Rural Youth's Identity Crisis as an Intricate Problem: A Necessity to Consider it to Achieve Efficient Human Rural Resources

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Abstract: The present paper is intended to particularize rural youth's identity crisis, as a pivotal challenge, has been intertwined in social rural areas. Admittedly, rural youths are a substantial body of the social capital; therefore, facilitating access to development summit. Using constructive education and training, rural youths' capacity, knowledge and skills will be proliferated so that they are to be enabled to become productive and contributing citizens of their local communities. Nowadays, it has been observable that Iran's youths, because of manifold reasons, have been encountering identity crisis that rural youths are not exceptional. Using archival study and review literature as research methodology, issues like the role of rural youth in development process, Iran's rural youth in crisis, identity and identity crisis has been described, as well as some recommendations in order to abate identity crisis in rural youth have been adduced.

Key words: Rural youth · Identity · Identity crisis · Sustainable development · Human rural resources

INTRODUCTION

Youth population has been estimated over 1.5 billion in 2035 and it has been accompanied with raising growth especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia by 26 percent and 20 percent respectively between 2005 and 2035 [1]. A large number of them are qualified as rural-based, poor, unemployed and with inadequate education and training, that make vulnerability for them to engage in unsafe and unfair occupations, in which negative consequences such as prostitution, HIV/AIDS, delinquency and drug abuse are emerged for them [2]. Roughly, all of psychology scientists are believed that youth life-span is the most sensitive and important development life course for anyone. Therefore, youth is a life course started by sensual maturity and ended by stabilizing social status in generative family and main labor. In other words, mentioned life course includes youth's transformation from main family to generative family [3]. There is no single consensus about youth definitions, so that each country/organization presents a special definition; for example according to United Nations General Assembly's definition, youth includes life course of 15-24-aged [4], whereas some reference adduces youth life course as 13-25-aged-time [5]. In addition, youth is a distinct transitional phase of life, between the more resistant childhood and adulthood categories of (Worth, 2009: p1051). Valentine (2003) advocates a youth life course as shifting to 'performative and processual identity', apprehending the multiplicity and often indirect nature of transitions to adulthood, although childhood and youth research widely declares that it is insufficient to consider the transition from childhood to youth to adulthood in terms of a linear progression from dependence to independence [6]. In recent years, it is declared that youth life course has been extended, because majority of industrial and semi-industrial societies are qualified by characters leading to precede maturity changes and increase independency age of marriage-occupation [3]. However, a point should be to know is that "youth" *is not a homogenous construct, but encapsulates several different experiences and diversities*, for example in regards to gender, class, disability, ethnicity, education and provenance e.g. region, rural/urban [4]. From an economic and social perspective, many needs of young people for positive youth development are not being met, putting them in a highly vulnerable position [7]. Rural youth are frequently neglected by government planners and international agency development strategists [8]. Smith *et al.*, (2002)

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have declared youths' voices are blind component of policies and practices that were being increased for their 'best interests' and their 'futures'. Gobeli (1996) declared that a substantial point that should be considered when looking at the need for sustainable development is in which a new development paradigm is focused where youths are playing vital pivot role in such paradigm. Gobeli says such paradigm focuses to receive two important needs of the world community: the need for sustainable development and the need to improve the rural youth circumstances and all youth. Beside natural resource capital, social and institutional capital, science and technological capital, rural youth are recognized as one of the "economic capitals" in sustainable agricultural and rural development [9]. Wiesinger (2007: p45) has suggested that social capital should be more known by policy makers as a key component in the rural development process. Three mechanisms have been recognized indicating that how social capital does its role: 1) making share information among group members, 2) decreasing opportunistic behavior and 3) facilitating collective decision-making [10]. Human capital is a unique and pivotal factor in development in that it is both an active agent of change and a beneficiary of change and progress, that when its potentials are developed, human capital is the only one that can create, modify, apply and utilize the other capitals such as technological and natural resources, for sustainable development [9]. In most developing countries, youth make up well over one-half of the total rural population that due to their numbers and potential impact, rural youth must be a major part of any equation dealing with immediate and long-term solutions to solving problems of food security and sustainable development [11]. A large part of integrated development of every nation is determined by youth's efficiency and activity in performing affaires that it can facilitate accessing to summit of development. In 5th international conference of united nation related to the support of youth and young, unemployment was declared as the most important problem for youth and young [12]. According to what said by Jean Piaget "*youth are the important capital in every country, because they are the core of creativity and innovation*" [13]. Youth can develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes that enable them to take an active role in society, become central actors around the issues that directly affect their lives, can be a force for grassroots or community development [7]. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) recognized youth as a special

group and an important element in the quest for sustainable development between generations [9]. El-Nour (2007) is convinced that rural youths' social participation is the process developing partnerships between young people and adults in all areas of life so that youths can get valuable situation in society and the community as a whole can benefit from their contribution, ideas and energies. Young people possess a role in building and rebuilding themselves, their families, their communities and the larger institutions that make the quality of life, can be enthusiastic, energetic, creative and interested in solving problems and concerned about their future and the future of their communities [14]. Nowadays, youth development, with its strong research/knowledge base and adequate policy and resource support, can become a strong movement in order to empower large numbers of rural young people in developing countries to undertake an active obligation in sustainable agriculture and rural development as a major contributor to the overall progress in their respective countries [11]. The goals of involving youth in development should be education and change young people; define and articulate issues of interest to them; and design, negotiate and implement solutions to those issues [7]. Therefore, rural youths should be at the forefront of efforts in order to broaden opportunities for rural people [1]. Gobeli (1996) has presented five main competency areas which define the range of behavior and skills needed for adult success mentioned following:

- *Health or physical competence*, which includes good current health position plus evidence of appropriate knowledge, attitudes and behavior that will ensure future health (e.g. exercise, good diet/nutrition);
- *Personal or social competence*: including intrapersonal skills (ability to understand personal emotions, have self discipline); interpersonal skills (ability to work with others, develop friendships by communication, cooperation, empathizing, negotiating); coping/system skills (ability to adapt, be flexible and assume responsibility); judgments skills (ability to plan, evaluate, make decisions and solve problems);
- *Cognitive or creative competence*: which includes a broad base of knowledge, ability to appreciate and have partnership in areas of creative expression; good oral, written language skills; problem solving and analytical skills, ability to learn/interest in learning and achieving;

- *Vocational competence*: including a broad understanding/awareness of vocational and avocational options and of steps needed to act on choices; adequate preparation for chosen career, comprehending of value and function of work and leisure;

- *Citizenship and ethical competence and participation*, which includes an understanding of the history and values of one's nation and community and the desire to be involved in efforts that contribute to the nation and community.

Therefore, for designing favorite plan in order to develop youth, it is necessary mentioned needs are taken into account. Because adducing any solving for problems such identity crisis in youth refers to obviate them that this action leads to make them tantalize to self, life and future.

Rrural Youth in Crisis: Although many researches related to youths' problems focus on urban youths, these problems can be generalized to rural youths. The delinquency [10], youth violence [13], youth suicide [15], migration prostitution, HIV/AIDS and drug abuse [2] are problems that rural youth have been encountering. There are a whole set of circumstances that are placing youth at high risk in rural areas including HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, violence, discrimination, broken families and high birth rates among adolescent girls [8]. Taherkhani (2002) has described youths' migration as process related to social and economic problems. Moulavi and Rasulzadeh, (2004) claimed personal, social and family-background factors affecting youths' tendency to opium use include frustration, divorce, smoking cigarette, family discrepancies and association with nefarious peers. A research performed by Sam Aram *et al.*, (2009) indicated that easy-access to opium, relationship with addicts have been had undesired impacts and such factors like tranquility and respect, religious intention and cordiality-sense has been avoided youth in getting addiction. According to Colman's theory, youths' problems arrive at maximum tension in regards to the special chronological age. They are alterable with regard to sexual differences. As maximum age of tension is synchronized with several problems, behaviors dilemmas are emerged [16]. Therefore, youth's identity can be affected by socio-economic, cultural circumstances, either improve identity or criticize one, for example in rural areas, youth, in particular, may face specific constraints and challenges in rural poverty.

Identity and Identity Crisis

Definition of Identity: Survive of any society is conditioning to regular transition of organizations and values from one generation to another, in other words, this survival process is deepened to cultural transition [17]. People's perceptions, preferences, intentions, attitudes and identities are a part of society enormous culture that can be changed, amended, revised and disseminated to future generation. In contrast to personal life, Engaging in social life solicits a numbers of issues such as consider to special norms and people's rights, adaptability and flexibility. Thus, society surrounded by social crisis, will severely influence on another generation. Identity is a position, with relative tension, oriented to change and transformation and identity crisis is insecurity in identity [3]. Individual, ethnic, national, transnational are the instructors of the identity hierarchy that some of them are acquisitive and selective whereas some of then are non-acquisitive and inherent, depending to structure and circumstance person's opportunity [18]. At first time in 1970, "identity crisis" concept has been introduced by Erickson in book name "identity, youth and crisis" [19]. Erickson is convinced that the more important youths' role in acquiring their stabilized identity is in which they regularly can response to their needs, wishes and abilities so that their expectancies is adapted to society's expectancies [20]. Identity is defined as all information associated with an individual or organization; it is not just a token or digital certificate [21]. Identity is defined as "a set of meanings applied to the self in a social role or situation defining what it means to be who one is" (Jacobson, 2003: 3). According to Twari's definition, identity is defined as the distinct personality of an individual (or object) regarded as a persisting entity. Identity, as an instrument differentiation and similarity, helps to acquire knowing [18]. Youths find themselves in situation that can make trust obligations to special commitments that it makes circumstances for them to affiliate in special groups, coalitions, diverse fashions and peer groups [20]. So, participation of youth in social programs is taken in to account.

Types of Identity: Inevitably, every one should adopt diverse kind of identities that they may be belonged to different social level [18]. Esmail-Sorkh (2002) has presented four identities as following:

Acquired Identity: in this group, youths successfully pass this kind of identity and make necessary obligations about defined goals. Youths are qualified by reflexivity, thoughtfulness and high-confidence;

Pre-mature Identity: youths without pre-identity-crisis, make obligations about goals prepared by others especially parent. They get the root of issues such as job, life style pre-defined by others. They are characterized by reflexivity and commitment to family's believes and social rules and obedience of authority reference;

Self-finding Identity: in this group, youths have been trying to get identity and they are dual-positioned, frustrated, vexatious, garrulous, warrior and close to heterogeneous parent;

Vague Identity: in this group, neither do youth pass any identity crisis and nor do they make obligations to special commitments, qualified by laid-back, loneliness.

Identity Crisis: What conceptualized as personal and collective identity crisis by modern human has been pertained to diversity in definitions and approaches about it [22]. According definition presented by Erickson, identity crisis is defined as a time of intensive analysis and exploration of different ways of looking at oneself—the individual feels unsure about his/her role in life and experiences confusion about who is s/he in reality [23]. Moreover, identity crisis is defined as distress and disorientation resulting from conflicting pressures and uncertainty about one's self and one's role, in which the most obvious root of uncertainty stems from a lack of knowledge about where someone has come from or where they are going [24]. When young people are uprooted, jobless, alienated and intolerant, having few opportunities for positive engagement, they represent a ready pool of recruits for groups seeking to mobilize violence (Kvitashvili, 2005: p2). In many developing countries, young people are coming of age in societies that lack stable government, economic growth, or basic material and physical security. In such circumstances, youth often turn away from the authority and ideology of older generations and seek to mobilize their own generation in search of solutions (Kvitashvili, 2005: p2). All youth are not the same, nor is their experience and the concept of youth is itself debated: Some favor biological markers, in which youth is the life course between puberty and parenthood, while others define youth in terms of cultural markers, a distinct social status with specific roles, rituals and relationships (Kvitashvili, 2005: p3). Moridi and Taghi Zadegan, (2007: p145) adduced a definition to identity crisis referred to questions such as "who is me?" and "what do I want?" granting relative stability to persons' ego [3]. Accompanying with physical, cognitive, affective and social development, Identity is taken into account

[20]. A large number of youths want to response to questions such as "what is my status", "what is my future job", "what is my future major", who is one I will get married" and "what are my ethic and philosophical values", "who select and theses values' "whose responsibility to declare right way of life" that response to these question indicating mission of parents, educators, consultants and cultural obligators [20]. The umbrages emerged for youths are questions pertained to identity, in which according to their attitude "how are they" and "how they interpret others' feeling about themselves" [20]. Piaget's developmental stages were anchored by the achievement of a stable adult identity, including the ability to think abstractly (Worth, 2009: p1051). Person's knowing related to self refereed to priority of placing his/or her perception and others' perception about self in conscience [20]. Identity is contribution among three systems: biological, social and psychological that if such contribution is not emerged, youths are encountered with tumble in behavior and communication [14]. Questions related to essence, wherefore and who of human referred to old tradition [22]. In the youth life course, youth is trying to discovery their identity; make discrete him/her from childhood dependencies [19]. Identity is active and intrinsic organization is derived from motives, abilities, believes and past experiences [20]. It is important to notice that these questions are not instantly emerged, but its origin has been referring childhood life course and as developing are emerging these questions are more preeminent [20]. Identity is multi-layer concept going beyond self image and including biographic/historical orientation [3]. Identity management involves maintaining an individual entity's complete information set, spanning multiple contexts and transactions and establishing the relationship among various identities with the goal of improving data protection, consistency, accuracy and security in an efficient manner. Sharafi-Jam presented the vulnerable points for identity in Iran such as cultural rupture, generations conflicts, incremental changes, lack of entirety, satellite technology, giant migration and big cities[25]. For example research pertained to Zokayi and Khatibi and Gorgi showed that continuous use of internet has been impacting on diverse aspects of identity and life style especially in youths[26]. When youth are shielded-from social and economic stresses and can participate in decisions that affect their lives, they are more likely to pursue peaceful change [13]. Hosseinzadeh claimed that there is a statistically relationship between cultural capital and all kind of identity that the maximum relationship is related to cultural capital and national, ethnic, religious

and individual identity and minimum relationship is bearing on cultural capital and global identity[27]. If youths are be engaged in identity crisis, therefore, may take actions such as delinquency, anxiety and so on [20]. In addition, Azade-Marzabadi is convinced that there is a statistically significant between value system and national identity[28]. One point should be subtly considered is that there should be existed a consistency between youth's imagination about self and others' imagination about him or her so that while youth can access to identity-sensing that both he or she selects values and be loyal about his or her goals [20].

Factors Impacting on Identity: Factors affecting in formation of identity include family, school, life quartert, social and religious institutions, group media and peers [20], Stratification and social strata, non- formal and formal education, myths, history, language, history, cultural and intellectual heritage, reference group, globalization [29]. For example group media such as TV and satellite can perform functions that lead to positive, neutral and negative consequences; related to positive result, they can results making national alliance, strengthening public culture, public education. Of negative results, conflicts, identity crisis, preaching alien culture, aggression can be mentioned [30]. Differences, discrepancies and predominate circumstances in one rural society can affect identity. For example rural youth may not be equivalent regarding to educational and occupational attainment with life satisfaction [31]. Ostracism leas to that youth can not find identity in self [20]. Brought following are some of factors affecting in formation of identity [29]:

Family Context: In which family is the first core forming people's identity. Formation of identity is started from the first of birth and continues to develop as time passed. Giving a name for children by parents, they find special position in world. Gradually, they are growing up until they meet youth life-span. In the first of this life span, youths can distinctly recognize themselves in the family context (family identity). Declared related to family identity is that the more family context take into account caring children, the more family identity is stably crystallized.

Collective Media: Collective media play important role in formation of identity so as to they do people information bombing. The most important issue is that information presented by collective media is effectively manipulated in order to achieve predefined goals. So, they can make new thoughts in people and consequently new identity is made.

Social Structures: Social structures affect humans' personality so that humans always imagine that take action in force circumstances and others influence and look at their attitudes and behaviors. In this way they try to adjust their behavior to absorb maximum others' satisfaction. Therefore, periphery circumstances with inducing their characteristics can influence in making or amending people's identity. For example new sub-culture induced by foreign countries can lead to formatting new identity in special society.

Education: The most substantial core to access sustainable development is education. Education, either formal or non-formal, plays constructive in making culture and stabilizing special qualities. In this direction, school is the best place to detect and develop theoretical and practical issues, as well as accomplishing social responsibility. All of concepts such as discipline, abnegation, affection, patience, ethic, mortality and so on are conceptualized education systems. So they influence in formation of social, cultural, national, political and civic identity.

Reference Group: Reference group is defined as group in which its beliefs, attitudes, actions and behavior are considered by its either members or non-members. Groups such as practitioners, engineers, clergies, athletes, scholars, college students, movie directors are example of reference group that they, depending to social situation, can be consider as identity-maker. It is important to notice that reference groups always have not positive functions (e.g. groups diffusing substances material).

Globalization: One the most important factors affects ethnic and national identity is globalization. Globalization is process that in it all the world is seen as a whole, countries' boundaries are undermined and *national* concept is replaced by *international*. Actually, in such context, economic, political and cultural communications will be increased that it can be preeminent in making and influencing countries' identity.

Principles and Solutions about Escaping Identity Crisis: Sobhanijou (2004, p 38) has posed in which "on the one hand, what factors can be preeminent in increasing sustainable social cohesion, collective conscious, sustainable relationships between people and government and on the other hand, in decreasing social abnormalities and in improving social identity. Esmail-Sorkh (2002) has presented principles that ones can be efficient in solving identity crisis dilemma including following:

Adoption and Reciprocated Respect: respect to youths' rights, adopt them as "they are" and consider to their needs;

Psychological Security: making circumstances filling security, affection, tranquility for them;

Making Affective and Vocal Relationship: it is performed by parents accompanied with responding cordially, confidently and actively to youths' needs;

Consider to Positively Behave and Not Compare: recognize youths potential abilities, reinforce positive behaviors and take into account personal differences;

Equilibrium: present freedom youth, neither prodigally nor failingly, related to family and social responsibilities.

Sobhanijou (2002: p49) in order to direct youths in straightforward way making favorite identity has presented following recommendations:

- Reviewing in contents of school and high School books; presenting new contents making in youths favorite attitude towards themselves, life and their obligated roles;
- Reviewing in contents and procedures applied in TV programs related children and youth so as to that deep cultural and national dependencies are made in them.
- Trying to solve problems such as decreased motivation in youth, drop-out, unemployment and other factors making to destroy youth's identity;
- Strengthening contexts for co-thinking with youth, understanding their problems and challenges and presenting responses to their fundamental questions;
- Developing parents' communications with their children in terms of affective, vocal in order to access family identity;
- Making contexts that youths can participate, as social decision-maker, in social programs in order to stabilize social identity;
- Making circumstances to critical thinking that hereby youth can critique alien cultures, combat cultural attack.

In addition, some recommendations have been presented by FAO (2005b) that they can be indirectly substantial in solving identity crisis in youth such as 1) to build and utilize youth's networks and partnerships at levels such as the national, regional and international;

2) to organize youth into youth-led organizations that are active and have strong leadership together with competent and committed advisors, with projects and activities that meet youth and community needs; 3) to give priority and attention to education and training opportunities for achieving continuing-learning and human-capacity building; 4) to rethink of the future for rural youth by investing in youth through investments in skills training, investing in suitable technology and microfinance and investment in capacity-building for youth-led and youth-serving organizations.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Present article aimed at standing out the most intricate problem in rural society so-called identity crisis. Identity crisis can be made in circumstance in which youths can not obviate their basic needs and there are conflicts among youths' personalities and consequently society is not able to make consensus among mentioned conflicts. Therefore, the more part of identity crisis refers to type youth's seeing to self, life and future. Inappropriate circumstances surrounding youth result to make tension, alienation, depression and frustration in them. Improving youth's position with regard to their education, employment and other basic needs can be riddance ring to escape youth from identity crisis. Followed are some recommendations in order to abate identity crisis in rural youth:

- Improving youth livelihood in rural area, because, origin of identity crisis refers to obviate basic need;
- The need for greater rural youth's participation in designing and implementing developmental programs can escape them from intricate problems such as identity crisis;
- Identity crisis is derived from social environment; specially, Iran is encountered with youth's employment. Therefore, it is necessary to consider capacity-building in youths for future job;
- Life skills also should taken into account, because learning life skill makes rural youths ready to challenge problems, dominate tensions and generate adaptive behaviors.
- NGOs can be substantial pivot to organize youth so that rural youth can take skills such as leadership, team-working, communication, problem-solving, critical thinking etc;
- Factors such as relationship, educational environment, experiential learning, participation and involvement in community should be taken into account in rural youth development.

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