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## The Struggle Of Assassin To Overcome Identity Crisis As Seen In Robert Ludlum's The Bourne Ultimatum

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### Abstract

*The title of this research is "The Struggle of Assassin to Overcome Identity Crisis Seen in Robert Ludlum's The Bourne Ultimatum." The problem of this research examines the psychological and moral journey of Jason Bourne, the protagonist of The Bourne Ultimatum by Robert Ludlum, as he grapples with an identity crisis triggered by amnesia and his past as a trained killer. The author uses Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory to analyze Bourne's struggle in finding himself and his quest for redemption. The researcher explores how Bourne's amnesia, a result of the CIA mind control program, forces him to confront a past he does not remember, filled with violence and morally ambiguous actions. This narrative reveals the psychological burden of being an armed individual, stripped of personal identity, and forced to operate solely as a tool for the state. Through his interactions with allies and foes, Bourne wrestles with the consequences of his actions and the ethical implications of his existence. This research analyzes how he confronts his past, seeks to understand his true identity, and ultimately attempts to free himself from CIA control, demonstrating human desire for self-determination and potential for redemption even amidst profound trauma. The research concludes by highlighting the profound impact of identity crisis on an individual's mental and moral development, showing how even a trained killer can overcome fractured self-perceptions and find meaning in a life marked by violence and manipulation.*

**Keywords:** Crisis, Identity, Psychosocial, Personality, Assassin.

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## I INTRODUCTION

In developmental psychology, the stages of an individual's social development are discussed, among the figures who contributed to this is Erikson's psychosocial development theory. Erikson (1978) stated that the term psychosocial in relation to human development means that the stages of a person's life from birth to death are shaped by social influences that interact with an organism that makes a person physically and psychologically mature.

One phenomenon often found in society related to identity crisis is the increase in cases of mental disorders, such as depression, anxiety, and other mental health problems. Individuals experiencing identity crisis tend to feel confused, uncertain, and lose direction in their lives and a sense of curiosity about who they really are, which can cause significant emotional and psychological pressure. In addition to the feelings of hopelessness and emptiness that often accompany it, identity crisis can be a risk factor that increases a person's tendency to commit suicide. Besides the individual impact, identity crisis can also affect one's interpersonal and social relationships.

For example, conflicts in relationships, social isolation, and difficulty interacting with others can be observed around individuals experiencing an identity crisis. Like Bourne, people may experience a deep sense of confusion and a strong desire to discover who they really are when they are caught between conflicting roles, expectations, or social pressures. The concept of self-identity in Erikson's theory is closely related to the concept of identity crisis.

Erikson emphasized that during adolescence, individuals experience an identity crisis as part of the process of building a strong identity. Identity crises arise when individuals feel the need to establish who they really are, what values they espouse, and how they interact with the surrounding environment. The resolution of this identity crisis shapes an individual's self-identity. If individuals manage to pass the identity challenge well, they will develop a solid and consistent identity. Conversely, if the identity

crisis is not resolved, individuals may experience confusion, uncertainty, or internal conflicts that hinder healthy personality development. In a literary context, identity crises are often related to internal conflicts experienced by characters. Literary works depict the search for, understanding, or acceptance of their identity. Identity crises in literature often involve deep questions about who the character is, what their values are, and how they interact with the world around them.

Characters experiencing an identity crisis in literature may feel confused, isolated, or uncertain about who they are. In general, a person's social environment, family, peers, and the culture in which they are situated can all have an impact on an identity crisis that they are experiencing in the context of their daily existence. An individual's environment can have a significant impact on how they define themselves. An identity crisis can be brought on by external pressures, family expectations, social standards, and experiences in social situations. How people connect with others and handle demands and challenges from their surroundings can have a significant impact on the process of self-discovery and discovering who they truly are.

Regarding identity crisis, one theory about identity crisis is the psychoanalytic approach. To explain in detail how identity crisis occurs from the perspective of the psychoanalytic approach developed by Erik Erikson, considering that the identity crisis experienced by individuals is an important stage in individual development, especially during adolescence and young adulthood.

To find out the stages of identity crisis experienced by individuals, Erik Erikson put forward eight stages of development, namely, trust and mistrust, autonomy and shame with doubt, initiative and guilt, industry and inferiority, identity and role confusion, intimacy and isolation, generativity and stagnation, integrity and despair.

## II RESEARCH METHOD

In 1968, Erikson introduced the idea of an identity crisis. Although there is undoubtedly more to identity crisis than first meets the eye. In this broad field, psychological methods are currently the most effective approach; however, the field to be studied is taken over by psychological terms that are frequently associated with identity or identity confusion, such as self-concept, self-image, or self-esteem, on the one hand, and role ambiguity, role conflict, or role loss, on the other. What is lacking from existing approaches is a theory of human development that seeks to approach things by figuring out where and how they evolve. Identity is never fixed as an accomplishment that takes the form of a personality shield because identity is never static and constant.

Identity crisis is a developmental stage in which people struggle to come to a clear understanding of who they truly are and suffer significant feelings of confusion and doubt. People have developmental goals to complete during adolescence, including identity development and exploration. They make an effort to identify the responsibilities, values, interests, and objectives that best fit them. During this process, they will experiment with different roles in their lives and explore a variety of possibilities. A crisis of identity arises when people struggle to define who they are. They might experience uncertainty, disorientation, or self-image dissatisfaction. Because ambiguity and internal conflict can result from an unstable or unclear identity, this crisis may have an impact on a person's psychological growth and well-being. Identity crisis is a common stage of teenage development that people must go through in order to establish a mature and secure identity. When faced with an identity crisis, people can integrate their experiences, delve deeper into their interests and values, and explore themselves to create a coherent and meaningful identity.

Every stage and crisis that follows has a distinct tie to one of the core institutionalized endeavors of humanity for the simple reason that human institutions and the life cycle have coevolved. They have a reciprocal connection in which each generation gives these institutions the last of its youthful aspirations and zeal while also receiving, if they are successful in retaining their institutional life, a unique infusion of vitality. It is obvious that organized religion has always actively promoted mass infantilization, but if religion is defined as the institution that has worked to uphold fundamental trust throughout human history, then researchers reject any idea that religion is fundamentally childish or that religious behavior is fundamentally regressive. As we overcome our collective amnesia for the terrible aspects of infancy, we can happily admit that, in theory, the beauty of childhood also persists into maturity. Identity issues are lifetime problems since identity formation can happen during adolescence, despite the fact that identity crises frequently happen at this time. Become lasting problems since identity development can happen in response to significant life obstacles, particularly firsts like moving to a new place, losing a loved one, getting divorced, losing one's job, becoming very ill. The way a person resolves their identity crisis during adolescence indicates how well-equipped they are to handle identity challenges that arise in the subsequent stage of life beyond adolescence. How one accepts themselves and their history determines how an identity crisis turns out. Erikson put forward eight development stage, namely, trust and mistrust, autonomy and shame and doubt, initiative and guilt, industry and inferiority, identity and confusion, intimacy and isolation, generativity and stagnation, integrity and despair.

## III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The techniques used to gather research data are known as data collecting methods. This implies that selecting the right kind of data is a requirement for all scientists and researchers.

The observation approach was employed in this research to gather data. Researchers most frequently employ the observation data gathering strategy, particularly in behavioral science

research, according to Kothari (2004: 96). *The Bourne Ultimatum* by Ludlum provided information for this investigation.

Although everyone is aware of the objects in their immediate environment, these observations are not of a scientific nature. Prior to this research, the data used in this study was also gathered from a variety of sources, including books, journals, and other pertinent publications. The act of gathering non-numerical data in the form of words, images, and observations to comprehend people's attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, and motivations in a specific situation is referred to as a qualitative data collection approach.

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In this chapter, the research results will be described from the data analysis results in the form of an identity crisis that occurs in the character Jason Bourne, the background that causes the identity crisis, and the journey to rediscover his identity found in the novel *The Bourne Ultimatum* by Robert Ludlum. The things to be explained include data findings, data analysis, and the discussion of the research conducted by the researcher on the causes of the identity crisis in the character, and the journey of rediscovering his identity found in the novel *The Bourne Ultimatum* by Robert Ludlum.

## The Occurrence of An He Loss Identity

Jason Bourne is a man suffering from amnesia. He was found floating in the Mediterranean Sea with gunshot wounds and no identity. He then discovers a plastic tube containing a bank account number in Zurich, leading to his new identity, Jason Bourne. However, this identity turns out to be a false identity given to him by a secret CIA program.

**Jason :** "*what are you doing for me? Where am i?*"

**Washburn :** "*A boat! Fishing boat. You were in the water. We pulled you upair.*"

**Jason :** "*What Water?*"

**Washburn :** "*You got shot, see? Here the bullet. See there's a number for a bank. Why's that in your hip?*"

**Jashon :** "*in my hip?*"

(*The Bourne Ultimatum*, 1993:2)

Jason asked what was being done for him and where he was, showing his confusion and loss of memory about his situation. Washburn explained that they were on a fishing boat and that Jason had been in the water before they pulled him out. Jason's like "What water?" showed his lack of understanding about his previous condition in the water. Washburn explained to Jason that he had been shot, showing the bullet that had pierced Jason body and pointing out the number on the bullet related to a bank. Jason asked again, "In my hip?" showing his surprise and disbelief that there was a bank number associated with him written on the bullet in his hip.

**Jason :** "*What are you doing to me?*"

**Washburn :** "*you need to rest. I am a friend. your friend. My name is Washburn, who are you? I asked you what your name was.*"

**Jason :** "*I don't know.*"

**Washburn :** "*Oh, my God, you need to rest.*"

(*The Bourne Ultimatum* 1993:5)

In this quote, Jason Bourne shows signs of confusion and memory loss. When Jason asks, "What are you doing to me?" It reflects his lack of understanding and uncertainty about his identity. He does not recognize himself or those around him. Washburn tries to calm Jason by saying that

he needs rest and claims to be his friend. He then asks Jason about his name to help him remember his lost identity. In his confusion, Jason admits that he does not know who he is. This confirms that he is experiencing significant memory loss. Washburn, with the reaction “Oh, God, you need rest,” shows concern and care for Jason’s chaotic and confusing state. With the quote above, it shows the theme of identity crisis experienced by Jason Bourne, which is the core of the novel’s story.

#### 4.2 Jason Bourne Rediscovering His Identity

**Jason** : “What is it?”  
**Washburn** : “It’s a bank account of some kind.”

“Where did you get it?”

**Washburn** : “From you. This is a very small negative; my guess would be half the size of a thirty-five millimeter film. It was implanted--surgically implanted--beneath the skin above your right hip. The numbers are in your handwriting; it’s your signature. With it you can open a vault in Zurich.”

(*The Bourne Ultimatum*, 1993:16)

This quote shows one of Jason Bourne’s struggles in finding his identity. Bourne asks “What is this” and “Where did you get it?” Indicating that he has no memory of the bank account or how he obtained it. This indicates that he is experiencing amnesia and lacks an understanding of his past. Washburn explains that the bank account was surgically implanted in Bourne’s body, meaning he has a secret identity and may have a dangerous or hidden past. Bourne feels confused and unsure about who he really is and what he has done in the past. The discovery of the bank account opens the door for Bourne to uncover his true identity, but also triggers uncertainty and fear. This quote shows that Bourne is on a journey to find his true identity. He

has no memory of his past, but clues like the bank account suggest that he has a more complex identity and may have a dangerous or hidden past.

*“He walked to a primitive cupboard against the wall, opened a drawer, and took out a large automatic handgun. The man with no memory tensed in his chair; Washburn was aware of the reaction. “I’ve never used this, not sure I’d know how to, but I do live on the waterfront.” He smiled, and then suddenly, without warning, threw it to the man. The weapon was caught in midair, the catch clean, swift, and confident. “Break it down; I believe that’s the phrase.”*

**Jason** : “What?”  
**Washburn** : “Break Now.”

*The man looked at the gun. And then, in silence, his hands and fingers moved expertly over the weapon. In less than thirty seconds it was completely dismantled. He looked up at the Washburn.*

(*The Bourne Ultimatum*, 1993:17)

This quote shows one of Jason Bourne’s struggles in finding his identity. Although Bourne admits to never using a weapon and being unsure of how to use it, he easily dismantles the weapon in a short time. This indicates that he has hidden skills that he is not aware of, which may be related to his forgotten past. Bourne asks “What?” when Washburn asks him to dismantle the weapon. This indicates that he has no memory of his skills and feels confused and unsure about his own abilities. Bourne’s hidden skills serve as an important clue for him to discover his true identity. He begins to realize that he has a more complex past and may have abilities he was not aware of before. This quote shows that Bourne is in the process of finding his true self. He has no memory of his past, but his hidden skills are evidence that he has a more complex identity and may have a dangerous or hidden past.

## IV CONCLUSION

The research was conducted to draw conclusions about the personality structure of Jason Bourne experiencing identity crisis contained in the novel *The Bourne Ultimatum*. The conclusion is as follows:

The answer to the first research objective in this study is the personality structure of the main characters in the novel *The Bourne Ultimatum* where Erik Erikson’s psychosocial development theory is used. It shows that the



character experiencing amnesia leading to an identity crisis. Jason's personality is influenced by his life background experiencing an identity crisis reflected through the story of the novel *The Bourne Ultimatum*. Based on the analysis of the main character's personality through psychosocial studies, it can be concluded that the main character experiences an identity crisis where the character does not recognize himself and does not know what happened in his past.

Jason Bourne's personality is a complex and mysterious character. He experiences amnesia, so he does not remember his past and who he is. This makes him a mysterious figure, with extraordinary physical and mental abilities, yet unaware of his life's purpose. Overall, Jason Bourne is an intriguing and mysterious character. He is strong and skilled, but also vulnerable and full of doubt. Bourne's journey to find his identity is at the core of this novel, providing readers with a thrilling and intriguing experience.

Then for the second research objective in this research explores several complex moral values, especially through the character of Jason Bourne. Bourne, who experiences amnesia, is forced to confront his violent past. He must grapple with the fact that he is a trained killer for secret missions. Although Bourne is an isolated and secretive figure, he shows his humanity through his relationship with Marie St. Jacques. Their relationship demonstrates that even in dangerous situations, humans still need connection and love. Bourne strives to uncover the truth about the Treadstone and Blackbriar programs, even though it makes him a target for assassination. He fights against the corrupt system and tries to expose hidden secrets. Bourne is not only seeking his identity but also freedom from CIA control. He wants to decide for himself how to live and does not want to be a tool for a corrupt organization.

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