

INFLUENCE OF PARENTING STYLES ON ADOLESCENT AUTONOMY AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of parenting styles on adolescent autonomy among secondary school students. Quantitative approach was used in this study. A total of 640 grade 10 students (320 males and 320 females) from Yangon region and Tanintharyi region participated in this study. The instruments used in this research were Questionnaires for Respondents Measuring Parenting Styles and Questionnaire Measuring Adolescent Autonomy. Both questionnaires were developed by Esther (2014). In the study of parenting styles, the majority of the students were treated by authoritative parenting style and none of the student was treated by uninvolved parenting style. According to the Chi-square results, there was no association between parenting styles by gender and by family size but there was significant association between parenting styles by region ($p < 0.05$). In adolescents' autonomy, *t*-test result indicated that there was significant difference by gender in autonomy with respect to emotional autonomy and value autonomy at 0.001 level. And there were also significant differences in students' autonomy by region and in value autonomy of students by specialized combination. In this study, students' autonomy was categorized into three levels: low, moderate and high. Most of the students' autonomy was in moderate level. As an ANOVA result, students treated by authoritative parenting style were higher in autonomy than those of students from authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. Pearson correlation revealed that authoritative and permissive parenting styles were significantly positive correlated with autonomy. But authoritarian parenting style was significantly negative correlated with autonomy. According to regression analysis, the authoritative parenting style was found to be the strongest predictor for autonomy. The authoritative parenting style offers adolescents with the opportunity to develop self-reliant individuals with a healthy sense of autonomy within parental limits. Therefore, parenting styles influence adolescents' autonomy either positively or negatively.

Keywords: parenting styles, autonomy

Introduction

Importance of the Study

When asked, parents often say that their wishes for their children are that they grow into happy, healthy adolescents and adults who can find optimal niches within their communities. Not all aspects of parental aspirations for their children are about autonomy development, but almost all include a solid foundation in adolescents' capacity for autonomous thought, self-managed behavior, and independence of mind that is balanced against the needs and desire of others at many levels of society. This makes the study of autonomy development during adolescence which is a field that includes many lines of research and much progress.

The push toward autonomy is one of the critical psychosocial developments of adolescence. During adolescence, there is a movement away from the dependency typical of childhood toward the autonomy typical of adulthood. Researchers now see the growth of autonomy during adolescence as gradual, progressive, and although important, relatively unromantic.

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The development and future of a country mainly depend on the youths as human resources because they are the one who are to create a modern developed nation. They need to be well developed their full potentials. It must be the hand of the parents, teachers and educators. Parents are the most important. Therefore, it is important to examine the influence of parenting styles on adolescent autonomy. Consequently, the finding of this research may provide more understanding of autonomy development during adolescence for parents, teachers and educators.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of parenting styles on adolescents' autonomy among secondary school students.

Specific Objectives

- To find out perceived parenting styles of students by gender, region and family size.
- To assess adolescents' autonomy of students by gender, region and specialized combination.
- To identify the level of adolescents' autonomy among high school students.
- To study the relationship between parenting styles and adolescents' autonomy.
- To examine the impact of parenting styles on adolescents' autonomy.

Definitions of the Key Terms

Parenting Styles – Parenting styles can be described as all strategies (behavior, attitudes, and values) parents used to interact with their children and influence their physical, emotional, social and intellectual development (Baumrind, 1991).

Autonomy – Autonomy refers to a person's ability to think, feel and make decisions on one's own, rather than following along with what other believe (Steinberg, 1999).

Method

Sample of the Study

The total number of Grade 10 students 640 (male 320, female 320) were chosen as a sample from Yangon region and Tanintharyi region.

Research Method

In this research, quantitative research design and descriptive survey method were used to assess the study.

Instruments

In this study students' parenting styles were examined by Questionnaires for Respondents Measuring Parenting Styles and students' autonomy were examined by Questionnaire Measuring Adolescent Autonomy. Both questionnaires are developed by Esther (2014). Questionnaires for Respondents Measuring Parenting styles was comprised of 32 items related to four subscales, namely, authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved. Questionnaire measuring Adolescent Autonomy was comprised of 24 items related to three subscales, namely, emotional, behavioral and value. Each subscales of both instruments were coded by using a five-point likert scale, with 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

Procedure

After surveying the related literature of the topics, instruments for the study was adapted. The instruments required for the study were translated into Myanmar version. These instruments were reviewed by the seven experts to ensure the face validity and content validity. Pilot study was conducted during November, 2018, within the sample of 60 students from No. (6) B.E.H.S, Ahlone. The internal consistency of parenting style was 0.614 (Cronbach's Alpha) and adolescent autonomy was 0.605 (Cronbach's Alpha). By the use of these instruments, test administration was conducted on the first week of December, 2018 in Yangon region and on the second week of December in Tanintharyi region.

Data Analysis and Findings

Describing Perceived Parenting Styles Among Grade 10 Students

Firstly, participants in the study were divided into four groups depending on the scores obtained at each of the parenting style. The parenting style with highest score is considered as the parenting style of that parent. The result was presented in Table 1.

The results showed that the dominant parenting style as adopted by parents is authoritative parenting style. Therefore, it could be interpreted that majority of participants whose parents were logical requests for reasonable behavior of children and listen patiently to their child's point of view and encourage participation in family decision-making.

Table 1 Numbers and Percentages of Participants with Their Respective Parenting Styles

Parenting Styles	Number	Percentages
Authoritative	595	93%
Authoritarian	42	6.5%
Permissive	3	0.5%
Uninvolved	0	0%
Total	640	100%

Comparison of Perceived Parenting Styles Among Grade 10 Students by Gender

A Chi-square test was conducted to explore whether there is an association between perceived parenting styles by students' gender. The result was presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Result of Chi-Squares Test for Association between Perceived Parenting Styles and Gender

Parenting Styles	Gender		Total	χ^2	<i>p</i>
	Male	Female			
Authoritative	295	300	595	.756	.685
	46.1%	46.9%	93%		
Authoritarian	23	19	42		
	3.5%	3.0%	6.5%		
Permissive	2	1	3		
	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%		

Based on the result, there was no significant association between perceived parenting styles and gender ($\chi^2 = .756$, $df = 2$, $N = 640$). It means that, with regard to the gender, parents did not offer different parenting styles for girls and boys.

Comparison of Perceived Parenting Styles Among Grade 10 Students by Region

To determine the association between perceived parenting styles by regions, the Chi-square analysis was conducted and the results were presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Result of Chi-Squares Test for Association Between Perceived Parenting Styles and Region

Parenting Styles	Region		Total	χ^2	<i>p</i>
	Yangon	Tanintharyi			
Authoritative	289	306	595	6.914*	.032
	45.2%	47.8%	93%		
Authoritarian	29	13	42		
	4.5%	2.0%	6.5%		
Permissive	2	1	3		
	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%		

* $p < 0.05$.

By studying Table 3, the results revealed that there was a significant association between perceived parenting styles and region of grade 10 students ($\chi^2 = 6.914$, $df = 2$, $N = 640$, $p < 0.05$). Cramer's V which indicates the strength of association between two variables is .104 and thus the effect size is considered to be small to medium according to Cohen (1988).

Comparison of Perceived Parenting Styles Among Grade 10 Students by Family Size

Table 4 Result of Chi-Squares Test for Association Between Perceived Parenting Styles and Family Size

Parenting Styles	Family Size			Total	χ^2	<i>p</i>
	Small	Medium	Big			
Authoritative	394	193	8	595	1.942	.746
	61.6%	30.2%	1.2%	93%		
Authoritarian	28	13	1	42		
	4.3%	2.0%	0.2%	6.5%		
Permissive	1	2	0	3		
	0.2%	0.3%	0%	0.5%		

Based on the Chi-square result, there was no significant association between perceived parenting styles and students' family size ($\chi^2 = 1.942$, $df = 4$, $N = 640$). It means that, with regard to the family size, parents did not offer different parenting styles for their children.

The Study of Adolescents' Autonomy

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics of Grade 10 Students' Autonomy

Subscales of Autonomy	N	Mean	SD	Mini	Maxi
Emotional	640	24.63	3.140	12	36
Behavioral	640	28.27	3.563	16	39
Value	640	27.71	3.316	12	38
Total	640	80.61	6.589	57	150

Note: N= Number, SD= Standard Deviation

According to the descriptive statistics, the mean score of students' behavioral autonomy was higher than the value autonomy and emotional autonomy of the students. It can be assumed that students have the ability to make decisions independently and to follow through on these decisions with actions.

Comparison of Grade 10 Students' Autonomy by Gender

Table 6 Mean Comparison of Grade 10 Students' Autonomy by Gender

Autonomy	Gender	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Emotional	Male	320	25.06	3.266	3.515***	.000
	Female	320	24.02	2.995		
Behavioral	Male	320	28.44	3.455	1.210	.227
	Female	320	28.10	3.655		
Value	Male	320	27.00	3.331	-5.549***	.000
	Female	320	28.42	3.148		
Total	Male	320	80.51	6.777	-0.414	.679
	Female	320	80.72	6.405		

*** $p < 0.001$.

From the result, there were significant differences by gender in autonomy with respect to emotional autonomy and value autonomy at 0.001 level. In emotional autonomy, the mean score of male students were slightly higher than the female students. In value autonomy, the mean score of female students were slightly higher than the male students.

Comparison of Grade 10 Students' Autonomy by Region

Table 7 Mean Comparison of Grade 10 Students' Autonomy by Region

Autonomy	Region	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Emotional	Yangon	320	24.24	3.273	-3.156**	.002
	Tanintharyi	320	25.02	2.995		
Behavioral	Yangon	320	28.06	3.729	-1.544	.123
	Tanintharyi	320	28.49	3.381		
Value	Yangon	320	27.67	3.421	-0.441	.660
	Tanintharyi	320	27.77	3.212		
Total	Yangon	320	79.95	6.807	-2.561*	.011
	Tanintharyi	320	81.28	6.306		

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

According to the results, the students in Yangon region were a little lower in autonomy than those in Tanintharyi region. Students in Tanintharyi region are more control over the expression of their feeling, socialization and less emotionally dependent on their parents.

Comparison of Grade 10 Students' Autonomy by Specialized Combination

Descriptive analysis showed that science students' autonomy was greater than the science & art students. Independent samples *t*-test was conducted. The results were analyzed and presented in Table 8.

According to the result in Table 8, the mean score of value autonomy for students from science subject was significantly different from that of students from science & art at 0.001 level.

It can be assumed that science students tended to have the ability to think abstract ideas and to make judgments using higher level of thinking.

Table 8 Mean Comparison of Grade 10 Students' Autonomy by Specialized Combination

Autonomy	Specialization	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Emotional	Science	320	24.73	3.300	0.793	0.428
	Science & Art	320	24.53	2.974		
Behavioral	Science	320	28.19	3.665	-0.565	-0.572
	Science & Art	320	28.35	3.463		
Value	Science	320	28.15	3.425	3.401**	0.001
	Science & Art	320	27.27	3.147		
Total	Science	320	81.08	6.838	1.773	0.077
	Science & Art	320	80.15	6.308		

*** $p < 0.001$.

Describing Three Groups of Autonomy Level Among Grade 10 Students

Participants were divided into three groups depending on their scores in the study. According to the questionnaire (Esther, 2014), a total autonomy score that is below 62 and 62 was rated as low in autonomy. Between 63 and 82 was rated as moderate in autonomy, between 83 and 120 was rated as high in autonomy. The results were analyzed and presented in Table 9.

Table 9 Describing Three Groups of Autonomy level Among Grade 10 Students

Variable	High Group	Moderate Group	Low Group	Total
Autonomy	234	402	4	640
	36.6%	62.8%	0.6%	100%

In the present study, the majority of the students 62.8% were in the moderate group, 36.6% were in high group and 0.6% of the students lie in low group. Most of the students' autonomy was at moderate level.

Comparison for Autonomy of Grade 10 Students on Their Perceived Parenting Styles

Table 10 Descriptive Statistics for Autonomy of Grade 10 Students on Their Perceived Parenting Styles

Parenting Style	N	Mean	SD	Mini	Maxi
Authoritative	595	80.97	6.424	57	105
Authoritarian	42	76.19	6.999	60	90
Permissive	3	71.33	5.774	68	78

According to ANOVA result, it was found that there were significant differences in autonomy of students on their perceived parenting styles at 0.001 level.

Table 11 ANOVA Result for Autonomy of Grade 10 Students on Their Perceived Parenting Styles

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Autonomy	Between Group	1156.961	2	578.48	13.859***	.000
	Within Group	26588.713	637	41.741		
	Total	27745.673	639			

***p<0.001

According to the result, students getting authoritative parenting style were found higher autonomy than students of both authoritative and permissive parenting styles.

Table 12 Results of Tukey HSD Multiple Comparison for Autonomy of Grade 10 Students on Their Perceived Parenting Styles

Variable	(I) Parenting Style	(J) Parenting Style	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
Autonomy	Authoritative	Authoritarian	4.783***	.000
		Permissive	9.640*	.027

*p<0.05 , ***p<0.001 .

Table 13 Descriptive Statistics for Subscales ofAutonomy Among Grade 10 Students on Their Perceived Parenting Styles

Autonomy	Parenting Styles	N	Mean	SD	Mini	Maxi
Emotional	Authoritative	595	24.78	3.066	14	36
	Authoritarian	42	22.90	3.413	12	29
	Permissive	3	19.33	3.055	16	22
Behavioral	Authoritative	595	28.36	3.547	16	39
	Authoritarian	42	27.14	3.613	19	36
	Permissive	3	26.00	4.000	22	30
Value	Authoritative	595	27.83	3.210	16	38
	Authoritarian	42	26.14	4.211	12	34
	Permissive	3	26.00	5.292	22	32

According to the result, the mean score of authoritative parenting style were highest on students' autonomy as regard emotional, behavioral and value autonomy. The mean score of permissive parenting style was found to be lowest in all three subscales of autonomy. It could be said that there were differences in subscales of autonomy among students on their perceived parenting styles.

Table 14 ANOVA Results for Subscales ofAutonomy Among Grade 10 Students on Their Perceived Parenting Styles

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Emotional	Between	222.234	2	111.117	11.644***	.000
	Within	6079.002	637	9.543		
	Total	6301.236	639			
Behavioral	Between	74.147	2	37.073	2.938	.054
	Within	8039.002	637	12.620		
	Total	8113.148	639			

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Value	Between	120.525	2	60.263	5.559**	.004
	Within	6904.998	637	10.840		
	Total	7025.523	639			

p<0.01,*p<0.001.

According to the result, there was significant difference between parenting styles and emotional autonomy at 0.001 level. And also there was significant difference between parenting styles and value autonomy at 0.01 level.

Table 15 Results of Tukey HSD Multiple Comparison for Subscales of Autonomy Among Grade 10 Students on Their Perceived Parenting Styles

Dependent Variable	(I) Parenting Style	(J) Parenting Style	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
Emotional	Authoritative	Authoritarian	1.873***	.000
		Permissive	5.445**	.007
Value	Authoritative	Authoritarian	1.687**	.004

p<0.01,*p<0.001

According to the result, autonomy of students with authoritative parenting style in respect of emotional autonomy was higher than that of students with authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. Similarly, autonomy of students with authoritative parenting in respect to value autonomy was higher than that of students with authoritarian parenting style.

Relationship Between Perceived Parenting Styles and Autonomy Among Grade 10 Students

Table 16 Inter-correlation Among Parenting Styles and Autonomy of Grade 10 Students

Variables	AT	AN	PE	AU
AT	1	-.355***	.109**	.347**
AN		1	-.005	-.199**
PE			1	.137**
AU				1

**p<0.01

Where, AT= Authoritative Parenting Style, AN= Authoritarian Parenting Style, PE= Permissive Parenting Style, AU= Autonomy

According to Table, authoritative parenting style and permissive parenting style were significant and positively correlated with autonomy. Authoritarian parenting style was significant and negatively correlated with autonomy. Therefore, adolescents experiencing different parenting styles clearly differ in autonomy they show.

Regression Analysis for the Prediction of Autonomy Among Grade 10 Students from Parenting Styles

In order to investigate the predictive power of each subscales of parenting styles on autonomy, the simultaneous multiple regression analysis was conducted.

Table 17 Regression Analysis for the Prediction of Autonomy Among Grade 10 Students from Parenting Styles

Variable	B	β	t	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	F
Autonomy	60.935		18.523***	.371	.138	.134	33.871***
Authoritative	.572	.304	7.665***				
Authoritarian	-.130	-.090	-2.295*				
Permissive	.177	.104	2.794**				

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

The result of multiple regression analysis pointed out that the subscales of parenting style made a significant prediction contribution to autonomy of adolescents $F(1,638) = 33.871, p < .001$. Among the subscales of parenting styles, authoritative parenting style was found to be the strongest predictor of autonomy ($\beta = .304$). The model equation to predict the autonomy from parenting styles was follow.

$$\text{Autonomy} = 60.935 + .572AT - .130AN + .177PE$$

Where, AT=Authoritative, AN= Authoritarian, PE= Permissive

Discussion

4.1 Special Feature for the study

The result indicates that the dominant parenting style as adopted by most parents is authoritative parenting style. This finding showed that most of the grade 10 students' autonomy has the moderate level. According to the correlation result, parenting styles was significantly related with adolescents' autonomy. So, adolescents experiencing different parenting styles clearly differ in autonomy they show. Among the subscales of parenting of styles, authoritative parenting style was found to be the strongest predictor of autonomy.

4.2 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

First, longitudinal design is more desirable. Second, research area is restricted to two regions, Yangon and Tanintharyi regions. The third limitation of the present study was that only the use of students in assessing the perceptions of parenting style. Fourth, there are many parenting styles today. The questionnaire used in this study is measured the four parenting styles.

A longitudinal design is necessary to clarify the students' autonomy by ages. Future research should be carried out in higher institution of learning where most of the adolescents congregate. Future studies should use the assessments of parenting style by the panels of experts and laypersons including students, parents, teachers and administrators.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this study was to find out the influence of parenting styles on adolescent autonomy among grade 10 students. As explain previously, authoritative parenting style was found the dominant parenting style. Therefore, it could be interpreted that majority of participants whose parents were logical requests for reasonable behavior of children and at the same they express warmth and affection, listen patiently to their child's point of view as well as encourage participation in family decision-making. Authoritative parenting style was found to be

the strongest predictor of autonomy. It is consistent with the Kopko (2007) finding reports that authoritative parenting style provides adolescent with the opportunity to develop into a self-reliant individual with a healthy sense of autonomy within parental limits. Therefore, parenting styles influence adolescents' autonomy either positively or negatively.

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