

The Mediating Role of Parental Attachment in the Relationship between Parenting Styles and Identity Achievement among Secondary and Preparatory School Students

Shimelis Anley Tizazu^a; Demeke Wolle Ambaye^{b1}

^a *Department of School & Counseling Psychology, Faculty of Educational and Behavioral Sciences, Woldia University*

^b *Department of Psychology, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Bahir Dar University*

Abstract: The purpose of this research was to examine the mediating role of parental attachment in the relationship between parenting styles and adolescents' identity achievement. To this purpose, 375 adolescent students were drawn from four secondary and preparatory schools in Debre Markos town using proportional stratified sampling technique. Correlational design was employed to conduct the study. Adapted self-report questionnaires for parenting styles, parental attachment and identity achievement of adolescents were used to collect the data from the respondents. Hence, quantitative data were collected and path analysis via linear regression was employed to determine the path coefficients of the variables under consideration. Based on Baron and Kenney's requirements of single mediation, simple and multiple linear regressions were made to determine the beta value of the four paths. Furthermore, the existence of significant mediation via parental attachment was tested using Sobel's z-test for each path diagrams. Hence, the findings indicated that parental attachment positively and partially mediated in the relationship between identity achievement and authoritative parenting style. Authoritarian parenting style had positive and significant direct effect on identity achievement, but the indirect effect via parental attachment was not significant. Parental attachment positively and fully mediated the relationship between permissive parenting style and identity achievement. Future research is recommended to extend the work of this study by further examining the mediating role of parental attachment in the relationship between parenting styles and adolescent identity achievement.

Key words: Parenting Styles, Parental Attachment, Identity Achievement

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are very busy in searching who they are, where they are going, and where they fit into society in relationships, ideology, career choice and other life issues. In this process of searching oneself, adolescents experience the psychosocial conflict of identity synthesis versus role confusion (Sigelman & Rider, 2009). Those adolescents who are in role confusion do not know what to do, when to do and how to do their activities in their daily life (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). According to Marcia (1980), the major challenge for adolescents is forming a matured identity, identity achievement. Adolescents who do not explore their environment

¹ Corresponding author: demekewolie2005@yahoo.com

are characterized by lack of awareness and knowledge about different alternatives and opportunities of interpersonal relationships, ideologies, political beliefs and occupational roles. Without exploring different domains, adolescents do not make any firm decision or commitment (Schwartz, Luyckx & Vignoles, 2011).

As a result, adolescents face problems such as anxiety, low self-esteem, low body image and self-confidence, a feeling of inferiority, suicidal attempt, exposure to risky behaviors, substance abuse and low academic achievement (Laghi, Baiocco, Lonigro, & Baumgartner, 2013). In contrast, studies revealed that achievers perceive more meaning in life and are more eudemonic than other types of identity status (Schwartz, et al., 2011). Besides, Kroger (1993) also confirmed that identity achieved individuals show the highest levels of ego development, moral reasoning, self-certainty, self-esteem, and internal locus of control.

Studies also suggest that family environments constitute the basic ecology where children's behavior is manifested, learned, encouraged, and suppressed (Dishion & Patterson, 2006). Parents' roles in the family environment have primarily been to prepare children for adulthood through rules and disciplines. Research has demonstrated that parenting accounts for more variance in externalizing behaviors in adolescence than any other one factor (Crosswhite & Kerpelman, 2009).

In relation to the above ideas, parents who are encouraging and supportive create safe and secured environment to explore various opportunities and alternatives for adolescents to become independent and autonomous individuals. For instance, Newman and Newman (2012) state that a secured parental attachment fosters identity formation in different ways such as fostering confidence in the exploration of social relationships, ideologies, and establishing positive expectations. They further suggest that secured attachment enhances adolescents' interpersonal experiences outside the family, encouraging the formation of group identities apart from the family and providing a transitional context for work on individual identity. Hence, adolescents who enjoy secured attachment relationships with their parents generally have a stronger sense of exploration and commitment, higher self-esteem, greater social competence, better emotional adjustment, and fewer behavioral problems (Sigelman & Rider, 2009). Yet research has demonstrated that the quality of family relationships contributes significantly to a young person's ability to achieve a personal identity achievement (Allen & Land, 1999).

Parenting styles and parental attachment are important factors that facilitate, encourage and support the synthesis and reorganization of childhood identifications and experiences to make active exploration and appropriate decision to the journey of independence and autonomy (Newman & Newman, 2012). More specifically, Arnett (2012) states that in a collectivistic culture like Africa and especially Ethiopia, parenting styles and parental attachments are more important than individualistic culture of western society. This is because in collectivist culture, the goal of parenting styles is to guarantee conformity, interdependence, cohesive emotional ties and support one another. In contrast to this, in individualist culture, the goal of parenting styles is developing a sense of independence, self-reliant, self-realization (Friedlmeier, Chakkarath & Schwarz, 2005).

In relation to this, empirical studies were conducted by several researchers on the relationship between parenting styles and parental attachment. For instance, Karavasilis, Doyle & Markiewicz (2003) conducted a study on the relationship between parenting styles and parental attachment with a sample of 212 adolescents. The findings indicated that authoritative parenting style positively and significantly predicted parental attachment. Moreover, the investigators confirmed that warm parental involvement plays a unique role in adolescents' views of attachment figure. Far & Fattahi (2015) conducted a study on the relationship between parenting styles and identity development using 360 randomly selected adolescents in India and found a significant relationship between parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative and permissive) and information identity style (identity achievement) of students. Besides, Damon & Lerner (2006) found that authoritative parenting significantly predicted adolescents' identity achievement and role-taking skills. In other words, sensitive support, monitoring and guidance from parents for adolescents significantly contributed for making crisis (exploring alternatives) and commitment (conducting firm decisions after considering the alternatives). Furthermore, Schwartz, Luyckx & Vignoles (2011) stated that identity of adolescents emerges from family social context. Thus, family is a unique relationship context that influences both the contents and processes of identity formation. Studies also confirmed that strong parental attachment was found among those in the identity-achieved status (Quintana & Lapsley, 1987; Kroger & Haslet, 1988)

Previous studies confirmed relations between attachment and identity status. When individuals have a secured attachment with parents, they are independent from external validation (Park, Crocker, & Mickelson, 2004), have an internal locus of control (Kroger, 1993), are able to explore their environment (Green & Campbell, 2000), have higher level of confidence and assertiveness in social situation (Collins & Read, 1990), are more educated (Sroufe, 2005), and have higher level of self-actualization (Otway & Carnell, 2013). Other studies reported relationships between parenting styles and identity achievement (Damon & Lerner, 2006; Schwartz, Luyckx & Vignoles, 2011). As mentioned earlier, studies also confirmed that parental styles and parental attachment are correlated (Karavasilis, Doyle & Markiewicz, 2003; Newman & Newman, 2012). However, these and other studies did not consider the mediating role of parental attachment in the relationship between parenting styles and identity achievement.

To the best of the researchers' knowledge, few studies have been conducted that showed parental attachment as a mediator variable in the relationships between parenting styles and identity achievement globally (Benson, Harris, & Rogers, 1992) and in particular no studies in Ethiopia were conducted in relation to the issue under consideration. Because of this, literature is scant in the area. Thus, through examining the relationship of parental influences on attachment and attachment on identity achievement, this study contributed indicating insights in which parents can support their adolescents' transition to positive development, ultimately helping their child achieve positive social and academic outcomes. Thus, conducting research in the issue under consideration is found to be worthwhile in order to pave the way for future research and suggest appropriate intervention strategies.

Thus, the purpose of the present study was to investigate the mediating roles of parental attachment in the relationships between parenting styles and identity achievement of adolescents. Based on this purpose, the following research questions were formulated.

1. To what extent does parental attachment mediate the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and identity achievement among adolescent students?
2. To what extent does parental attachment mediate the relationship between authoritative parenting style and identity achievement among adolescent students?
3. To what extent does parental attachment mediate the relationship between permissive parenting style and identity achievement among adolescent students?

METHODS

Participants

The participants of this study were ninth up to twelfth grade secondary and preparatory school students in Debre Markos town. There were four secondary and preparatory schools with a total number of 6080 students, 2045 students in grade 9, 1947 students in grade 10, 1023 students in grade 11 and 1065 students in grade 12. Regarding grade level, in order to obtain a representative sample size, the number of students in each school, grade level and gender categories were taken into consideration.

Procedures

In order to determine the sample size, some researchers support using rule of thumb considering the total population and directly calculate the sample size using the percentage given in the rule of the thumb (Yount, 2006). Nevertheless, other researchers are sensitive to use formula to determine the sample size based on the nature of the population. In this study, the sample size was determined through a formula developed by Yamane (1967). After determining the sample size, to make the sample more representative, respondents were selected considering school, grade level and gender categories proportionally through stratified sampling technique. Finally, simple random sampling technique was used to select 373 respondents from each stratum. Of this population, 196 students were females while the rest 177 were male students.

In the process of collecting the data, approval was obtained from Zonal Education Department and school officials. Following this, informed verbal consent was obtained from all participants before administration of the questionnaire. The participants were also informed to decline from filling out the questionnaire when they felt uncomfortable. Assistant data collectors together with the investigators briefed the participants on the nature and purpose of the study and attempted to make participants to feel at ease. They were also told how to fill out the questionnaire.

Measures

Parenting style Questionnaire: Regarding parenting styles, the data were collected using parenting authority questionnaire developed by Buri (1991). This scaled questionnaire consisted of 30 items rated on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). Of these 30 items, ten items measured authoritative parenting style, ten items measured permissive parenting style, and ten items measured authoritarian parenting style. The internal consistency or reliability was determined through a pilot study and the result revealed .712 for permissive parenting style, .831 for authoritative parenting style and .808 for authoritarian parenting style. The alpha levels for each parenting style in this study were almost closer to a study conducted in the U.S.A. which indicated authoritarian parenting style alpha level of .88, authoritative alpha level of .85 and permissive style at alpha level of .73. All these alpha level results were within in the acceptable range of alpha coefficient as a measure of internal consistency because each exceeded .67 (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2008).

Parental Attachment Questionnaire: Researchers used different data collection instruments to measure parental attachment developed and revised at different times by different scholars. However, the most commonly used data-gathering instrument is inventory of peer and parental attachment (IPPA) that was originally developed by Armsden and Greenberg (1987) in two versions, one for peer attachment and the other for parental attachment. Each version consists of 25 items to measure peer attachment and parental attachment separately. Then, this study adapted the parental attachment version which contains 25 items with five-point Likert-scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Pilot test was made on 50 adolescent students to check the internal consistency of this general parental attachment questionnaire. Based on the pilot study result, the internal consistency was found to be .829, indicating more reliable and in the accepted range of alpha coefficient (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2008).

Identity Status Questionnaire: Identity achievement of adolescents was measured using scaled questionnaire taken from Objective Measure of Ego Identity Statuses (OMEIS) adapted from Bennion and Adams (1986) prepared based on the extent of making commitment and in-depth exploration. The instrument consisted of six-point Likert-scale with 16 items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). A pilot study was conducted on 50 secondary and preparatory school students selected randomly to assess the internal consistency of items for identity achievement taken from Objective Measure of Ego Identity Statuses (OMEIS). Then, the pilot study result indicated that the internal consistency of the scale was .90 for identity achievement that shows in the acceptable range of alpha level.

Methods of data analyses

The methods of data analyses for this study began from Pearson product moment correlation to examine the extent of relationships among the predictor, mediating and criterion variables (Hewitt & Cramer, 2011). In addition, the mediating role of parental attachment in the relationship between parenting styles and identity achievement was analyzed using path

analysis. In determining the four paths, Baron and Kenny's (1986) single mediator model was used in the conceptual framework (path c, path a, path b and path c'). A series of linear regressions were run for each parenting style, parental attachment and identity achievement in path diagram (Howitt & Cramer, 2011). The significance of the indirect effects of parenting styles on identity achievement via parental attachment were tested by Sobel's z-test.

RESULTS

The following section shows results of path analysis via simple linear and multiple regressions with a discussion of major findings in line with the research questions. Significant relationships among study variables were the basic requirement for mediational analysis. Hence, before the mediational analysis, the mean, standard deviation and intercorrelation results of parenting styles, parental attachment and identity achievement were computed and presented as shown below.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations among the Variables

| Variables | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------------|----------|-----------|------|------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1 <i>PPS</i> | 3.04 | .598 | 1.00 | .068 | .355** | .175** | .387** |
| 2 <i>APS</i> | 3.42 | .623 | | 1.00 | .105* | .194** | .221** |
| 3 <i>PA</i> | 3.64 | .720 | | | 1.00 | .332** | .525** |
| 4 <i>IDA</i> | 3.92 | .989 | | | | 1.00 | .282** |
| 5 <i>AVPS</i> | 3.51 | .729 | | | | | 1.00 |

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

Note - *PPS* = *Permissive Parenting Style*, *APS* = *Authoritarian Parenting Style*, *AVPS* = *Authoritative Parenting Style*, *PA* = *Parental Attachment*, *IDA* = *Identity Achievement*

As shown in Table 1, permissive parenting style was significantly and positively associated with identity achievement ($r = .175, p < .01$) and parental attachment ($r = .355, p < .01$). On the other hand, permissive parenting style was significantly and positively correlated with authoritative parenting style ($r = .387, p < .01$). Furthermore, authoritative parenting style was significantly and positively correlated with parental attachment ($r = .525, p < .01$), identity achievement ($r = .282, p < .01$) and authoritarian parenting style ($r = .221, p < .01$). The result indicated a significant and positive relationship between authoritarian parenting style and parental attachment ($r = .105, p < .05$), identity achievement ($r = .194, p < .01$). Finally, parental attachment was significantly and positively correlated with identity achievement ($r = .332, p < .01$).

In order to examine the mediating role of parental attachment in the relationship between parenting styles and identity achievement, first, the path coefficients were determined using simple and multiple linear regressions. According to Mackinnon (2008), the following three requirements are required to establish a mediational relationship.

First, conduct a simple regression analysis with parenting styles predicting identity achievement. Second, conduct a simple regression analysis with parenting styles predicting the mediating variable (parental attachment). Third, conduct a regression analysis with parental attachment controlling parenting styles predicting identity achievement. Finally, conduct a regression analysis with parenting styles controlling parental attachment predicting identity achievement. Accordingly, the mediating role of parental attachment in the relationships of parenting styles and identity achievement were investigated by running two simple and one multiple regression analyses.

Table 2

Regression Analysis on the Mediating Role of Parental Attachment in the relationship between Identity Achievement and Authoritarian Parenting Style

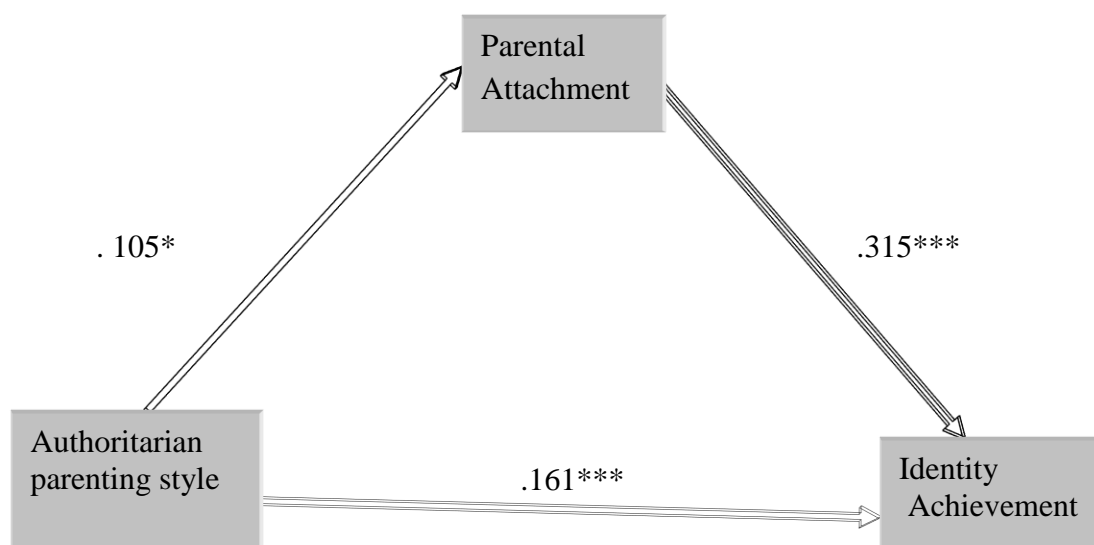
| Regression | Variables | Unstandardized | | Standardized | <i>t</i> | Sig. |
|------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|--------------|----------|------|
| | | Coefficients | | Coefficients | | |
| | | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | Beta | | |
| 1 | APS | .308 | .081 | .194 | 3.80*** | .000 |
| 2 | APS | .121 | .060 | .105 | 2.03* | .043 |
| 3 | PA | .433 | .067 | .315 | 6.48*** | .000 |
| | APS | .255 | .077 | .161 | 3.30*** | .000 |

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

Note - APS = Authoritarian Parenting Style, PA = Parental Attachment

As shown in Table 2, for the first requirement, the first regression result indicated that authoritarian parenting style ($\beta = .194$, $t = 3.80$, $p < .001$) significantly and positively predicted identity achievement. Furthermore, for the second requirement, authoritarian parenting style ($\beta = .105$, $t = 3.03$, $p < .05$) positively and significantly predicted parental attachment. For the final requirement, the effect of parental attachment on identity achievement controlling for authoritarian parenting style was found to be positive and significant with a path coefficient of ($\beta = .315$, $t = 6.48$, $p < .001$). Moreover, identity achievement was predicted positively and significantly by authoritarian parenting style ($\beta = .161$, $t = 3.30$, $p = .001$) controlling for parental attachment.

The indirect effect of authoritarian parenting style on identity achievement ($.105 \times .315$) was .033. Then, Sobel's z-test result demonstrated that the indirect effect of authoritarian parenting style on identity achievement was not significant with $z = 1.9251$, $p = 0.0542 > .05$, indicating that parental attachment did not mediate in the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and identity achievement. Thus, the direct path is more influential than the indirect path (see Figure 2 below).



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

Fig. 2. Path Diagram on the Mediating Role of Parental Attachment between Identity Achievement and Authoritarian Parenting Style

Table 3

Regression Results on the Mediating Role of Parental Attachment between Identity Achievement and Authoritative Parenting Styles

| Regression | Variables | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | <i>t</i> | Sig. |
|------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|----------|------|
| | | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | Beta | | |
| 1 | AVPS | .382 | .068 | .282 | 5.65*** | .000 |
| 2 | AVPS | .519 | .044 | .525 | 11.9*** | .000 |
| 3 | PA | .349 | .078 | .254 | 4.45*** | .000 |
| | AVPS | .201 | .077 | .148 | 2.59* | .011 |

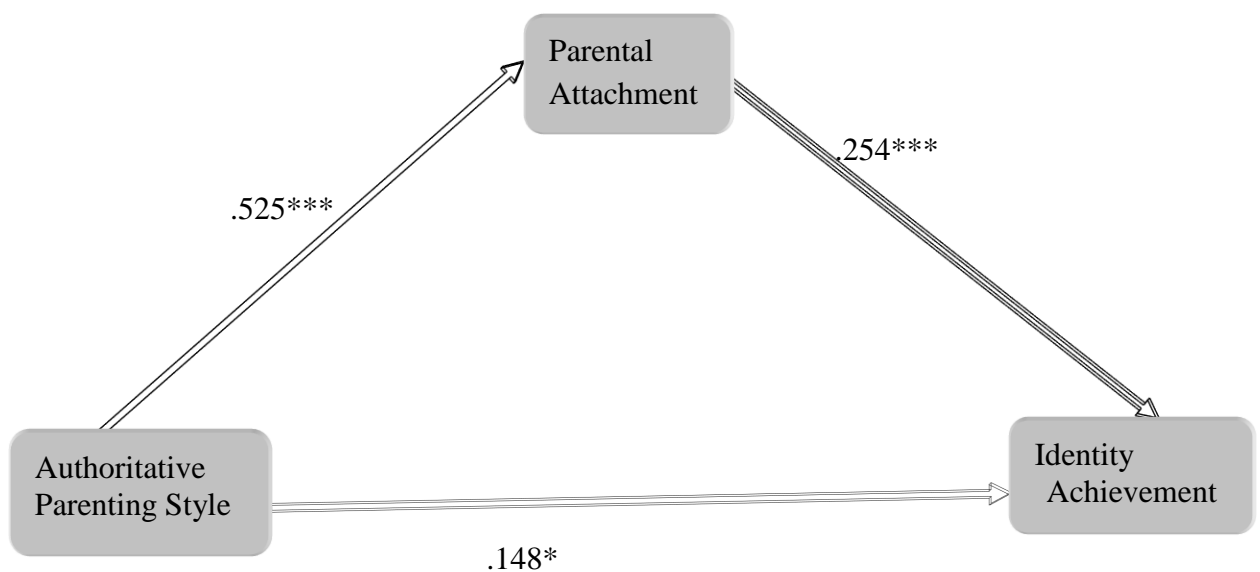
* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Note - AVPS = Authoritative Parenting Style, PA = Parental Attachment

The regression analysis for the first requirement in Table 2 demonstrated that authoritative parenting style significantly predicted identity achievement ($\beta = .282$, $t = 5.65$, $p < .001$). In addition, for the second requirement, parental attachment was regressed on authoritative parenting style and, significant relationship was exhibited ($\beta = .525$, $t = 11.9$, $p < .001$). Hence, for the last requirement, the effect of authoritative parenting style on identity achievement, controlling parental attachment, was found to be significant ($\beta = .148$, $t = 2.59$, $p < .05$). At the same time, the effect of parental attachment on identity achievement

controlling for authoritative parenting style was found to be significant ($\beta=.254$, $t = 4.45$, $p < .001$).

The indirect effect of authoritative parenting style on identity achievement through parental attachment ($.525 \times .254$) was $.133$. With this extent of indirect effect, Sobel's z -test result depicted that the indirect effect of authoritative parenting style on identity achievement was found to be significant with $z = 4.1834$, $p < .001$, indicating that parental attachment partially and significantly mediated the relationship of authoritative parenting style and identity achievement. With regard to effect proportion, 47.2% of the effect of authoritative parenting style on identity achievement was mediated through parental attachment, while the rest 52.8% through identity achievement directly. This shows that both the direct and indirect effects are important for the development of adolescents' identity achievement.



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

Figure 3: Path Diagram on the Mediating Role of Parental Attachment between Identity Achievement and Permissive Parenting Style.

Table 4

Regression Results on the Mediating Role of Parental Attachment between Identity Achievement and Permissive Parenting Style

| Regression | Variables | Unstandardized | | Standardized | <i>t</i> | Sig. |
|------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|--------------|----------|------|
| | | Coefficients | | Coefficients | | |
| | | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | Beta | | |
| 1 | PPS | .290 | .085 | .175 | 3.43*** | .000 |
| 2 | PPS | .427 | .058 | .355 | 7.31*** | .000 |
| 3 | PA | .424 | .072 | .309 | 5.89*** | .000 |
| | PPS | .109 | .087 | .066 | 1.260 | .208 |

** $p < .001$

Note - PPS = Permissive Parenting Style, PA = Parental Attachment

As shown in Table 4, the first regression analysis indicated that identity achievement was positively and significantly associated with permissive parenting style ($\beta = .175$, $t = 3.433$, $p = .001$). Besides, for the second requirement, the second regression analysis indicated that permissive parenting style ($\beta = .355$, $t = 7.309$, $p < .001$) was positively and significantly correlated with parental attachment. As a last Baron and Kenny's requirement, parental attachment ($\beta = .309$, $t = 5.898$, $P < .001$) significantly and positively predicted identity achievement when the effect of permissive parenting style was controlled. The direct effect of permissive parenting style on identity achievement was not found to be significant, controlling for the effect of parental attachment with a path coefficient of ($\beta = .066$, $t = 1.260$, $p > .001$). This shows that the direct path is not influential for the development of identity achievement.

The indirect effect of permissive parenting style on identity achievement ($.355 \times .309$) was .1096. The Sobel's z-test result revealed that the indirect path had a significant effect on identity achievement ($z = 3.821$, $p < .001$), indicating that the relationship between permissive parenting style and identity achievement was significantly and fully mediated through parental attachment because the effect of the direct path was found to very small and insignificant to adolescents' identity achievement. Thus, the path coefficients were displayed in Figure 4 below.

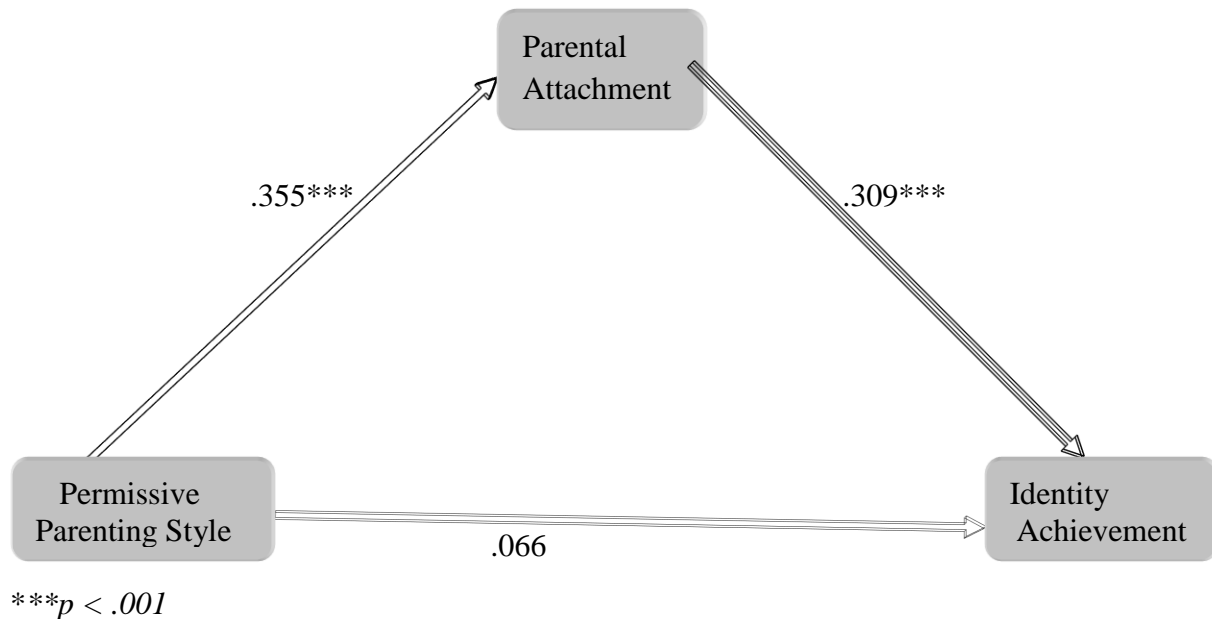


Figure 4: Path on the Mediating Role of Parental Attachment between Identity Achievement and Permissive Parenting Style

DISCUSSION

Parenting styles predict Identity achievement

Parenting styles are powerful beliefs, values, efforts and endeavors in shaping, guiding, directing and controlling the identity formation of adolescents (Borkowski, Ramey & Marie Bristol-Power, 2002). Research findings revealed that parental beliefs about childrearing and parenting including appropriate practices, aspirations and expectations are important factors to determine adolescents' identity development. This study revealed that authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parenting style significantly and positively predicted identity achievement. This means adolescents from controlling and restrictive parenting style develop sense of exploration and commitment to their future personal goals. In the same vein, parents who are warm, supportive and believe in discussion foster their children to have positive developmental outcomes. In relation to the findings of this study, it was suspected that parents who provide the most supportive and loving relationship would produce the most securely attached adolescent. These secured adolescents would yield better achievements (Kerns, Tomich, Aspelmeier, & Contreras, 2000). Similarly, Far & Fattahi (2015) found that parenting styles are the main factors that affect establishment of successful identity through encouraging, facilitating and motivating adolescents in searching for their own individuality and independence.

Parenting Styles Predict Parental Attachment

The findings of this study revealed that the predictor variable was significantly correlated with the mediator variable. That is, authoritative parenting style significantly and positively predicted parental attachment. Consistent to the findings of this study, Karavasilis, Doyle &

Markiewicz (2003) in their study reported that authoritative parenting style significantly and positively correlated with parental attachment. Moreover, inconsistent with this research finding, Sigelman & Rider, (2009) stated that authoritative parents are responsive, setting clear and consistent limits, relatively strict but love and emotionally supportive, use reasons and discussion on basic issues with better communication that increase an emotional attachment with their adolescent children. Still, Berger's (2009) research findings indicated that parents with authoritative parenting exert maximum efforts for better future of their children and provide every opportunity to improve their status and provide them comfort.

Yet again, this research found that authoritarian parenting style was a very weak predictor of parental attachment compared with other parenting styles, but it remained positive and significant. This weak and poor relationship is the result of high demanded and low responsive behavior of parents such as strictness, firmness, rigidity, setting rules and standards, respecting values and being obedience (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). This home environment is most common in collectivistic society like Ethiopia compared with the individualistic society in western countries.

Furthermore, the results of this study revealed that permissive parenting style significantly and positively predicted parental attachment. Supporting this finding, Santrock (2011) stated that parents with permissive parenting style deliberately rear their children in this way because they believe the combination of warm involvement, high love and affectionate, and few restraints can produce creative, confident adolescents. Yet, Karavasilis, Doyle & Markiewicz (2003) also found that warm parental involvement plays a unique role in attachment. Other research results showed that permissive parenting style is very weak in supporting, guiding, setting the demanded standards and monitoring their daily behaviors (Sigelman & Rider, 2009).

Parental Attachment Predicts Identity Achievement

This research result indicated that parental attachment positively and significantly predicted identity achievement. This shows that as the parent-adolescent emotional bond becomes strong, identity achievement becomes encouraged and strengthened. In relation to the current study, Zimmermann & Becker-Stoll (2002) conducted a Meta-analysis and found that Marcia's identity achievement and parental attachment had weak to moderate correlations. Campbell, Adams, and Dobson (1984) conducted another study on the parent adolescent relationship in terms of emotional attachment and the results suggest that those with the highest degree of attachment to their parental figures fall into the identity achieved status which confirms adolescents who were in identity achievement had higher and strong parental attachment. Similarly, Kroger and Haslet (1988) found that strong parental attachment was found among those in the identity-achieved status. Quintana and Lapsley (1987) demonstrated a significant finding relating ego identity to parental attachment, indicating low level of attachment led to low level of identity achievement and vice versa. Concisely, parents who raised their children with strong emotional ties and attachment, their adolescent

children explore several alternatives and reach better commitments that characterize identity achievement.

The Mediating Role of Parental Attachment in the relationship between Parenting Styles and Identity Statuses

This research result depicted that the inclusion of parental attachment (the mediator variable) into the regression equation controlling for authoritarian parenting style did not significantly reduce the relationship of authoritarian parenting style and identity achievement. At the same time, the Sobel's z-test result demonstrated that the indirect effect of authoritarian parenting style on identity achievement was positive but insignificant, implying that parental attachment did not mediate in the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and identity achievement. This shows that authoritarian parenting style has positive and significant direct effect on identity achievement. In consistent with the above result, Quintana & Lapsley (1987) indicated that authoritarian parenting style had significant direct effect on identity achievement but not mediated by parental attachment. The present research result implies that parents had higher demand in obedience and conformity, respecting rules, standards, values and other measures of disciplines, which in turn positively contributed for identity achievement.

The study also showed the effect of authoritative parenting style on identity achievement controlling for parental attachment positively and significantly predicted identity achievement. Moreover, the Sobel's z-test revealed that the indirect effect of authoritative parenting style on identity achievement was found to be significant, indicating that parental attachment significantly and partially mediated the relationship between authoritative parenting style and identity achievement. Regarding the effect proportion, 52.8% of effect of authoritative parenting style directly influenced identity achievement, whereas the rest 47.2% of the effect influenced identity achievement indirectly via parental attachment. In order to relate the findings of this study to the previous studies, literature was almost none. Thus, we suggest future research will be conducted on the area by considering the variables of this study.

Similarly, this study indicated that permissive parenting style was positive but did not significantly predict identity achievement. This finding indicates that the indirect effect, as indicated in the Sobel's z-test result, permissive parenting style via parental attachment was positive and significant. This shows that permissive parenting style significantly and fully mediated the relationship between permissive parenting style and identity achievement through parental attachment. This means that high degree of warm parental involvement, emotional bond, love and affection but low fostering of psychological and behavioral control contributed for adolescents to explore alternatives and make committed decision. In fact, literature was scant in this area; we tried to indicate that the results of this study will have a great contribution for future research.

CONCLUSION

This research examined the mediating role of parental attachment in the relationship between parenting styles and identity achievement of adolescents. Then, authoritative-parenting style

was most commonly practiced with higher mean score compared with other parenting styles followed by authoritarian parenting style. This shows that parents of adolescents monitor, guide, set rules and standards, respond, discuss basic issues, and have high expectation from their adolescent children outshine the other parenting styles.

Furthermore, authoritative parenting style facilitates and encourages adolescents' exploration and commitment and significantly contributes for the development of identity achievement. Moreover, authoritative parenting style uses parental attachment as tool to shape children's behavior with the necessary guidance and monitoring while allowing the children explore alternatives and make commitments. However, authoritarian parents directly enforce their adolescent children to follow their rules, standards, values, and expectations without discussion and mutual understanding, but it remained significant and positive predictor of identity achievement in the context of this study. The relationship between permissive parenting style and identity achievement significantly and fully mediated through parental attachment. This implies that permissive parenting style contribute to identity achievement through warm parental involvement, emotional bond, love and affection.

Recommendation

- Developmental psychologists ought to pay much attention to the importance of parental attachment that plays role in creating the link between parenting styles and identity achievement. This may inform on how to devise appropriate intervention strategies to foster the relationship of the two parties.
- Future research is recommended to extend this study by further examining the mediating role of parental attachment in the relationship between parenting style and identity achievement of adolescents

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