

A STUDY ON SELF-ESTEEM AND DECISION MAKING STYLES OF TEACHERS IN KYAUKSE DISTRICT

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate self-esteem and decision making styles of teachers in Kyaukse District. The study was conducted by quantitative research design and employed with descriptive survey method. The participants were comprised 400 teachers (93 senior teachers, 196 junior teachers and 111 primary teachers) from selected basic education high schools, high schools (Branch), post-primary schools and primary schools in Kyaukse District. In this study, Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI) - An Adult Version was used to examine the teachers' self-esteem. The questionnaire for decision making styles was adapted from Melbourne Decision Making Questionnaire (MDMQ). The results of this study revealed that teachers had high self-esteem and their dominant decision making style was vigilance decision making style. The independent samples *t* test result showed that there was no significant difference in self-esteem by gender. Then, the result of ANOVA proved that there were significant differences in self-esteem by age and designation. According to Pearson Chi-square results, there were significant differences in teachers' decision making styles by both age and designation, however, no significant difference by gender. In addition, there was a significant association between self-esteem and decision making styles ($\chi^2=39.104, p<0.001$). The findings of this study can provide some innovative ideas and information for educational personnels to develop high self-esteem among teachers in order to use the excellent decision making styles.

Keywords: self-esteem, decision making, decision making styles

Introduction

The term self-esteem comes from a Greek word meaning reverence for self. Self-esteem is not only about the internal attitude formation of an individual but also has a major influence on social relations such as friendship, school life, and social life. Teachers, parents, therapists, and others have focused efforts on boosting self-esteem, on the assumption that high self-esteem will cause many positive outcomes and benefits (cited in Rosenberg, 1965). Self-esteem is a judgment in which a person makes about his/her self-worth (Papalia & Feldman, 2004) and the satisfaction or dissatisfaction with oneself (James, 1983).

High self-esteem makes people more willing to speak up in groups and to criticize the group's approach. Low self-esteem is more likely than high to lead to depression under some circumstances. Individuals with high self-esteem are successful in making decisions and evaluating the results of their decisions and do not live to regret. Self-esteem is also an individual's self-evaluation of his/her decision making capability in a given situation.

People have to make decisions continually during time from birth to death. Human is a social being who lives in a certain group and makes decisions in almost every stage of his/her life since he/she is not a being who automatically adapts himself/herself to the environment with instinctive reactions (Kocel, 2001). These decisions vary according to environmental factors and characteristics of situations that have to be decided. Decision is selecting the most appropriate possibility for achieving a goal and the most appropriate one of various action situations that may occur in existing conditions.

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Throughout the lifespan, the abilities to judge and decide are fundamental higher order cognitive abilities, upon which both quality and length of life are directly contingent (Sanfrey & Hastie, 2000). Different decision making contexts can encourage the use of a different decision making style to achieve the most desirable alternative outcome (Scott & Bruce, 1995).

Teachers are the energy of today and important human resources of the future. They should have good self-esteem and decision making styles. Thus, this study intended to support the teachers by providing the basic information that can contribute to the development of good self-esteem and decision making styles.

Purpose of the Study

The main aim of this study was to investigate self-esteem and decision making styles of teachers in Kyaukse District. The specific objectives were as follows:

1. To find out the self-esteem and decision making styles of teachers in Kyaukse District
2. To examine the differences in self-esteem of teachers by gender, age and designation
3. To explore the differences in decision making styles of teachers by gender, age and designation
4. To find out the association between self-esteem and decision making styles of teachers

Definitions of Key Terms

Self-Esteem: Self-esteem is the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy (Coopersmith, 1986).

Decision Making: Decision making is the process of choosing among alternatives, implementing a decision and using the subsequent outcome data to shape any further decisions associated with the earlier one (Lawson & Shen, 1998).

Decision Making Style: Decision making style is called a situation which includes the approach, reaction, and action of the individual who is about to make a decision (Phillips, Paziienza, & Ferrin, 1984, cited in Deniz, 2011).

Review of Related Literature

Rosenberg's Theory of Self-Esteem (1965). Rosenberg (1965) has described global self-esteem as the overall negative or positive attitudes towards the self. According to Rosenberg, four major principles contributed to the formation of self-esteem.

Social Comparisons: This principle is based on Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory argues that self-esteem is the process of making positive or negative self-evaluations as a consequence of individuals' comparing themselves with others. This suggests that persons belonging to low-status groups will internalize the negative evaluation of themselves by society and as a consequence have low self-esteem and vice versa (Hughes & Demo, 1989).

Reflected Appraisals: This principle signify that a person's self-esteem is a product is a product of how that person believes others see her/him (Hughes & Demo, 1989). Rosenberg admitted that human communication depends on seeing matters from others people's perspectives. In the process of taking the role of other, people become aware that they are objects of others' attention, perception and evaluation. Thus, they become to see themselves through the eyes of others.

Self-perceptions: This principle derives from Bern's behaviouristic view that one come to know himself not by introspection but by observation of his overt behaviour. In this view, one interpreting his own behaviour and its outcomes (Phylactou, 2000).

Psychological Centrality: This final principle is concerned with self-values which are heavily influenced by the value system of a society and by the system of social rewards and punishments; this means that the positive or negative attitude of a person towards the self depends on whether the person possesses certain of those qualities which society pushes into the center of concern or others which are relegated to the periphery (Phylactou, 2000).

Conflict Theory of Decision Making. In Janis and Mann's theory, the most decisive resource affecting a decision making process is the time available. According to the conflict theory, there are five basic patterns of coping with the stress generated by a difficult, potentially threatening decision:

Unconflicted adherence. The decision maker ignores information about the risk of losses and decides, complacently, to continue the present course of action.

Unconflicted change. The decision maker uncritically adopts whichever new course of action is most salient or most strongly recommended.

Defensive avoidance. The decision maker escapes conflict by procrastinating, shifting responsibility to someone else or constructing wishful rationalizations to bolster the least objectionable alternative. Each of these expressions of defensive avoidance is associated with incomplete and often biased evaluation of information, leading in turn to faulty decisions. Defensive avoidance is associated with high stress. The goal of these decision makers is to avoid conflict and the least objectionable alternatives are frequently employed as the result.

Hypervigilance. The decision maker searches frantically for a way out of dilemmas. Due to time pressure, the decision maker impulsively seizes upon hastily contrived solutions that seem to promise immediate relief. The full ranges of consequences of choices are overlooked because of emotional excitement, perseveration and limited attention. In its more extreme form, hypervigilance is a panic-like state in which the decision maker vacillates between unpleasant alternatives. Hypervigilance is associated with severe emotional stress.

Vigilance. The decision maker clarifies objectives to be achieved by the decision, canvasses an array of alternatives, searches painstakingly for relevant information, assimilates information in an unbiased manner and evaluates alternatives carefully before making a choice. According to the conflict theory, vigilance is the only coping pattern that allows sound and rational decision making (cited in Mann et al., 1997). The decisions made by employing unconflicted adherence, unconflicted change, defensive avoidance, and hypervigilant coping patterns are considered by Janis and Mann as defective or non-rational decisions (cited in Lee, 2009).

Method

Participants of the Study. By using simple random sampling technique, the participants for the present study were selected from 32 schools (11 basic education high schools, 3 high schools (Branch), 4 post-primary schools and 14 primary schools) in Kyaukse Township and Myittha Township at Kyaukse District. There were 93 senior teachers, 196 junior teachers, 111 primary teachers and so totally 400 teachers in this study.

Research Method. In this study, correlational research design and survey method were used.

Instruments. The first instrument for self-esteem was adapted from Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI) – An Adult Version developed by Ryden (1978). The questionnaire presents respondents with generally favorable or generally unfavorable statements about the self in which they indicate as “like me” or “unlike me”. Each response indicating positive attitude toward self is marked as 1 with negative responses scored as 0. After taking the pilot study, 9 items of CSEI-A were left out from the questionnaire since they were inappropriate for assessing teachers’ self-esteem in Myanmar. Thus, only 49 items (CSEI-A) was used in this study.

As the second instrument, the teachers’ decision making styles were assessed by using Melbourne Decision Making Questionnaire (MDMQ) that was developed by Mann et al. (1997). The total number of items used in this study were 22 items and all are 4-point Likert type. A pilot study was done with a sample of 100 teachers in Myittha Township. The Cronbach’s Alpha values for each questionnaire were 0.774 for CSEI and 0.762 for MDMQ.

Data Analysis and Findings

Descriptive statistics was used for obtaining mean, mean percentage and standard deviation of teachers’ self-esteem. The results can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics for Self-Esteem of Teachers

Dimensions	Number of Items	Mean	Mean Percentage	SD
General Self	25	17.84	71.36%	3.24
Social Self-peers	8	5.09	63.63%	1.34
Home Parents	8	6.11	76.38%	1.33
Professional	8	6.28	78.5%	1.37
Total (Self-Esteem)	49	35.32	72.08%	5.70

Table 1 indicated that the mean score (35.32) for teachers’ self-esteem was greater than theoretical mean score (24.5). Therefore, it can be interpreted that the teachers in Kyaukse District were high in self-esteem.

To find out the difference between male and female teachers in self-esteem, descriptive analysis was firstly conducted. Moreover, to be more specific, the independent samples *t* test was used to examine whether the difference in self-esteem by gender was significant or not. The result was shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples *t* test Results for Self-Esteem of Teachers by Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Self-Esteem	Male	46	35.00	5.62	-.411	398	.681
	Female	354	35.37	5.71			

According to the independent samples *t* test result, there was no significant difference in self-esteem by gender. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers’ self-esteem was not influenced by gender. This finding was consistent with the results of the studies of Reilly et al. (2014) and Cevap and Tas (2018).

Besides, to find out the differences in teachers’ self-esteem by age, teachers were categorized into four groups: teachers between the ages 21-30, those between the ages 31-40, those between the ages 41-50 and those who have above 50 ages. Then, descriptive statistics was

firstly conducted to compare teachers' self-esteem with respect to age. The result was shown in the following Table 3.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics for Self-Esteem of Teachers by Age

Variable	Age (Year)	N	Mean	SD
Self-Esteem	21-30	61	33.75	6.77
	31-40	120	35.45	5.79
	41-50	83	34.18	5.19
	Above 50	136	36.62	5.10

Then, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was calculated to examine whether there was a significant difference or not in teachers' self-esteem by age. The result was shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Results of One-way ANOVA for Self-Esteem of Teachers by Age

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Self-Esteem	Between Groups	488.332	3	162.777	5.176**	.002
	Within Groups	12453.418	396	31.448		
	Total	12941.750	399			

Note: ** $p < 0.01$

Table 4 indicated that a statistically significant difference was found in teachers' self-esteem by age at 0.01 level ($F=5.176, p < 0.01$). Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' self-esteem was different by their age.

To investigate more specifically how teachers' self-esteem differed by age group, the Post Hoc Test was carried out by Tukey HSD method. The result was shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Results of Tukey HSD Test for Self-Esteem of Teachers by Age

Variable	Age (I)	Age (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
Self-Esteem	Above 50	21-30	2.864**	.006
		31-40	1.168	.345
		41-50	2.437*	.010

Note: ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Table 5 revealed that teachers who have above 50 ages had higher self-esteem than those between the ages 21-30 and 41-50. This finding was consistent with the result of the study of Khin Mar Myint (2015). Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers who have above 50 ages were generally more optimistic, flexible and successful at solving problems and coping with stress than others.

In order to explore differences in self-esteem by designation, teachers were categorized by three groups: Primary Teachers (PT), Junior Teachers (JT) and Senior Teachers (ST). The means and standard deviations for teachers' self-esteem by designation were calculated and the result can be shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Descriptive Statistics for Self-Esteem of Teachers by Designation

Variable	Designation	N	Mean	SD
Self-Esteem	PT	112	34.41	6.36
	JT	196	35.24	4.99
	ST	92	36.61	6.07

To make sure the differences in self-esteem by designation, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The result was shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Results of One-way ANOVA for Self-Esteem of Teachers by Designation

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Self-Esteem	Between Groups	246.485	2	123.242	3.854*	.022
	Within Groups	12695.265	397	31.978		
	Total	12941.750	399			

Note: * $p < 0.05$

The result revealed that there was a significant difference in self-esteem by designation at 0.05 level ($F=3.854$, $p<0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' self-esteem was different by their designation.

To investigate more specifically how teachers' self-esteem differed in relation to designation, the Post Hoc Test was carried out by Tukey HSD method. The result was shown in Table 8.

Table 8 Results of Tukey HSD Test for Self-Esteem of Teachers by Designation

Variable	Designation (I)	Designation (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
Self-Esteem	ST	PT	2.198*	.017
		JT	1.364	.138

Note: * $p < 0.05$

According to Table 8, it was found that the senior teachers' self-esteem were higher than that of primary teachers at 0.05 level. It was consistent with the result of the study of Ratanasiripong, Ratanasiripong and Toyama (2021).

By descriptive statistics, frequency and percentage of each decision making style was conducted to analyze data. The result was described in Table 9.

Table 9 Frequency and Percentages of Decision Making Styles of Teachers

Type of Decision Making	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Vigilance	347	86.8
Buck-passing	17	4.2
Procrastination	7	1.8
Hypervigilance	29	7.2

Table 9 indicated that vigilance decision making style was most used by 347 (86.8%) of teachers and procrastination decision making style was least used by 7 (1.8%) of teachers. Therefore, it can be concluded that the dominant decision making style of teachers in Kyaukse District was vigilance decision making style.

To find out the difference in teachers' decision making styles by gender, descriptive statistics was firstly conducted. Besides, in order to investigate whether the difference in decision making styles by gender was significant or not, Pearson Chi-square test was computed. Since 80% of the expected frequencies were above 5 and there were not less than 1, Pearson Chi-square test was used. The results were shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Frequency, Percentages and Chi-square Test Result of Decision Making Styles of Teachers by Gender

Decision Making Styles	Gender				Chi-square	p
	Male		Female			
	N	%	N	%		
Vigilance	40	10	307	76.8	2.376	.498
Buck-passing	1	0.2	16	4		
Procrastination	0	0	7	1.8		
Hypervigilance	5	1.2	24	6		

According to Pearson Chi-square result, it can be said that there was no significant difference in teachers' decision making styles by gender ($\chi^2=2.376$, $p=0.498$). Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' decision making styles did not depend on gender. This finding was consistent with the result of the study of Spicer and Sadler-Smith (2005).

Then, to find out the differences in teachers' decision making styles by age, descriptive statistics was firstly conducted. Then, Pearson Chi-square test was conducted to examine whether there was significant difference or not in teachers' decision making styles by age. Since 80% of the expected frequencies were above 5 and there were not less than 1, Pearson Chi-square test was used. And, the result was shown in Table 11.

Table 11 Frequency, Percentages and Chi-square Test Result of Decision Making Styles of Teachers by Age

Decision Making Styles	Age (Year)								Chi-square	p
	21-30		31-40		41-50		Above 50			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Vigilance	46	11.5	109	27.3	73	18.2	119	29.8	16.547*	.035
Buck-passing	2	0.5	3	0.8	4	1	8	2		
Procrastination	2	0.5	2	0.5	2	0.5	1	0.2		
Hypervigilance	11	2.8	6	1.5	4	1	8	2		

Note: * $p<0.05$, Contingency Coefficient=0.199

According to Pearson Chi-square result, it was found that there was statistically significant difference in teachers' decision making styles by age at 0.05 level ($\chi^2=16.547$,

$p < 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' decision making styles were different by their age. This result was consistent with the studies conducted by Baron et al. (1993) and Temur (2012). As a result of this study, most teachers in all age groups preferred to vigilance decision making style. Among four age groups, vigilance decision making style was used by the teachers who were above 50 years old than others.

Then, to find out the differences in teachers' decision making styles by designation, descriptive statistics was firstly conducted. Then, Pearson Chi-square test was conducted again to examine whether there was significant difference or not in teachers' decision making styles by designation. The results were shown in Table 12.

Table 12 Frequency, Percentages and Chi-square Test Result of Decision Making Styles of Teachers by Designation

Decision Making Styles	Designation						Chi-square	<i>p</i>
	PT		JT		ST			
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Vigilance	93	23.2	177	44.2	77	19.2	19.586**	.003
Buck-passing	6	1.5	7	1.8	4	1		
Procrastination	1	0.2	0	0	6	1.5		
Hypervigilance	12	3	12	3	5	1.2		

Note: ** $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.156$

According to Pearson Chi-square result, it was found that there was statistically significant difference in teachers' decision making styles by designation at 0.01 level ($\chi^2 = 19.586$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' decision making styles were different by their designation. Vigilance decision making style was more used by the teachers in three designation groups. Among them, junior teachers (JT) more preferred vigilance decision making style than other designation groups.

Then, the frequency and percentages of teachers by different groups of self-esteem were conducted. The result can be clearly seen in Table 13.

Table 13 Frequency and Percentages of Teachers by Different Groups of Self-Esteem

Self-Esteem Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	53	13.2
Moderate	278	69.5
Low	69	17.3

After the teachers' self-esteem (high, moderate, and low) were categorized with the groups, the association of decision making style preferences with self-esteem groups were calculated. Then, in order to investigate whether there was statistically significant association between self-esteem and decision making styles of teachers, Pearson Chi-square test was conducted. And, the result was presented in Table 14.

Table 14 Frequency, Percentages and Chi-square Test Result of Self-Esteem and Decision Making Styles of Teachers

Self-Esteem Group	Decision Making Styles								Chi-square	p
	Vigilance		Buck-passing		Procrastination		Hyper-vigilance			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
High	49	12.2	2	0.5	1	0.2	1	0.2	39.104***	.000
Moderate	253	63.2	8	2	1	0.2	16	4		
Low	45	11.2	7	1.8	5	1.2	12	3		

Note: *** $p < 0.001$, Cramer's $V = 0.221$

According to the result, it was found that there was significant association between self-esteem and decision making styles at 0.001 level ($\chi^2 = 39.104$, $p < 0.001$). The value of Cramer's V was 0.221. The strength of association was typical. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was the association between self-esteem and decision making styles. This result was consistent with the study conducted by Ramanigopal (2008) and Rebellow and Patra (2017). As a result, teachers in all self-esteem groups used the vigilance decision making style. Among them, the teachers in high and moderate self-esteem groups used the vigilance decision making style more than the teachers in low self-esteem group. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers with high and moderate self-esteem were more likely to use the vigilance decision making style than other decision making styles.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Teachers play a crucial role in their students' lives, not merely providing knowledge and skills but supporting, helping them maintain a physical and mental health, foster good habits, and of utmost importance, live a good life. This research allows teachers to become aware of their automatic behaviours, to decode pedagogical decision making.

To become high self-esteem and make good decision making styles,

- Teachers should have a positive attitude and ability to accept mistakes from others.
- Teachers should have feeling comfortable with a wide range of emotions.
- Teachers should be given opportunities to make own decision and encouraged to use excellent decision making styles (eg, vigilance).
- Teachers should search painstakingly through all relevant information and appraising alternatives carefully before making a choice.

This research can provide to produce positive staff morale and commitment, improve employee relations and increase the quality of profession and workplace resulting into a less stressful for teachers in schools. Moreover, this research can also increase the understanding on the role of self-esteem in shaping up the teachers' cognitive ability and better decision making styles.

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