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Identity Salience and its dynamics in Palestinians Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The goal is to build and test a measure for identity salience and use it to explore the validity of some assumptions of the identity trauma theory (ITT). ITT suggests that the salience of identity concerns, personal, and collective enhances or negatively affect agency and self-efficacy and explain suicidality and militancy. Using samples of 880 Palestinian adolescents, we developed in the first study a measure for identity salience that included sub-scales for identity commitment and militancy. In the second study we used the measure along with measures for fear of death, mental health variables, and trauma types. Personal identity traumas were associated with decrease in fear of death; increase in mental health problems and in clinical suicide. Collective identity traumas were associated with increase in identity commitment and militancy. Militancy was found to be associated with decreased PTSD which suggests that militancy acts as anxiety buffer. Identity commitment was associated with decrease in militancy. The implications of the results were discussed.

KEYWORDS

Identity Salience, Mortality Salience, Suicidality, Militancy, Identity Trauma Theory

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