

Bar-Ilan University

**The Interaction Between Adult Psychosocial Stages of
Development among Parents in a Mixed Religious-
Secular Marriage**

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Abstract

This study deals with the interaction between psychological stages of development among parents living in a mixed religious-secular marriage. Particularly, the study focuses on the interaction between the Eriksonian developmental stages concerned with identity, intimacy, and generativity. Due to the fact that the interaction between developmental stages was not sufficiently studied, this study seeks to examine how parenthood issues in a mixed-relationship redefines how identity and intimacy issues are dealt with. The goal of the study is to delineate the experiences of parents dealing with reawakened processes relating to past stages (identity and intimacy).

Relationship conflicts that may serve as catalysts for the processes of interest are common in mixed religious-secular relationships. Accordingly, 15 participants were interviewed, where each is a parent and is married to a spouse that defines himself or herself as different from a religious identity perspective. The findings suggest that parenthood within a mixed relationship indeed is affected by the past developmental stages of identity and intimacy and also reawakens issues related to them. The findings also point to an interaction between the developmental stages. Coping with identity and intimacy issues inter-relates with generativity issues.