

# **The Relationship between the Professional Identity Crisis and the Academic Adjustment of Social Work Students**

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**Abstract:**

This study aims at determining the relationship between professional identity crisis and the academic adjustment of social work students. It also aims to identify the indicators of the social worker's roles in enhancing the professional identity and academic adjustment of students. We selected simple random sample of 340 students from grade 3 and 4 involving 86 males and 254 females.

The study concludes that there is an inverse correlation concerning statistical significance between professional identity crisis and academic adjustment of social work students, at a significance level of 0.01. There is a positive correlation between the professional identity crisis, academic adjustment and some demographic variables for students of social work at a significance level of 0.05. There are statistically significant differences at 0.01 between males and females on the professional identity crisis scale in favor of females with a mean of (2.7333 in its total dimensions).

**Keywords:**

*Professional identity, identity crisis, academic adjustment, social work students, university students*

**Introduction:**

University education is one of the most important educational stages concerned with maintaining reliability and security, forming the professional identity of this category. The undergraduates who are in good standing will create the appearance of a healthy community.

University students are among the most important sectors of youth that the state pays more attention to (Fahmy, 2012, p. 129). The number of students enrolled in higher education reached 3,339 in the academic year 2019-2020, compared to 3.104 million students in 2018/2019, which is an increase of 7.6%. (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, 2020)

Professional identity refers to the internalization of reference frame provided by the profession that aids in the professional's ability to understand their role as an individual and as a member of a larger group with a unique purpose (Pistole & Roberts, 2002).

Achieving professional identity is the main goal in an individual's life. Loss of identity or difficulty in achieving it makes the individual in a state of permanent alienation from society. Social identity is determined after achieving professional identity, and this gives a picture of the difficult situation that young people may live in (Karim, 2013, p.75). According to Otto Kornberg, the identity crisis is a result

of the discrepancy between rapid physical transformation and psychological experiences on one hand, and the widening gap between self-perception and experiences and perceptions of others on the other (Goth & Foelsch, 2006, pp. 143,144). Literature on identity and identification in organizational settings, flags up the core phenomena are at work in identity formation and maintenance: belonging and attachment. This formulation is reflected in the conception of identity (Thornton et al., 2012, p.33).

Whereas Rothausen et.al, (2015) refer to the effect of socialization, beliefs, and sense of belonging on the professional identity of social workers, Seering & Felicia (2018) also showed that identity differs according to race and gender.

In this regard, the identity crisis is formed among young people because of their sense of loss and rupture in a society that does not help them in understanding who they are. In addition, they do not find opportunities for them in life that help them to feel their social value, adhere to values and norms, and express themselves (Shend, 2015).

Mukhtar (2016), Sari (2018) and Jomenia & Ghorbani (2012) show that students with disordered identity suffer from high external control, low self-esteem, poor social adjustment, anxiety and poor academic adjustment.

Al-Ahmad (2011) reveals that the identity crisis becomes clear to university youth This study calls for the need to confront this crisis by allowing them to discover their ideas and help them discover their true inclinations and self-esteem, which result in the presence of citizens who make a great change in the future world of their society.

Professional identity challenges are not unique to the field of social work. In their review of literature, Gignac & Gazzola (2016) suggest that many other professions struggle with professional identity including rehabilitation counselors, chiropractors, homeopaths, osteopaths, professional consultants, lawyers, doctors and occupational therapists Murphy (1999), Barnes & Louw (2012), McLaughlin & Boettcher (2009) and Kellyanne, (2020).

Issues of professional identity in social work have been vexed by conceptual ambiguity, lack of consensus about core attributes and problems in identifying what counts in the constitution of identity. Studies have tended to focus on the social workers' professional identity formation, the framing of key characteristics of social workers' professional identity, issues which convey the narrative represented by social workers in talking about their role and work, and

the context in which professional identity is formed and articulated. This muddled terrain is further complicated by the fact that several competing theoretical perspectives have been deployed to help make sense of matters of professional identity. (Webb, 2015, p.1)

The crisis in social work is regarded a crisis of professional identity. Whether issues of professional identity constitute a crisis for social work, and despite the growing interest in matters of professional identity in social work, researchers know relatively little about how identities are formed among practitioners who carry out complex, challenging and often ambiguous public sector functions (Baxter, 2011). This may be due to the increase in the number of students applying to the Faculty of Social Work, Helwan University during the past three years, which are as follows, respectively 5300, 8750, 10558 (Helwan University, 2021).

Hence, the professional identity crisis does not come from a vacuum. Rather, it results from many problems faced by students of social work, including the lack of societal recognition of the profession and its lack of awareness of the importance of its role in society. Whereas Cinnirella (2014) indicated that the status of social workers in the European society is low in spite of the progress of society, and this affects the status of the profession in other societies, including Egypt.

Moreover, Noble & Stretch (2002) indicate that there is a large gap between what social work students learn and what is actually practiced in social institutions, and there are also problems associated with low incomes of social workers after graduation, namely: this study agrees with the study of both Bedgood & Holusko (2003) and Alvin (2003) explain that there are gaps between social work education and social work practice at all levels.

Meredith (2016) also argues that social workers may need extended professional identities in order to identify situations for themselves and their roles to work on environmental issues. Despite the state's efforts to develop the educational process and turn it into an integrated education, there are several obstacles that resulted from this and affected the professional identity of students.

There are many contemporary changes that have occurred in the world that have affected teaching methods and the use of distance education and thus affected the extent to which students absorb the academic courses. Ahmed (2021) shows that social work students see that distance education is ineffective in implementing the skills that help them to develop their professional identity. There are many

obstacles that students face in benefiting from blended education during Covid-19 period. For example, respondents demonstrate sudden and frequent interruptions of the Internet. Further examples of common obstacles include the lack of computers and lack of internet access to their homes as well as their poor skills in using computers and that blended education is costly.

Among the effects of the professional identity crisis upon social work students is its impact on students' adjustment with university life. Bubb (2006) finds the high dropout rate of students indicates that students have an adapting problem to university. Khalaf (2016) proves that there is a relationship between the efficiency of field training institutions and the quality of professional preparation for social service students as there are deficiencies in the field training institutions in which social service students are trained, which negatively affects students' abilities, preparation and professional identity.

Also, the study of El-diasty, (2018) finds out a positive relationship between spiritual intelligence, academic, social and personal adaptation and commitment to achieving goals and shows that social work students' adaptation to university life is average.

Younis, (2021) and Al-Raqad, (2017) demonstrate that the level of adjustment to university life among university students is average while the study of Sawadqi, (2019) shows the relationship between psychological alienation in its dimensions (lack of sense of value, loss sense of belonging, non-compliance with standards, helplessness) and academic adjustment of university students.

Also, the study of Muqran, (2018) shows that the level of university adjustment among female students, residents and non-residents is average.

**Through the previous presentation, the problem of the study is identities in the following question:**

"Is there a fundamental relationship between professional identity crisis and the academic adjustment of social work students?"

**Theoretical Guidelines of the Research:**

### **The ecological theory**

It is that approach that deals with the study and understanding of a set of intertwined relationships between man and the environment with its various elements and focuses on how the environment and man affect each other and the determinants of this influence and the adaptation processes by which man resists to adapt to the environment (Karen, 2006, p.417).

**The application of the concepts of ecological perspective in this study is as follows:**

1. **Habitat:** Every student has their homeland in which they live. A student who lives in a rural environment differs from a student who lives in an urban environment, and thus the student is affected by the environment in which he lives, the college and the university in general, and these interactions represent effective factors in achieving professional identity, whether it is a successful professional identity or not.
2. **Status:** Each student in college has specific roles that determine his or her position, importance and social status, and thus these roles affect their self-esteem and society's recognition of them, which affects their professional identity.
3. **Adjustment:** It is mutual interactions between the student and the surrounding environment (the environment in which he lives, its customs and traditions, the university and its resources and its financial capabilities, the faculty member, colleagues, the nature of the curricula they study, and the college administration).
4. **Role:** It includes the student's performance of their roles, whether inside lectures or in the training institutions. It refers to the student's rights and duties.

**Study Objectives:**

1. Determining the nature of the relationship between professional identity crisis and the academic adjustment of social work students.
2. Identifying the indicators of the role of social workers in promoting the professional identity and academic adjustment of social work students.

**Study Concepts**

**1) professional identity crisis**

Professional identity is defined as a practitioner's professional self-concept based on traits, beliefs, values, motivations and experiences (Ibara, 2001, pp. 764-791).

The theoretical definition is the factors that influence recruitment, retention, and understanding of the primary goals of the profession. The crisis may destabilize professional boundaries but has the effect of making discourse in social work more visible to the public.

The concept of professional identity crisis is measured procedurally through: The degree obtained by the university student on the dimensions of the professional identity crisis scale.

## **2) the academic adjustment:**

Academic adjustment is the orientation towards establishing social relationships with others and enjoying those relationships, and it includes four main dimensions: the social dimension, the disciplinary dimension, the emotional dimension, and the academic dimension (Lenz, 2006, P. 3613).

Academic adjustment in theory is knowing by the degree of student's social, psychological and academic satisfaction and the control factors that they are exposed to within the university framework. As for the procedural definition of academic adjustment, it is the sum of the responses of university students on the scale of academic adjustment.

### **Methodology:**

This study belongs to the pattern of descriptive and analytical studies that determine the relationship between two variables, the professional identity crisis and academic adjustment of social work students. This study relies on the method of the social survey by random sample.

### **Study hypothesis:**

1. There is an inverse statistically significant relationship between the crisis of professional identity and academic adjustment of social work students.
2. There is statistically significant relationship between some demographic variables (Gender, Age, Last year's degree, Place of residence) and professional identity crisis of social work students.
3. There is a statistically significant relationship between some demographic variables (Gender, Age, Last year's degree, Place of residence) and academic adjustment of social work students.
4. There are statistically significant differences between males and females on the professional identity crisis scale for students.
5. There are statistically significant differences between males and females on the academic adjustment scale for students.

### **Population**

The Faculty of Social work, Helwan university has 28500 students in the bachelor level. The application was applied to the third- and fourth-year students because they feel more professional identity crisis, especially during field training in the institutions. The sampling

frame after applying the conditions became 3027 students, and a simple random sample consisting of (340) students was drawn from the Faculty of Social Work, Helwan University with 86 male and 254 female students using (Stephen Samphtho equation) **according to the following conditions:**

- 1- To be from third- or fourth-year students at the faculty.
- 2- The student should be regular in attending lectures
- 3- Not to have failed in the college before.
- 4- Regular attendance at field training institutions.
- 5- The student resides with his natural family.
- 6- He does not suffer from a severe mental disorder or disability.

**Tools:**

The tools of the study are as follows:

**1. The professional identity crisis scale:** (Prepared by researchers)

The professional identity crisis scale has been legalized in terms of language, content, reliability and validity. The scale consists of four dimensions, the first dimension contains 11 statements and each of the second, third and fourth dimensions 10 statements. It includes three responses, and they are (agree, agree to some extent, disagree) and their weights are respectively (3, 2, 1), and the opposite for the negative statement.

**Scale reliability:** It was applied by 15 students from the Faculty of Social Work in the third and fourth year out of the study sample. The sample then retested after 15 days on the same cases, during the period from 25/1/2021 until 10/2/2021.

**Table No. (1) reliability of the professional identity crisis scale by Pearson correlation coefficient n = 15**

N	Serial Number	Tool dimensions	The value R and significance
1.	The first dimension	the feeling of weakness	.990**
2.	the second dimension	the feeling of self-esteem	.977**
3.	the third dimension	the trend towards the other sex	.994**
4.	the fourth dimension	the trend towards a care	.996**
	<b>The whole scale</b>		<b>.988**</b>

\*\* Significant at (0.01)

\* Significant at (0.05)

The previous table shows that the reliability for each dimension of the tool, and for the tool, as a whole, is acceptable at significant (0.01).

**Validity of the academic adjustment scale:**

**A. Internal consistency of dimensions**

**Table No. (2) the correlations of the dimensions and the total score of the identity crisis scale for students of social work using the Pearson correlation coefficient n = 15**

Tool dimensions	the feeling of weakness	the feeling of self-esteem	the trend towards the other sex	the trend towards a care
the feeling of weakness		.695**	.711**	.623*
the feeling of self-esteem	.796**		.633*	.676**
the trend towards the other sex	.685**	.719**		.789**
the trend towards a care	.768**	.681**	.739**	
<b>The whole scale</b>	<b>.822**</b>	<b>.759**</b>	<b>.706**</b>	<b>.643**</b>

The previous table shows that the internal consistency of the study scale is valid at significant (0.01).

**B. Internal consistency of statements:**

**Table No. (3) the validity of the internal consistency of the statements of the identity crisis scale for students of social work using the Pearson correlation coefficient n = 15**

N	Phrases	Dimension	The scale
<b>The first dimension: the feeling of weakness</b>			
1	I feel like my parents care more about my brothers	.795**	.631*
2	It's hard to get to listen to me	.884**	.522*
3	I'm afraid of reveal my true identity to others	.695**	.601*
4	I'm very relation with my family	.905**	.642*
5	I feel ashamed when I talk to others	.698**	.559*
6	I feel my parents are proud of me	.895**	.722**
7	I spend my free time alone	.775**	.539*
8	hide my weakness from others	.771**	.689*
9	I play sports with my friends	.790**	.599*
10	My friends make me feel unwanted	.944**	.766**
11	Others make me feel like I'm being influenced	.871**	.677**

<b>the second dimension: the feeling of self-esteem</b>			
12	I feel that I will have something to do in the future	.991**	.731**
13	I see that I am a person who can achieve his goals	.771**	.528*
14	I feel special when I am among my friends	.795**	.622*
15	I see that my family brags about me in front	.815**	.698**
16	I have specific goals that I strive to achieve	.622*	.524*
17	I have the trust of my close friends	.795**	.688**
18	I feel proud when I achieve my difficult goals	.845**	.692**
19	I trust my abilities to understand those around me	.871**	.533*
20	I accept the criticism of others for my behavior	.760**	.603*
21	I like share other people their social features	.887**	.674**
<b>the third dimension: the trend towards the other sex</b>			
22	Being with the opposite sex makes me feel comfortable	.891**	.731**
23	I find it difficult to make friends with the opposite sex	.771**	.625*
24	I feel attracted to the opposite sex	.775**	.622*
25	I cherish my friendships with the opposite sex	.905**	.703**
26	I can express my feelings to the opposite sex.	.692**	.524*
27	My family does not allow me to get to know the opposite sex.	.745**	.688**
28	I enjoy spending my time with the opposite sex.	.943**	.692**
29	I am happy to deal with the opposite sex.	.671**	.566*
30	My thoughts towards the opposite sex are strict.	.860**	.703*
31	It is difficult for me to think about choosing my life partner	.981**	.779**
<b>the fourth dimension: the trend towards a care</b>			
32	I prefer to work in the profession after graduation	.699**	.581*
33	my studies will achieve what I want to be in the future	.862**	.748**
34	I see that my college has no future	.876**	.778**
35	My family knows the value of my profession.	.925**	.698**
36	My family motivates me to work in my profession.	.922*	.729**
37	People around me look down on my profession.	.795**	.688**
38	My academic courses do not open the job market to me.	.845**	.692**
39	It hurts me about the poor job opportunities for my profession.	.921**	.743**
40	My profession achieves a place for me in society	.683**	.603*
41	I'm proud to be part of my career	.887**	.674**

The previous table shows that the scale has a high degree of validity.

## 2. Academic adjustment (Prepared by: Jamal Al-Lail, 1993).

The professional identity academic adjustment scale has been legalized in terms of language, content, reliability and validity. The scale consisted of 44 statements before the re-rating procedure, and 6 non-statistically significant phrases were deleted, so the number of the scale's phrases became 38 statements, the first dimension 10 statements, the second dimension 9 statements, and the third dimension 8 statements and the Fourth dimension 11 statements. It includes three responses, (agree, agree to some extent, disagree) and their weights are respectively (3, 2, 1) and the opposite for the negative statements.

**Scale reliability:** It was applied by 15 students from the Faculty of Social Work in the third and fourth year. The sample then retested after 15 days on the same cases, through the period from 25/1/2021 until 10/2/2021.

**Table No. (4) reliability at the academic adjustment scale by Pearson correlation coefficient n = 15**

Serial Number	Tool dimensions	The value R
The first dimension	Social dimension	.741**
the second dimension	The emotional dimension	.657*
the third dimension	Disciplinary dimension	.752**
the fourth dimension	Learning dimension	.798**

The previous table shows that the reliability for each dimension of the tool, and for the tool, as a whole, is acceptable at significant (0.01).

We conclude from this that the scale depends on the validity of its results and its moral significance, and the conditions of application that have been considered in the pre and post measurement are similar to a large extent as the two researchers explained what the scale includes and the correct way of it.

**Determine the validity of the scale:** The internal consistency of the validity of the study scale was calculated since the scale as a whole is consistent as the scale was applied to a sample consisting of 15 singles out of the study sample, and the internal consistency of the scale was calculated as follows:

### A. Internal consistency of dimensions

Table No. (5) the correlations of the dimensions and the total score of the academic adjustment scale using the Pearson correlation coefficient n = 15

Tool dimensions	Social dimension	emotional dimension	Disciplinary dimension	Learning dimension
Social dimension		.714**	.788**	.655*
emotional dimension	.696**		.733**	.689**
Disciplinary dimension	.713**	.698**		.776**
Learning dimension	.696**	.636*	.711**	
The whole scale	.853**	.757**	.751**	.796**

### B. Internal consistency of statements:

Table No. (6) the validity of the internal consistency of the phrases of academic adjustment Scale for students of social work using the Pearson correlation coefficient n = 15

Phrase number	Dimension	The whole scale	Phrase number	Dimension	The whole scale
1	.443	.266	23	.782**	.728**
2	.781**	.688**	24	.744**	.621*
3	.796**	.601*	25	.625*	.612*
4	.855**	.642*	26	.852**	.619*
5	.698**	.634*	27	.803**	.632*
6	.895**	.832**	28	.689**	.619*
7	.695**	.619*	29	.421	.277
8	.216	.355	30	.635*	.554*
9	.641*	.634*	31	.401	.314
10	.687**	.591*	32	.710**	.631*
11	.226	.255	33	.689**	.719**
12	.771**	.781**	34	.688**	.582*
13	.744**	.731**	35	.796**	.733**
14	.825**	.612*	36	.745**	.632*
15	.758**	.619*	37	.636*	.594*
16	.753**	.732**	38	.381	.311
17	.785**	.619*	39	.793**	.692**
18	.781**	.688**	40	.705**	.619*

Phrase number	Dimension	The whole scale	Phrase number	Dimension	The whole scale
19	.796**	.633*	41	.721**	.641*
20	.855**	.632*	42	.696**	.623*
21	.532*	.634*	43	.755**	.692**
22	.695**	.632*	44	.632*	.544*

The previous table shows that the scale has a high degree of validity.

**Sample properties:**

**Table No. (7) Characteristics of the research sample n = 340**

Variables	responses	Frequency	(%)	professional identity crisis	Academic Adjustment
<b>Gender</b>	Male	86	25.3	.625*	-.544*
	Female	254	74.7		
<b>Age</b>	19-	2	0.6	-.682**	.704**
	20-	106	31.2		
	21-	209	61.5		
	22 and over	23	6.8		
<b>How far is the dorm from the university?</b>	Near	64	18.8		
	average proximity	124	36.5		
	far	152	44.7		
<b>Housing type</b>	old rent	41	12.1		
	modern rent	150	44.1		
	ownership	149	43.8		
<b>Last year's estimate</b>	Acceptable	118	34.7		
	Good	165	48.5		
	very good	44	12.9		
	Excellence	3	0.9		
<b>Place of residence</b>	Rural	210	61.8	.577*	-.539*
	Urban	130	38.2		
<b>Average household income</b>	1000 -	40	11.8		
	2000 -	228	67.1		
	3000 -	45	13.2		
	4000 more	27	7.9		

**General results of the study:**

**1. The first hypothesis:** "There is an inverse statistically significant relationship between the crisis of professional identity and academic adjustment of social work students".

**Table No. (8) The correlation between the professional identity crisis and the academic adjustment of social work students using Pearson correlation coefficient  
n = 340**

The professional identity crisis / academic Adjustment	Social dimension	The emotional dimension	Disciplinary dimension	Learning dimension
the feeling of weakness	-.795**	-.744**	-.692**	-.725**
the feeling of self-esteem	-.699**	-.742**	-.734**	-.576*
the trend towards the other sex	-.739**	-.612*	-.773**	-.789**
the trend towards a care	-.768**	-.691**	-.739**	-.711**
<b>The whole scale</b>	<b>-.787**</b>	<b>-.731**</b>	<b>-.806**</b>	<b>-.778**</b>

The previous table shows the validity of the study first hypothesis, which was proved (There is an inverse statistically significant relationship between the professional identity crisis and the academic adjustment of social work students) at significant level (0.01) in all dimensions.

**The second and third hypothesis**

**2.** There is statistically significant relationship between some demographic variables (Gender, Age, Last year's degree, Place of residence) and professional identity crisis of social work students.

**3.** There is a statistically significant relationship between some demographic variables (Gender, Age, Last year's degree, Place of residence) and academic adjustment of social work students. (See **Table No.7**)

The previous table proved the second hypothesis. It is statistically significant at (0.05), the results indicated there is a positive relation between (Gender, Place of residence) and the professional identity crisis for students of social work at significant level (0.05). However, there is a negative relationships between (Age, Last year's degree) and the professional identity crisis of students at significant level (0.01). As the age increases and the values of the past year rises, the identity crisis of students of social work decreases and vice versa.

The previous table proved the second hypothesis at statistically significant (0.05) where the results indicated there is a positive relation between (Age, Last year's degree) and the academic adjustment for students of social work at significant level (0.01). As the age increases and the assessment of the past year rises, the academic adjustment of students of social work increases, it means a negative relationship between (Gender, Place of residence) and the academic adjustment of students at significant level (0.05).

#### The Fourth and Fifth Hypothesis:

4. There are statistically significant differences between males and females on the professional identity crisis scale for students.

5. There are statistically significant differences between males and females on the academic adjustment scale for students.

**Table No. (9) The differences between males and females on the professional identity crisis scale and academic adjustment for social work students using a coefficient (T) n = 340**

Scale	Indicators	%	Averages	Standard deviation	(t) test Crisis scale
The professional identity crisis scale	Male	25.3	1.4333	0.46115	7.225 Significant at 0.01
	Female	74.7	2.7333	0.45774	
The academic adjustment	Male	25.3	2.8666	0.46115	8.559 Significant at 0.01
	Female	74.7	1.6555	0.45774	

The previous table proved the fourth hypothesis as there are statistically significant differences at (0.01) between males and females on the professional identity crisis scale in favor of females with a mean of (2.7333).

The previous table shows that the fifth hypothesis is correct as there are statistically significant differences at (0.01) between males and females on the academic adjustment scale in favor of male with a mean of (2.8666).

#### Discussion and results:

The study proves the validity of the first hypothesis "at a statistical significance of (0.01) in all dimensions. The greater the identity crisis among students of the third and fourth year of social work, the more this leads to a decrease in their academic compatibility. The weak sense of an individual's identity makes him/her incompatible with those around them, as well as agreeing with the environmental perspective that affects the individual and affected by him.

Researchers justify the poor professional identity of students of social work due to the lack of societal recognition of the profession, inadequacy of the bachelor's program to graduate a competent general practitioner, the deterioration of the profession's status in developing societies, and competition between psychologists and social workers over working with cases in institutions that provide social and counseling services such as school and hospital.

While higher professional identity crisis among the study sample leads to decrease in their academic adjustment socially, emotionally, disciplinarily or academically, this is consistent with Al-Ahmad, (2011) as the results showed a decrease in academic compatibility among students of social work, and this contradicts with the study results of Al-Khoukhi (2009), Al-Qahtani (2018), Muqran (2018) and Younes (2021). They concluded that the university adjustment of the students is high.

The two researchers justify the weak professional identity of social work students due to the society's lack of recognition of the social work profession, lack of awareness of social work students and society with the value of the profession. In addition, the bachelor's program is insufficient to graduate a competent general practitioner, and the prosperity of the social work profession succeeded in the capitalist and not in developing societies. This is explained in the light of the theoretical framework used to explain the results of the study (the ecological perspective in the Social Casework), where it explains the results in light of the position occupied by the student in the community after his graduation, the recognition of society and other disciplines of the value of the profession, and the extent of its compatibility with the surrounding environment and the extent of its preparation theoretically and practically to keep pace with contemporary changes in society and to perform its desired roles. The study also proves the validity of the second hypothesis, which has a statistical significance at (0.05). This is consistent with the concept of habitat in ecological theory, where students are psychologically, socially, and behaviorally influenced by the environment in which they live.

The study also proves the validity of the third hypothesis, which has a statistical significance at (0.05). This is consistent with the concept of adjustment in ecological theory as students take on a range of roles to adapt to their surroundings.

Hence, the professional identity crisis of social work students is affected by the nature of the community, rural or urban, and its awareness and extent of its recognition of the value of the profession, as well as the weak academic adjustment of students.

The study proves the validity of the fourth hypothesis “where there are statistically significant differences at (0.01) between males and females on the professional identity crisis scale in favor of females with an arithmetic mean (2.7333), and this may be due to the increase in the number of females in the sample over the number of males. Furthermore, this is consistent with Mukhtar (2016) who refers to the method of selecting the sample. However, it contradicts with Al-Saudi, (2018) which finds that there are no differences between males and females on the professional identity crisis scale. This may be due to the different nature of the community, rural or urban, and the extent of its awareness of the profession value, as well as the increase in the proportion of females in the size of the research sample.

The study proves the validity of the fifth hypothesis, where there are statistically significant differences at (0.01) between males and females on the academic adjustment scale in favor of males with an arithmetic mean (2.8666), where it finds that there are supporting differences of males. This may be due to a higher identity crisis in favor of females than males. Nevertheless, this contradicts Rashid, (2011) who finds out that there are differences in favor of males, and this may be due to a higher identity crisis in favor of females than males. The results contradict with both Younis (2021) and Al-Raqad (2017), who find that there are no differences between males and females on the academic adjustment scale.

### **Indicators of the role of social workers in alleviating the professional identity crisis to raise the level of academic adjustment among students at the College of Social Work:**

- 1. Trainer:** holding training courses for social work students to train them on social marketing skills for social institution.
- 2. Teacher:** Focusing on research that shows the importance of the role of the social worker in various fields.
- 3. Focusing** on scientific approaches and synthetic models that clarify the role of the social worker in applying them to solve different problems and acquire the skills of their application.

**4. Broker:** Through the scientific leadership lectures, students are encouraged to express their problems related to the curricula, teaching method, and the relationship with the professor, and conducting this to the college administration to bring about actual development so that the student feels the importance of his opinion in developing the profession.

**5. Changing** the negative attitudes of society towards the profession

**6. The educational** institutions modify the curricula in line with contemporary changes in society and achieve a successful identity for the profession.

**7. Developer:** Developing the professional performance of social workers in social institutions.

**The difficulties faced by researchers during the practical application are as follows:**

1. Researchers turned to the research community more than once to meet the scale due to the students' preoccupation with the lectures.

2. The spread of the Covid-19 virus during the study period.

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