and therefore the importance-of developing a sense of identity in young adults as a foundation for successful adjustment in the university in terms of social, academic and emotional.

The findings of this study has also established that ways in which the family is structured in terms of functioning, processes, and resources determines to a large extent the variability in identity style scores viz-a-viz adjustment in the university.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the findings obtained and conclusion reached, the following are recommended.

1. This study has established that the family is the foundation for a successful formation of identity, which in turn plays a significant role in the successful adjustment in the university. This therefore means that parents must play a role as active and reflective agents in their children's development a major part of which is identity formation. Parents need to deliberately reassess their parental roles and goals in this regard. It is imperative that the parents choose the environment for their children carefully that will provide them with a vision of their aspirations for their children, and also will have an impact on how the children will see themselves.
2. Evidence from the study revealed that the various identity styles capture two important components of parental responsiveness and demandingness. Parental responsiveness alludes to the degree to which parents purposefully encourage individuality, self-control, and how submissive are they to their children's demands and desires. Parental responsiveness is the expectations parents have from their children, supervision and disciplinary endeavors and ability to tackle disobedience. These are essential ingredients that are vital to university adjustment.
3. Counsellors in the university should see themselves as parents and guides to the students. Some level of cordiality and friendliness should exist between them and the students so that the students will be free to confide in them.
4. The findings underscore that the role of social interactions as necessary for young adults' identity styles formation and successful adjustment to the university.

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