

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IDENTITY STYLES AND SELF-ESTEEM OF GRADE 10 STUDENTS

Mie Mie Khaing¹, Tin Mg Win²

Abstract

The present study was carried out to investigate the relationship between identity styles and self-esteem of Grade 10 students. A total of Grade 10 students (386 male and 529 female) from Yangon and Bago Regions were selected as participants in this study. Data were collected by the use of Identity Styles Inventory-5 (ISI-5) developed by Berzonsky (2013) and Coppersmith's Self-esteem Inventory (1987 and 2012). According to *t*-test results, female students were more likely to use normative identity style than male students in this study. It was found that male students had higher personal self-esteem than female students in this study. And female students had higher level of self-esteem derived from parents, peers, and self-esteem (Personal, School academic, Parents, Peers) than male students in this study. With the aid of Pierson's solitary test, the results showed that among identity styles, informational style and normative identity styles had positive relationship with self-esteem and diffuse avoidant style had negative relationship with self-esteem respectively.

Keywords: Identity Style, Informational Style, Normative Style, Diffuse Avoidant Style, Commitment Style and Self-Esteem

Introduction

For the formation of total structure of a life, whole of the lifespan is important, but some of them are more. For numerous people, especially in contemporary industrialized societies, the process of identity development may be influenced either by an individualistic approach or by a collectivist approach. Individual usually think about future events and set some goals for them, they try to reach their goals. According to this perspective, individuals must develop a coherent identity framework to effectively manage and navigate their lives. This framework supports a sense of continuity and serves as a reference for making decisions, solving problems, and interpreting experiences and information. Across an individual's life, self-esteem is shaped by interpersonal relationships in diverse settings. Both formal and personal interactions with partners, family members, and peers impact self-esteem. Notably, the parent-child relationship plays a crucial role in the development of self-esteem during adolescence. Adolescence is a time of significant transformation that frequently leads to declines in positive self-perceptions and self-esteem. Adolescent as one of the most critical period of life, accompanies various changes in different dimensions and the vulnerable age group in the society. Adolescence is a time when both positive and negative developmental trajectories begin to take shape, in which there are dramatic changes, and as a result of such changes an individual's perception of the world is altered. The study of adolescence has consistently been a compelling area of research, with identity emerging as a particularly crucial topic during this developmental stage. Adolescent students face unique and diverse challenges, both personally and developmentally, that impact their identity styles and self-esteem. The study of adolescent has always been an interesting subject to explore. Identity is a central and critical aspect of adolescent development. Identity is a construct of psychological and social development, with its foundations being established during the years preceding adolescence. The core elements of identity encompass the selection of

¹ Department of Educational Studies, Hlegu Education Degree College

² University of Loi Kaw

values, beliefs, and life purpose. Additionally, social interactions, particularly recognition within peer groups, play a crucial role in fostering a healthy identity and self-esteem. Efforts to enhance students' identity styles and self-esteem have proven effective in diminishing mal-adaptive behaviors and improving academic performance. Examining the relationship between identity styles and self-esteem of adolescent students with gender might be useful to gain some empirical evidence that might be of interest to counselors, psychologists, educators, teachers and parents. Such evidence would provide guidelines for how educators should interact with students in the school environment and how parents should engage with their children at home to foster the development of identity styles and self-esteem, as well as to assist in addressing challenges encountered at home, in school, and within the broader society.

Objective of the Study

To investigate the relationship between identity styles and self-esteem of Grade 10 students.

Research Questions

- ❖ Is there any significant difference in identity styles among Grade 10 students by gender?
- ❖ Is there any significant difference in self-esteem among Grade 10 students by gender?
- ❖ Is there any significant relationship between identity styles and self-esteem among Grade 10 students?

Definitions of Key Terms

Identity style. An identity style refers to the strategy that an individual prefers to use in processing, structuring, utilizing, and revising self-relevant information (Berzonsky 2013).

Information style. An information style is typical of adolescents who actively construct a sense of identity by seeking out and evaluating self-relevant information before making decisions and forming commitments (Berzonsky 2013)

Normative style. A normative style is typical of adolescents who rely on the prescriptions and expectations held by significant others (such as parents and authority figures) when confronted with identity-relevant problems (Berzonsky 2013).

Diffuse avoidant style. Diffuse avoidant style refers to procrastination and attempting not to deal with important life decisions (Berzonsky, 2013).

Commitment style. Commitment was defined as the extent to which individuals adhere to and invest in identity-relevant choice (Marcia, 1996).

Self-esteem. Self-esteem refers to an overall evaluation of one's worth or value as a person (James 2002).

Related Literature Review

Adolescence

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2013) defines adolescence as the period of transition (referred to as a "bridge" by between childhood and adulthood, ranging from the ages of 10 to 19. Universally, adolescence is seen as the onset of biological factors such as puberty; however, the duration and defining characteristics of this period may vary across time, cultures, and socioeconomic situations (World Health Organization [WHO], 2013). Making a clear distinction between the starting and ending points of adolescence is quite a challenge (Jacobs, 2014).

Identity formation in adolescents

The adolescent phase of development is often marked by a growing awareness of identity issues. Some of the concerns that are relevant to adolescents include gender roles, relationships, marriage, religion, politics, an own value system, independence from parents, social responsibility, and work roles (Luyckx et al., 2013). In addition, Wild and Swartz (2012) have identified six factors that also affect identity formation in adolescence: cognitive skills, personality, relationships with parents and peers, and opportunities to explore cultural and economic context. Erikson believed that identity formation is central to the adolescent phase, and that it can be achieved in the form of a coherent sense of one's roles and occupational pathway, one's self in relation to others, and one's values and purpose in life, whereas failure resulted in confusion within these self-aspects (Jacobs, 2014).

The word context can be defined as the interconnected conditions in which something exists or occurs. A key factor is that the school context provides a sense of continuity between childhood and adolescence, and therefore how they adapt and experience the site of formal education is important. Continuity and change have implications for development, and therefore the school environment is critical to development (Nweman, 1986).

Erik Erikson's Theory (Identity Development)

Erik Erikson formulated a theory of human development consisting of eight distinct stages: (1) Basic Trust versus Mistrust (from birth to one year), (2) Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (from one to three years), (3) Initiative versus Guilt (from three to six years), (4) Industry versus Inferiority (from six years to adolescence), (5) Identity versus Role Confusion (during adolescence), (6) Intimacy versus Isolation (in young adulthood), (7) Generativity versus Stagnation (in middle adulthood), and (8) Integrity versus Despair (in late adulthood). According to Erikson (1968), the process of identity formation can be tracked through all the stages of development (Jacobs, 2014).

Relationship Between Identity Styles and Self-Esteem of Adolescents

Erikson (1968) expressed self-esteem is a byproduct of identity development, which arises from effectively navigating the challenges associated with each developmental stage throughout life. Consequently, a person's sense of progress, personal growth, and successful engagement with life's tasks contributes to their overall feelings of self-worth. Self-esteem includes healthy identity formation because students with high self-esteem function effectively in a variety of situations, including school contexts (Meece, 2002).

Adolescents who use an information-oriented identity style have a strong need to engage in adaptive cognitive activities, a willingness to consider alternative ideas (Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992), and they use a vigilant decisional strategy (Berzonsky & Ferrari, 1996). They tend to use problem-focused and seeking-social-support coping strategies, and do not rely on wishful thinking, emotional distancing, or anxious reactions (Berzonsky, 1992). Information-oriented adolescents possess the life-management skills needed to effectively structure their lives and manage their time to deal with academic demands in a responsible, self-regulated fashion (Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000). They use effective strategies such as expecting success, seeking social support, and do not engage in task-irrelevant behavior. As a result, these adolescents demonstrate academic independence, active engagement in their education, and elevated levels of

self-esteem. They also critically assess the extent to which specific religious content aligns with their individual self-concepts, resulting in the interpretation of religious material through a personal and symbolic lens. An information-oriented identity style exhibits a negative correlation with the need for closure, as well as with indicators of prejudice and conservatism. As a result, adolescents who adopt this identity style characterize themselves as tolerant and report having open, mature, and sincere relationships. Adolescents with an information-oriented identity style are less likely to exhibit conduct or hyperactivity disorders. Overall, an information-oriented style appears to be linked with adaptive developmental outcomes, both at the individual and interpersonal levels. Adolescents who adopt a normative identity style manage stressors through avoidance strategies, such as distancing themselves and engaging in wishful thinking. They show increased debilitating and decreased facilitative anxiety reactions (Berzonsky, 1992). This is consistent with their inflexible and narrowly focused approach to information processing. Such defensive attitudes may serve the role of protecting the individual from having to deal with dissonance-inducing experiences and information that might threaten or invalidate critical self-views (Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992). Normative adolescents hold firm personal commitments, suggesting that they may foreclose their options and use relatively automatic means of resolving decisional tasks (Berzonsky & Ferrari, 1996). As a consequence, their sense of academic purpose is more externally based and inflexible (Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000). A normative style is characterized by a passive, submissive, and obedient orientation towards important authority and identification figures (McLean et al., 2012). Perhaps as a consequence of this strong endorsement of social norms and conventions, normative individuals are at low risk for problem behaviors (Adams et al., 2001). They have also been found to report high levels of self-esteem (Jenaabadi & Dehabasi, 2014). In summary, a normative identity style functions as a double-edged sword: while individuals with this style generally exhibit favorable personal adjustment outcomes, such as high levels of commitment and self-esteem, it also has a negative aspect concerning interpersonal attitudes and behaviors. Due to their rigid cognitive patterns and adherence to rules, individuals with a normative identity style exhibit intolerance and struggle to establish honest and mature relationships. Adolescents who employ a diffuse-avoidant identity style utilize emotion-focused coping strategies, including distancing, wishful thinking, and methods for reducing tension. They do not use a problem-focused approach (Berzonsky, 1999), but they have a more situation-specific approach to problem solving and decision making (Berzonsky, 1992). Diffuse-avoidant adolescents show pre-decisional panic, low cognitive confidence, procrastination, and maladaptive decisional strategies such as avoidance, excuse making, rationalization (Berzonsky, 1997), expecting to fail, limited social support seeking, and a high level of task-irrelevant behavior.

Adolescents with a diffuse-avoidant identity style encounter social difficulties, struggle to establish and sustain a supportive social network, and exhibit immature interpersonal relationships. They have low scores on academic autonomy or educational involvement (Berzonsky, 1989). These adolescents have an increased risk for a variety of difficulties, including low self-esteem, high levels of depression and neuroticism, early drug and alcohol use, and conduct and hyperactivity disorder behaviors. In summary, the diffuse-avoidant identity style is associated with a consistently maladaptive pattern of outcomes and related variables. Although

previous research on the relationship between identity and self-esteem has predominantly used cross-sectional designs, many scholars have interpreted these findings as supporting a primary pathway from identity to self-esteem, known as the identity main-effects model. Among others, stress that this reversed path also merits empirical attention because self-esteem could influence identity processes. High self-esteem could be a resource for making strong identity commitments and a sense of competence over time (Luyckx et al., 2013).

Method

Sample and Scope of the Study

The study of identity styles of Grade 10 students and its correlation with their self-esteem was conducted by descriptive survey method.. A total of 915 Grade 10 students (386 male and 529 female) were selected as a sample from 8 High Schools in Yangon and Bago Regions.

Research Instrumentation

The study was conducted with two instruments, Identity Style Inventory—Version 5 (ISI-5, 2013) and Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory (1987 and 2012) were used in this study to explore Grade 10 students' identity styles and self-esteem. ISI-5 composed of 36 items, consisting 9-items Informational-style scale, 9-items Normative-style scale, 9-items Diffuse-avoidance style scale and 9-items Commitment style. Each item was assessed along a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree: to (5) strongly agree. The internal consistency of Cronbach's alpha was 0.75. Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory (1987 and 2012) contained 50 items to assess students' self-esteem. The response type for each item was Yes / No type questions and including personal self-esteem (27-items), self-esteem derived from school academic (7-items), self-esteem derived from parents (8-items) and self-esteem derived from peers (8-items). The internal consistency of Cronbach's alpha was 0.78.

Two instruments were modified into Myanmar version. After developing the instruments, expert review was conducted for face validity and content validity by five experienced teachers from Department of Educational Psychology in the last week of October, 2014. As an initial phase of this study, pilot study was conducted on the second week of the December, 2014 with a sample of 100 Grade 10 students from Shwe Pyi Thar, in order to explore whether the questionnaires were clear enough in Myanmar questionnaires, the researcher improved and modified the weak points, misunderstanding of wording and phrases of some items on which seemed to be vague. Before the test administration, students were provided necessary instructions and explanations on how to complete the questionnaire. Students answered the questionnaire within 45 minutes. The instruments were distributed during their class time and returned back. All participants completed two instruments (ISI and SEI) and demographic information.

Data Analysis and Research Findings

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Grade 10 Students' Identity Styles

Variables	Number	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Informational style	915	17	45	33.75	4.46
Normative style	915	18	45	32.92	4.88
Diffuse-avoidant style	915	11	43	26.15	6.29
Commitment style	915	14	45	31.55	5.35

From the descriptive analyses, it was revealed that the mean scores of Grade-10 students' identity styles were IS=33.75, NS=32.92, DS= 26.15 and CS=31.55 respectively.

IS=informational style, NS=Normative Style, DS=Diffuse avoidant Style, CS=Commitment Style

Table 2 ANOVA Results in Differences of Identity Styles of Grade 10 Students by Schools

Variables	Sum of Square	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Informational style	Between Groups	301.28	16.988**	.000
	Within Groups	17.74		
Normative style	Between Groups	337.42	15.652**	.000
	Within Groups	21.56		
Diffuse-avoidant style	Between Groups	713.06	20.686**	.000
	Within Groups	34.47		
Commitment style	Between Groups	277.63	10.414**	.000
	Within Groups	26.66		

Note. ** $p < .001$ level

To obtain more detailed information of a particular school, Post-Hoc test was executed by Tukey-HSD method and it was found that identity styles among schools were significantly different at 0.05 level.

Table 3 Post-Hoc Analysis of Grade 10 Students' Identity Styles by Tukey Method

Variables	(I) School	(J) School	Mean Differences	<i>p</i>
Informational style	School-1 (Ygn)	School-3 (Ygn)	5.645*	.000
		School-4 (Ygn)	2.601*	.001
		School-6 (Bago)	1.928*	.01
		School-8 (Bago)	2.290*	.000
	School-2 (Ygn)	School-3 (Ygn)	4.012*	.000
Informational style	School-1 (Ygn)	School-3 (Ygn)	5.645*	.000
		School-4 (Ygn)	2.601*	.001
		School-6 (Bago)	1.928*	.01
		School-8 (Bago)	2.290*	.000
	School-2 (Ygn)	School-3 (Ygn)	4.012*	.000
	School-3 (Ygn)	School-4 (Ygn)	-3.043*	.000
		School-5 (Bago)	-4.319*	.000
		School-6 (Bago)	-3.995*	.000
		School-8 (Bago)	-3.354*	.000
		School-3 (Ygn)	2.518*	.000
		School-8 (Bago)	-2.089*	.009
	School-2 (Ygn)	School-4 (Ygn)	-2.914*	.000
		School-7 (Bago)	-3.390*	.000
		School-8 (Bago)	-4.415*	.000
	School-3 (Ygn)	School-4 (Ygn)	-3.105*	.000
		School-5 (Bago)	-3.105*	.000
		School-7 (Bago)	-3.582*	.000
		School-8 (Bago)	-4.607*	.000
	School-6 (Bago)	School-8 (Bago)	-2.744*	.000

Variables	(II) School	(K) School	Mean Differences	<i>p</i>
Diffuse-avoidant style	School-1 (Ygn)	School-4 (Ygn)	-2.880*	.001
		School-5 (Bago)	3.221*	.002
		School-6 (Bago)	3.732*	.000
		School-7 (Bago)	-2.831*	.020
	School-2 (Ygn)	School-3 (Ygn)	-2.447*	.003
		School-4 (Ygn)	-3.418*	.000
	School-3(Ygn)	School-5 (Bago)	5.130*	.000
		School-6 (Bago)	5.641*	.000
		School-8 (Bago)	2.970*	.001
	School-4 (Ygn)	School-5 (Bago)	6.101*	.000
		School-8 (Bago)	3.941*	.000
	School-5 (Bago)	School-7 (Bago)	-6.051*	.000
		School-8 (Bago)	-2.160*	.060
	School-6 (Bago)	School-7 (Bago)	-6.652*	.000
		School-8 (Bago)	-2.160*	.003
	School-7 (Bago)	School-8 (Bago)	3.891*	.000
Commitment style	School-1 (Ygn)	School-3 (Ygn)	2.944*	.000
		School-6 (Bago)	4.322*	.000
		School-7 (Bago)	4.670*	.000
		School-8 (Bago)	4.151*	.000
	School-2 (Ygn)	School-6 (Bago)	2.435*	.006
		School-7 (Bago)	2.784*	.004
		School-8 (Bago)	2.264*	.010
	School-4 (Ygn)	School-6 (Bago)	2.205*	.038
		School-7 (Bago)	2.554*	.023
	School-5 (Bago)	School-6 (Bago)	2.375*	.009
		School-7 (Bago)	2.724*	.006
		School-8 (Bago)	2.204*	.016

Note.* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < .001$

According to Table 3, there were significance differences in Identity styles of Grade 10 students among schools.

Table 4 Comparison of Identity Styles of Grade-10 students' by Gender

Variables	Gender	N	M	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
IS	male	386	33.83	.472	913	.637
	female	529	33.69			
NS	male	386	31.48	-7.797	913	.000
	female	529	33.96			
DS	male	386	26.37	-0.919	913	.358
	female	529	25.98			
CS	male	386	31.35	-0.982	913	.326
	female	529	31.70			

Note. *** $p < .001$

Table 4 revealed that there were significant differences in normative identity style of Grade 10 students by gender at .001 level. It was observed that female students' normative style were higher than male students. So it can be interpreted that female students in this study tend to use normative identity style than male students. But there were not statistically significant differences in informational style, diffuse avoidant style and commitment style by gender.

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics of Grade 10 Students' Self-Esteem

Variables	N	Minimum %	Maximum %	Mean %	SD
Personal	915	0	100	64.23	14.62
School academic	915	0	100	73.71	19.04
Parents	915	0	100	69.99	18.67
Peers	915	0	100	75.94	16.02
Self-esteem (total)	915	29.25	95.37	71.00	10.18

From the descriptive analyses, it was revealed that the mean percentage of total self-esteem was 71% and thus, self-esteem of Grade 10 students seemed to be satisfactory.

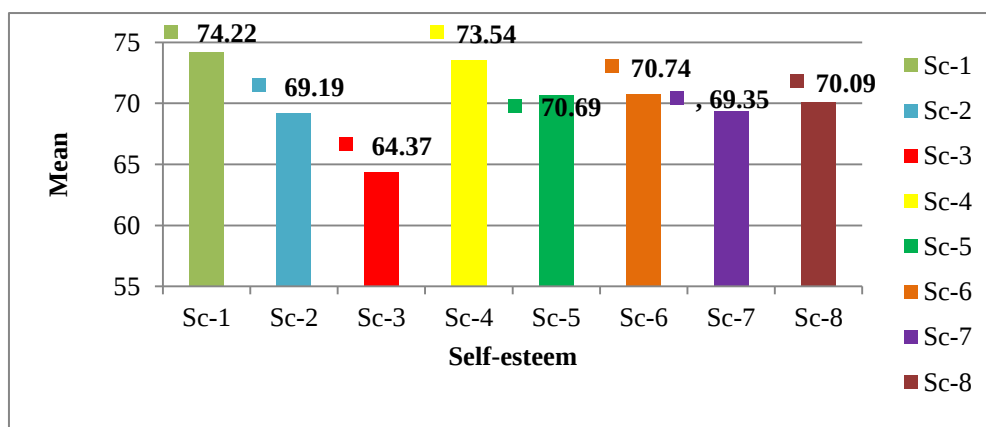


Figure 4.1 Mean Comparison of Grade 10 Students' Self-Esteem

Self-esteem (total)= personal self-esteem, school self-esteem, parental and peer self-esteem.

One way ANOVA was conducted to find out the differences among selected schools with regard to Grade 10 students' self-esteem.

Table 6 ANOVA Results in Differences of Students' Self-esteem of Grade 10 Students by Schools

Variables	Sum of Square	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Personal	Between Groups	25960.466	20.34**	.000
	Within Groups	165352.343		
School academic	Between Groups	10818.258	4.38**	.000
	Within Groups	320345.788		
Parents	Between Groups	30109.435	13.74**	.000
	Within Groups	284042.546		
Peers	Between Groups	4508.798	2.54	.14
	Within Groups	230146.939		
Self-esteem (total)	Within Groups	8151.950	12.2**	.000
	Between Groups	86576.047		

Note. * $p < 0.05$

To obtain more detailed information of a particular school, Post-hoc Test was also conducted using Tukey-HSD method.

Table 7 Post-Hoc Analysis of Grade 10 Students' Self-Esteem (total) Tukey HSD Method

Variable	(I)School	(J)School	Mean Differences	<i>p</i>
Self-esteem (total)	Sc-1 (Ygn)	Sc-2 (Ygn)	5.0245*	.004
		Sc-3 (Ygn)	9.8488***	.000
		Sc-4 (Ygn)	8.534*	.02
	Sc-2 (Ygn)	Sc-3(Ygn)	4.824*	.005
		Sc-4 (Ygn)	-4.34*	.042
		Sc-8 (Bago)	-3.76**	.000
	Sc-3 (Ygn)	Sc-4 (Ygn)	-9.164**	.000
		Sc-5 (Bago)	-7.814**	.000
		Sc-6 (Bago)	-6.196**	.000
		Sc-7 (Bago)	-7.394**	.000
		Sc-8 (Bago)	-8.584**	.000

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 7 described the significance differences of self-esteem of Grade-10 students among schools.

Table 8 Comparison of Grade 10 Students' Self-Esteem by Gender

Variables	Gender	N	Mean %	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Personal	male	386	67.69	13.13	6.193***	913	.000
	female	529	61.82	14.89			
School academic	male	386	73.83	18.85	.171	913	.864
	female	529	73.62	19.19			
Parents	male	386	64.70	17.33	7.715***	913	.000
	female	529	73.99	18.43			
Peers	male	386	74.58	16.29	-2.204*	913	.028
	female	529	76.94	15.76			
Self-esteem (total)	male	386	70.20	9.89	-2.037*	913	.042
	female	529	71.59	10.36			

*** $p < 0.001$

According to Table 8, it can be interpreted that female students have higher self-esteem derived from parents, peers and self-esteem (total) than male students. And also can be interpreted that male students' personal self-esteem was higher than female.

The major objective of this study is to explore the relationship between identity styles and self-esteem of Grade 10 students. To investigate whether there was a statistically significant relationship between the identity styles and self-esteem of Grade 10 students, the Bivariate correlation was computed.

Table 9 Correlation Between Identity Styles and Self-Esteem of Grade 10 Students

	Personal self-esteem	School	Parents	Peers	Self-esteem (total)
IS	.176**	.089**	.283**	.121**	.258**
NS	.083**	.127**	.722**	.103**	.458**
DS	-.157**	-.135**	-.027	-.050	-.150**
CS	.135**	.180**	.182**	.117**	.262**

Note. ** $p < .01$

IS=informational style, NS=Normative Style, DS=Diffuse avoidant Style, CS=Commitment Style

Self-esteem (total) = personal self-esteem, self-esteem derived from school academic, parental self-esteem and self-esteem derived peers.

According to Table 9, both of the students' informational style, normative style are positively correlated with their self-esteem (total=personal, school, parents, peers), personal self-esteem, self-esteem derived from school academic, self-esteem derived from parents and peers. However, among these two identity styles, normative style is more positively correlated with total self-esteem and Parental self-esteem. Diffuse-avoidant style is negative significant relationship with self-esteem (total=personal, school academic, parents, peers), personal self-esteem, self-esteem derived from school academic, self-esteem derived from parents and peers.

Conclusion

The primary focus of this study was to find out the identity styles and self-esteem of Grade 10 students who were studying at Grade 10 and then to investigate the relationship between identity styles and self-esteem of Grade 10 students. In this study, an investigation was conducted by using the quantitative method and a total of 915 Grade 10 students from Yangon and Bago Regions participated as the sample. To investigate students' identity styles, the researcher used identity style inventory (ISI-5), 2013. This questionnaire consists 36 items composing four subscales; informational style (9 items), normative style (9 items), diffuse-avoidant style (9 items) and commitment style (9 items). Also, Grade 10 students' self-esteem was explored by mixing and developing Self-Esteem Inventory-Long Form (SEI), 1987 and the school short-form Coopersmith's Self-esteem Inventory designed by Hills, P, R., & Francis, 2013). This instrument includes four subscales; personal self-esteem, self-esteem derived from school academic, parents, peer. These two instruments were modified into Myanmar version. After developing the instruments, expert review was conducted for face validity and content validity by five experienced teachers from Department of Educational Psychology in the last week of October, 2014. Then during the third week of November 2014, a pilot testing was conducted on 100 Grade 10 students from Shwe Pyi Thar, Yangon.

The main objective of this study was to investigate the relationship among identity styles and self-esteem of Grade 10 students. The findings pointed out that students' identity style is strongly correlated with their self-esteem at .05 level and .01 level. So it can be concluded that students who have higher levels of self-esteem tend to possess informational style and also

possess normative style. Students who possess lower level of self-esteem tend to possess diffuse-avoidant style.

The second objective of this study was to find out the gender differences in identity styles of Grade 10 students. In order to observe gender differences on students' identity style, *t*-test was employed. *t*-test result revealed that the significant difference was not found in the informational style, diffuse-avoidant style and commitment style. It also revealed that the significant differences were found in the normative style by gender. According to the finding of the study, female students were more likely to use normative style than male students in this study. This finding was consistent with Myanmar culture. In order to observe gender differences on students' self-esteem, *t*-test was employed. *t*-test result revealed that the significant differences were found in the self-esteem (personal esteem, self-esteem derived from school academic, parents and peers) by gender. Therefore, it can be concluded that male students in this study have higher self-esteem than female students and male students' personal self-esteem, self-esteem derived from parents, peers are higher than female students.

Moreover, the primary objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between identity styles and self-esteem of Grade 10 students. The Bivariate correlation was conducted. As a result, both of the informational style and normative style were positively correlated with the self-esteem and its components (personal, self-esteem derived from school academic, parents and peers). This finding was consistent with the findings of Natasi et al., (2005) which stated that there was a significant relationship between self-esteem components (personal self-esteem, self-esteem derived from school academic, parents and peers) and identity styles. Informational and normative identity styles have positive significant relationship with self-esteem, on the other hand, there was a negative relationship between self-esteem and diffuse-avoidant identity style. And they showed that people with informational style have higher self-esteem than people with normative style. Furthermore, the findings in this study are consistent with the results of Luyckx et al., (2011) which stated that there was a positive significant relationship between self-esteem and normative and informational identity styles, and a negative significant relationship between diffuse avoidant style.

Other researchers have confirmed that informational and normative identity styles can positively influence self-esteem, while the diffuse-avoidant identity style has been found to predict self-esteem negatively. Furthermore, the findings of Erigit and Kerpelman (2009) stated that people with informational and normative identity styles had a positive understanding of themselves, while people with diffuse-avoidant style have negative understanding. Self-esteem includes healthy identity formation because students with high self-esteem function effectively in a variety of situations, including school contexts (Ervin & Stryke, 2001).

Discussion and Recommendations

Identity development is the primary task of adolescent. Erikson believed that identity formation is central to the adolescent phase, and that it can be achieved in the form of a coherent sense of one's roles and occupational pathway, one's self in relation to others, and one's values and purpose in life, whereas failure resulted in confusion within these self aspect (Jacobs, 2014). Establishing a coherent identity framework provides lifelong stability and allows individuals to derive meaning from their life experiences. Educators can support healthy identity development

by fostering safe learning environments that enable students to explore their identities without undue pressure. In a secure learning environment, educators should accommodate variations in adolescent behavior and refrain from labeling students based on their conduct. By establishing secure learning environments in which students feel free to explore their identities, educators can assist students in broadening their perspectives on their potential future selves. Instructional methods that promote exploration of personal identity are likely to facilitate adolescents in developing an informational identity style. This style is characterized by active questioning, elevated self-esteem, and overall psychological well-being. Experiencing success is a crucial factor. Self-esteem involves a balanced perspective, navigating between excessive defensiveness and undue egotism, as well as between overly negative and excessively positive self-assessments. Adolescence is a period characterized by fluctuations in self-esteem.

The development and formation of identity and self-esteem are crucial factors that significantly influence an individual's life trajectory, particularly during adolescence. These two factors are intricately connected and are regarded as fundamental issues in the processes of development and personality formation. It can be concluded that adolescence encompasses rapid changes across physical, cognitive, psychological, and behavioral domains. This developmental stage is particularly significant as it influences how teenagers process and reflect on both past experiences and future aspirations. Majority of educational problems are rooted in confused, and diffuse-avoidant style, because teenagers who does not know himself/herself, cannot find a way. The study's findings may establish a foundation for implementing specific preventive or corrective measures.

Limitations of the Study

Practical and methodological issues were sources of limitations in this study. In the case of a study of relationship between identity styles and self-esteem of Grade 10 students, longitudinal study was more desirable. Due to the scarcity of time and resources, such design was impossible for this study. Short time period could be taken as another limitation for this thesis. The research area was restricted to Yangon Region and Bago Region. So, the recruited scope of this study was the limitation of this study.

The results could have been influenced by the atmosphere while responding to this questionnaire. It would be better if follow-up studies could be conducted for strong evidence. Despite these limitations, results of this study might provide a base for certain preventive or corrective measures to be carried out. Therefore, school consultants should aid teenagers in recognizing good identity styles and self-esteem. Examining students' identity styles and self-esteem facilitates addressing the diverse needs and issues faced by adolescents. This investigation aids in identifying strategies to meet their needs and develop solutions to their problems.

References

- Berzonsky, M. D. (1989). The self as a theorist: Individual differences in identity formation. *International Journal of Personal Construct Psychology*, 2, 363-376.
- Berzonsky, M. D. (1990). Self-construction over the life-span: A process perspective on identity formation. *Advances in Personal Construct Psychology*, 1, 155-186.
- Berzonsky, M. D. (1992). Identity style and coping strategies. *Journal of Personality*, 60(4), 771-788.

- Berzonsky, M. D. (1997). Identity development, control theory and self-regulation: An individual differences perspective. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 12(3), 347-353.
- Berzonsky, M. D., Nurmi, J., Kinney, A., & Tammi, K. (1999). Identity processing style and cognitive attributional strategies: Similarities and differences across different contexts. *European Journal of Personality*, 13(2), 105-120.
- Berzonsky, M. D. (2003). The structure of identity: Commentary on Jane Kroger's view of identity status transition. *Identity*, 3(3), 231-245.
- Berzonsky, M. D. (2004). Identity style, parental authority, and identity commitment. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 33(3), 213-222.
- Berzonsky, M. D., & Adams, G. R. (1999). Reevaluating the identity status paradigm: Still useful after 35 years. *Developmental Review*, 19(4), 557-590.
- Berzonsky, M. D., & Kinney, A. (1995, February). Identity style and need for cognitive closure. Paper presented at the biennial meetings of the Society for Research on Identity Formation, Dog Island, FL.
- Berzonsky, M. D., & Kuk, L. S. (2000). Identity status, identity processing style, and the transition to university. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 15(1), 81-98.
- Berzonsky, M. D., & Kuk, L. S. (2005). Identity style, psychosocial maturity, and academic performance. *Personality & Individual Differences*, 39(1), 235-247.
- Berzonsky, M. D., Soenens, B., Luyckx, K., & Papini, D. R. (2013). Development and validation of the revised identity style inventory (ISI-5): Factor structure, reliability, and validity. *Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 25(3), 893-904.
- Bos, A. E. R., Muris, P., Mulken, S., & Schaalma, H. P. (2006). Changing self-esteem in children and adolescents: A roadmap for future interventions. *Netherlands Journal of Psychology*, 62, 26-33. http://repub.eur.nl/pub/8078/Bo_s_Muris_Mulken_Schaalma_2006_post_print-1.pdf
- Carol Monroe Traeger, M. A. (1985). Adolescent self-esteem and perceived relationships with parents and peers (Doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University). Retrieved from <https://etd.ohiolink.edu/ap/0?APPLICATI ONPRO CESS%3 DDOW NLOADETDSUBDOCACCNUM::: F1501ID:osu1244652560%2Cinlin>
- Coetzee, M., Martins, N., Basson, J. S., & Mulier, H. (2006). The relationship between personality preferences, self-esteem, and emotional competence. *Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 32(2), 64-73.
- Chapman, P. L., & Mullis, A. K. (2002). Readdressing gender bias in the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory - Short Form. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 163(4), 403-409. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221320209598692>
- Coopersmith, S. (1981, 1987). *Self-Esteem Inventories*. Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Coopersmith, S. (2002). *Revised Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory manual*. Mind Garden
- Emil, S. (2003). Self-esteem and stressful life events of university students (Doctoral dissertation, Middle East Technical University). Retrieved from <http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/1014307/index.pdf>
- Emler, N. (2001). *Self-esteem: The costs and causes of low self-worth*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/1859352510.pdf>
- Erikson, E. (1963). *Childhood and society* (2nd ed.). Norton.
- Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity, youth, and crisis*. Norton.
- Erikson, E. H. (1968). On the nature of psycho-historical evidence: In search of Gandhi. *Daedalus*, 695-730.
- Erikson, E. H. (1980). *Identity and the life cycle* (2nd ed.). Norton.
- Erol, R. Y., & Orth, U. (2011). Self-esteem development from age 14 to 30 years: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101(3), 607-619. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024287>
- Ervin, L. H., & Stryker, S. (2001). Theorizing the relationship between self-esteem and identity. In T. J. Owens & S. Stryker (Eds.), *Extending self-esteem theory and research: Sociological and psychological currents* (pp. 29-55). Cambridge University Press.
- Harris, S. L. (2009). The relationship between self-esteem and academic success among African American students in the Minority Engineering Program at a research-extensive university in the southern portion of the United States (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from http://etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-11042009-102505/unrestricted/Harris_diss.pdf

- Hefferon, C. (2000). Process drama: Its effect on self-esteem and inclusion of primary Fifth Class boys and girls (M.Ed. dissertation, St. Patrick's College). Retrieved from <https://www.spd.dcu.ie/site/edc/documents/C olmHefferontesis-drama.pdf>
- Jacobs, C. (2014). Exploring identity formation in adolescents who attend a school of skills (Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University). Retrieved from http://scho lar.sun.ac. za/bitstream/handle/ 10019.1/ 86256/Jacobs_exploring_2014.pdf?sequence=1
- James, K. (2002). *Report and literature review into the role of self-esteem as a barrier to learning and as an outcome*. Department for Education and Skills. Retrieved from <http://etd.lib. metu.edu.tr/upload/ 1014307/index.pdf>
- Jelenic, M. (2013). Identity status: The impact on academic performance (Doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Fredonia). Retrieved from <http://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/ cgi/viewcontent.cgi? article=2934&context=thesesdissertations>
- Jenaabadi, H., & Dehabasi, A. (2014). Investigating the role of identity styles in predicting responsibility and academic self-regulation of third-grade male high school students in Zehend. *International Journal of Social Science and Education*, 4(4), 1-12. <http://ijss.e.com/sites/default/files/issues/2014/v4-i4-2014-1/Paper-23.pdf>
- Luyckx, K., Kilmstra, T. A., Duriez, B., Petegem, S. V., & Beyers, W. (2013). Personal identity processes from adolescence through the late 20s: Age trends, functionality, and depressive symptoms. *Social Development*, 22(4), 701-719. https://www. bartduriez.com/documentts/ PDF/ 2013_Luyckx_etal_SD.pdf
- Marcia, J. E. (1966). Development and validation of ego identity status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 3, 351-358.
- Marcia, J. E. (1980). Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (pp. 159-187). Wiley.
- Marcia, J. E. (1993). The status of statuses: Research review. In J. E. Marcia, A. S. Waterman, D. R. Matteson, S. L. Archer, & J. L. Orlofsky (Eds.), *Ego identity: A handbook for psychosocial research* (pp. 22-41).
- Meeus, W., van de Schoot, R., Keijsers, L., & Branje, S. (2012). Identity statuses as developmental trajectories: A five-wave longitudinal study in early-to-middle and middle-to-late adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 41(8), 1008-1021. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-011-9730-y>
- McLean, K. C., & Pasupathi, M. (2012). Processes of identity development: Where I am and how I got there. *An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 12, 8-28. <http://myweb. facstaff. wwu.edu/mcleank2/ docs/McLean.Pasupathi.2012.pdf>
- Meece, J. L. (2002). *Child and adolescent development for educators* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Natasi, N. A. (2005). Enhancing self-esteem of sixth-grade girls: A group counseling approach (Master's thesis, State University of New York at Brockport). Retrieved from <http://digit alcom mons.br ockport .ed u/cgi/viewco ntent.cgi?arti cle=1075&c ontext=edctheses>
- Newman, B. M., & Newman, P. R. (1986). *Adolescent development*. Merrill Publishing Company.
- Okoko, W. O. (2012). Self-esteem and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa District, Kenya (Master's thesis, University of Nairobi). Retrieved from <http:// edumfounda tions.uonbi.ac. ke/sites/default/files /cees/education/edufoundations/William%20Okoko%20Research%20Project.pdf>
- Schwartz, S. J. (2001). The evolution of Eriksonian and Neo-Eriksonian identity theory and research: A review and integration. *An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 1(1), 7-58. http://www.s ethschwartz.i nfo/pdfs/Ident ity_Revi ew_Paper. pdf
- Schwartz, s. J., Zamboanga, B. L., Meca, A., & Ritchie, R. A. (2012). Identity around the world: An overview. In S. J. Schwartz (Ed), *Identity around the world. New directions for child and adolescent development*, 138, 1-18. <http://seths chwartz.info/wp-contet/uploads/2010/08/Identity-Around-the-World-chapter-12.pdf>
- Schwartz, S. J., Zamboanga, B. L., Luyskx, K., Meca, A., & Ritchie, r. a. (2013). Identity in Emerging Adulthood: Reviewing the Field and looking Forward. *Emerging Adulthood* 1(2) 96-113. <http://eax.sagepub. com/ content/ 1/2/96. Abstract>

- Smith, I. (2009). Identity styles in adolescence: Measurement and associations with perceived parenting, personal well-being, and interpersonal functioning. Unpublished in Doctoral dissertation. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven Faculteit Psychologie. En Pedagogische Wetenschappen. Retrieved from 18.12.2014. https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CDgQFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fkuleuven.be%2Fbitstream%2F12345789%2F2513502F1%2FDoctoraatIlseSmits.pdf&ei=Q6iqVKmSO8StuASQ_YKABw&usq=AFQjCNEOEkcJRMP4hHbRADrvehlz2xTjw .
- Soenens, B., Berzonsky, M. D., Dunkel, C. S., Papini, D. R., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2011). Are all identity commitments created equally? The importance of motives for commitment for late adolescents' personal adjustment. *International journal of behavioral development* 35(8)358-369. http://www.selfdeterminationtheory.org/SDT/documents/2011SoenensEtAl_JBD.pdf
- Steinberg, L. (1992). Adolescence. 2nd edition. United States of America. McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Wangqvist, M. (2013). That's How People Grow Up: Identity Formation in Emerging Adulthood. Unpublished in Doctoral Dissertation. University of Gothenburg. Retrieved from 15.11.2014. <https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/2077/32508/1/gupea2077325081.pdf>