Kurd Students' Future Education Orientation: Associations with Self-esteem, and Ethnic Identity

Armindokht Ahmadi[1*], Soghra Yousefi[2], Seyed Mehdi Hoseinifard[3], Salva Shamseddinilory[4], maryam shahryari[5], Fatemeh Torfi[6]

[1.] MA in Department of Psychometry, Central Tehran branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
[2,4,6.] MA. in Department of Counseling, Research and Science Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran
[3] Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Medical Science, Kerman, Iran
[5.] MA Student in Department of General Psychology, Zarand branch, Islamic Azad University, Zarand, Iran
[*]Corresponding author: armindokhta@yahoo.com

Abstract: The aim of the present study is to investigate the relation between self- reverence, ethnic identity and future education orientation in Kurd students of Kurdistan University. 308 subjects (165 male and 143 female) among students of different faculties of Kurdistan University have been selected by multiple process sampling. For data collection, future orientation questionnaire of Seginer, Nurmi and Pool (1999), self-esteem measure of Rosenberg (1985) and multiple ethnic identity measure (MEIM) of Phinney (1992) had been used. The findings of study indicate that self-esteem have a positive meaningful relation with future education orientation and ethnic identity. Furthermore, there is a positive meaningful relation between ethnic identity and future education orientation. The variables of self-esteem and ethnic identity have been introduced to step-by-step regression analysis for determining their share in predicting future education orientation and the results obtained from step-by-step regression showed that it is just self-esteem which has the ability to predict future education orientation. [A. Ahmadi, S. Yousefi, S. M. Hoseinifard, S. Shamseddinilory, M. Shahryari, F. Torfi. **Kurd Students' Future Education Orientation: Associations with Self-esteem, and Ethnic Identity**. *Life Sci J* 20132; 10(2s):169-174] (ISSN: 1097-8135). http://www.lifesciencesite.com. 29

1. Introduction

Individuals usually think about future events and set some goals for them, they try to reach their goals. Thinking about future education is one of the main concerns of youth for being related to their individual and social success. Future orientation in youth and adolescence is of great significance, because in adolescence, individuals become face with main tasks and responsibilities which have been determined for them by their parents, peers and teachers. Decisions which adolescents make regarding their future occupation, life span and family affect their future orientation. Furthermore, their attitude toward future has a great role in their identity formation. The significant of future orientation in making main and transient decisions in youth is obvious (Nurmi, 2005. Different definitions have been provided for future orientation, e.g. Nurmi (1994) defines future orientation as the thinking, imagination and expectations which the individual have for future. Trommsodroff (1983) defines it as the mental judgment of individuals about those events whose probability to happen in the future is less or more (quoted in Kerpelman et. Al 2008). Future orientation is related to simple view of individuals toward future prediction and includes some plans, wishes, willingness and fears about probable events and experiences or some areas of life which are related to thematic themes (Seginer, 1998 quoted in Seginer and Halabi, 1991). Nurmi (1994), Seginer and Poole

(1999) have offered some patterns for future orientation. The pattern offered by Nurmi contains three elements: motivation, planning and evaluation; motivation is the incline of individuals to some goals which have set for themselves. Planning refers to those plans and activities which are used for reaching goals and evaluation refers to predicted success for actualization of goals as reflected in documents and works (Seginer, 2009). In this pattern, first individuals define some goals for themselves, and then plan for actualization of them. Finally, they evaluate the required facilities and conditions for meeting goals and plans (Poole, 2000). The pattern offered by Seginer, Nurmi and Poole includes three elements of motivation, cognitive and behavioral.

The variables of motivational element are: time value related to future; waiting (inner confidence) for realization of hopes, plans and emotional consequences of it and primary control feeling toward actualization of hopes and future-related plans or individual's skills and affairs. The variables of cognitive element include content and value. Content refers to different areas of life which people build for their future. And value is consistent with this assumption that individual associate with future according to their incline and avoidance which is defined in terms of hopes and fears. Behavioral element includes two variables: exploration and commitment. Exploration refers to data gathering related to higher education and occupational options,

negotiation and conversation with people and commitment is applied for individuals' decision making about occupation, course of education or marriage (Seginer, 2009).

2. Self- esteem

Many researchers confirmed the role of self and its surrounding on prediction of future orientation. Seginer (2009) believes that engagement in thinking and behavior of future orientation lead to inner ability and optimization and it is more evident in individuals with higher score in self-evaluation, primary control and self-empowerment. Douvan and Adelson (1966 qouted in Seginer, 2009) believe that individuals can reach compatibility when they coordinate his/her future with the present status and self- concept. Those who have future orientation have higher ability in self-regulation and are able to postpone their current pleasure to reach future pleasure and goals (McInerney, 2004). Furthermore future orientation have been investigated with self- efficacy due to responsibility traits, believe in self- abilities to control consequences and waiting for success. Kerpelman and Mosher (2004) and Kerpelman et al (2008) found positive meaningful relation between future orientation and self- efficacy and conclude that self-efficacy is a powerful predictor for education future orientation. Bandura (1997) believe that self- efficacy is related to self- esteem.

Self-esteem and efficacy expectation for doing assignment affects self-esteem, especially when failure/success is woven with self-valuation (Lane et al, 2004). Considering the role of self-derivation including self-regulation, primary control, self-concept and self-efficacy in prediction of future orientation one can raise this question that is there any relation between self- esteem and education future orientation?

3. Ethnical Identity

Tajfel (1972) and Phinney (1992) are the main researchers who have worked on social identity and ethnic identity. According to Tajfel (1972 quoted in Mohseni, 2004) social identity is "individual's knowledge in relation to its belonging to social groups and excitements and value meanings which results from desire to evolution and upheaval" and ethnic identity results from individual's awareness from membership in a social group which have emotional and value significance for him/her (Phinney, 1992).

Ogbu (1978, 1991) is one of the outstanding researchers who have studied about the relation between education future orientations of ethnic minorities. He concluded that cultural patterns are the best determiner of education success and failure among ethnic minority students. Cultural patterns provide a framework for their member in determining social and educational phenomena, opportunities and experiences and guide the member behaviors in social and educational environment (Kathleen, 2006). Ogbu shows a converse relation between the acceptance of ethnic group and educational performance. He believes that African students, who are minority group in America, undermine hard work in education and don't consider it dependent to future goals (Adelabu, 2008). Furthermore, (Oklez et al, 2006) conclude that when minority students are discriminated by teachers and peers, their score, education self-concept and the value of their education assignment decrease.

Other studies show that the feeling of belonging is in relation with many positive psychological consequences including high self-esteem (French, 2002), Verkuyten and Brug (2002), Bracey et al (2004), Ivori (2002), Phinny and Chavira (1992) and Phinny et al (1997); psychological competence (Phinny, 1992); low anxiety, low depression, high life quality (Abu-Rayya (2006), social and emotional compatibility (Yasui et al, 2004); occupational decision making efficacy (Gushue, 2006) and positive attitude toward other ethnic groups (Phinny et al 2007). In addition, Oyserman et al (2001), Wong et al (2003) report a positive relation between ethnic identity and education performance and indicate that ethnic identity have positive effects on engagement and education performance and can be a supportive factor in reaching educational goals. Other researches show a positive correlation between ethnic identity and education performance and conclude that high ethnic identity have a positive relation with education engagement. In the research done by Adelabu (2008) about future time perspective (FTP), hope and ethnic identity, it was shown that those who have higher orientation toward their future, were more interested in pursuing their goals, also have more belonging and interest toward their ethnic group.

The above findings prove that when getting successful ethnic identity is the main concern for ethnic groups, it can be a preventive factor in their education goals, however when their ethnic identity become fixed and their member succeeded in their ethnic identity, they can use it as a supportive factor in reaching education goals while not having any belonging to their ethnic and not having any positive incline toward it, will become a barrier for getting education identity. Kerpelman et al (2008) conclude that ethnic identity can have a preventive role against those factors which might endanger self- efficacy and education engagement and when individuals felt belonging to their ethnic group and make sure that ethnic group value their education progress, it will bring for them a better education consequence. In this study, it is assumed that ethnic identity has a positive relation with future education orientation. So in order to examine this we have investigate the relation

between ethnic identity and education future orientation among Kurd students.

Considering what has been mentioned, it can be seen that the relation between self-esteem and future education orientation has not been investigated but its relation with other derivations of "self" has been examined. Due to the fact that future education orientation is one of the main concerns of youth and adolescences and considering the present condition of Iran and lack of clear vision toward future occupation related to education, it seems necessary to investigate future orientation of students.

In addition, other researches done considering the investigation of ethnic identity focus on immigrant ethnic minority and it is less done in countries having ethnic variation excluding immigrant. So the investigation of relation between variables of ethnic identity, self- esteem and future education orientation in a country like Iran which have a wide ethnic variety including Fars, Kurd, Turk, Arab, Balouch and Lor, etc. can extend the generalization of previous findings and theoretical framework of variables. Finally this research has been done for reaching the following goals.

1. Identifying the relation between self- esteem, ethnic identity and future education orientation in Kurd students
2. Determining the portion of self-esteem and ethnic identity in prediction of future education

4. Methodology

The present study is correlational and predictive. The sample of study is BA students of different faculties of Kurdistan University (entrance 2007-2008). The population in 2010-2011 is 1493 people. Multi-step random sampling has been used in this survey and the sample size was estimated as 308 people (165 boys and 143 girls). The average age of students has been 21 years and 6 months old and its standard deviation was 1.44.

5. Data collection

The following tools have been used for data collection: Future Education Orientation Questionnaire: this questionnaire has been constructed by Seginer, Nurmi and Poole (1994) for measuring three areas (educational, occupational and family) and is rated based on a five point scale (1-5). Each area includes three elements of cognitive, motivational and behavioral representation. The motivational element include three sub-scale of value, mental expectation for realization of hopes and internal control on realization of plans and hopes. Cognitive representation includes two sub scales which show the main and essential dimensions of each area in thought related to occupation, education and their partner in future life. Finally behavioral element includes two

sub scale of exploration, selection for future and commitments, i.e. decision making about a preferred option. In this study for measuring future education orientation of students the educational dimension of future orientation has been used. Seniger et al (2004) reported the coefficients of reliability for cognitive, behavioral and motivational elements as 0/75, 0/73 and 0/84 and its convergent validity has been calculated through correlation between future occupation orientation and considering future consequences scale which is a tool for measuring future thoughts. These correlation coefficients have a range between 0.23 and 0.39 and are meaningful (Rabani Zadeh, 2011). In the present study reliability of the questionnaire has been 0.93 and internal consistency (Alpha Chronbach) for future education orientation has been 0.87.

Self-esteem scale: for evaluation and measuring of self-esteem a 10 point scale of self-esteem from Rosenberg (1985) has been used. The points of this scale have been rated based on Likert scale from completely agree to completely disagree. Rajabi and Bohloul (2006) reported the reliability of this scale for university students as 0.84. In the present study the reliability has been obtained as 0.86 based on Alpha Chronbach.

Multiple ethnic identity measure (MEIM): this measure has been constructed by Phinny in 1992 for identification of ethnic identity of individuals. Phinny has confirmed the general dimensions of ethnic identity and the common applicable elements for all groups including 1. Naming of self and ethnicity, 2. Ethnic behavior and activities, 2. Acceptance and ethnic belonging feeling, 3. Successful ethnic identity and 5. Attitude toward other ethnic groups. The reliability of this tools has been 0.90 through Alpha Chronbach as obtained by Phinney and the internal consistency of sub scales have been 0.69- 0.74. In present study the reliability of the whole measure is 0.76 and its internal consistency for subscales is 0.61- 0.84.

6. Findings

Table 1 shows statistical indices of sample in self-esteem ethnic identity and future education orientation.

Table1. Descriptive indices of variables

Variable	Mean	DS
Self- esteem	32.46	4.44
Ethnic identity	68.53	8.66
Future Education orientation	129.13	16.64

N=308

In order to determine the relation between self-esteem, ethnic identity and future education orientation, Pearson correlation coefficient has been used and the results have been presented in table 2.

Table2. Correlation coefficient between future orientation and gender with self-esteem

Variables	1	2	3
1. Self-esteem	-	-	-
2. Ethnic identity	0.49*	-	
3. Future education orientation	0.46*	0.21*	-

*p< ./01

Table 2 shows that there is positive meaningful difference relation between self-esteem and ethnic identity, self-esteem and future education orientation in 0.01 alpha Chronbach. In order to determine the share of self- esteem and ethnic identity in prediction of future education orientation step-by-step regression analysis has been used. The results of regression analysis are presented in following table:

Table 3: Step-by-step regression of future education orientation based on self- esteem and ethnic identity

Model	Variable	R	R^2	R^2 adjustment	Standard error	ΔR^2	F	df 1,2	P
Self-esteem	0.46	0.21	0.21		14.8	0.21	81.7	1,306	0.00

The regression analysis table show that among two variables of self-esteem and ethnic identity, just self- esteem is predictive for future education orientation and despite existence of self-esteem variable, ethnic identity has not been able to act as predictive variable. So regression analysis is just is meaningful just in one step and considering coefficient of R^2, self-esteem predicts 21% of the shifts in future education orientation.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relation between self-esteem and ethnic identity with future education orientation in Kurd students of Kurdistan. The findings show that self- esteem and future education orientation have positive meaningful relation with another. As it was shown previously, no research has been found on investigation of self-esteem with future education orientation. However, some researches have been done on investigation of relation between "self" elements and future orientation, one of them is self-efficacy which has positive meaningful difference with future education orientation (Kerpelman and Mosher, 2004; Kerpelman et al. 2008). Seginer et al (1998) believe that those adolescents who have higher self- efficacy rather than their peers choose more real objectives, reasonable plans and make use of their ability in reaching their future goals (Kerpelman et al, 2008). If we believe in the effectiveness of efficacy expectation on perceiving self-esteem (Bandura, 1997 quoted in Lane et. Al, 2004) and considering the positive relation between self-efficacy with self- esteem (Lin et al, 2004, Sasson, 2005), it might be possible to regard these two as related. So, one can say that the findings of present study, concerning positive meaningful relation of future education orientation with self-esteem, are in line with Kerpelman and Mosher (2004) and Kerpelman et al (2008).

Considering the relation between ethnic identity and self-esteem the correlation coefficient showed that there is positive meaningful difference between these two variables. The results of this research can be proved based on social identity theory of Tajel and ethnic identity theory of Phinney and compare them based on the researches done on relationship of these two variables: according to Tajfel and Turner (1987) the categorization process of self as a member of a group lead to building of self-esteem in individuals. Then this identity becomes an inevitable part of the feeling of "who am I". So getting new social identity makes individuals to see themselves better than others so they honor their group which increases their self-esteem (Moore, 2008). Furthermore, according to Phinney those who begin to explore the meaning of identity in their life and find themselves according to exploration of their ethnic identity (commitment), usually find a positive feeling about themselves and their ethnic group. So the finding of present study can be considered as in line with social identity theory of Tajel and ethnic identity of Phinney. In refer to relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem many researchers have been done (Phinney and Chavira, 1992; Phinny et al, 1997; French, 2002; Verkuyten and Burg 2002, Bracy et al, 2004 and Ivori 2002) which indicate the positive meaningful relation between these two variables and are consistent with the results of present study.

Considering the share of self-esteem and ethnic identity in prediction of future education orientation, the results of step-by-step regression analysis show that the only powerful predictor for future education orientation is self-esteem and despite the existence of self-esteem, the ethnic identity has not been able to be a powerful predictor for future education orientation. As mentioned before, when ethnic identity has not get a well-organized from and the members of ethnic groups have not got inner commitment due to exploration of ethnicity meanings, and don't feel belonging to their ethnic, they have not got successful ethnic identity and getting successful ethnic identity is still their main concern. So, one cannot expect that they could prove their abilities in terms of education identity. And inaccessibility to

successful ethnic identity becomes a barrier for getting education identity and education performance. However, when ethnic identity gets a well-organized form and ethnic members have got access to successful ethnic identity as a result of exploration, and the members of society respect their identity, their self-esteem increases and they would be able to get other identities including occupation identity and education identity.

The finding of this research is inconsistent with Ogbu (1978) due to following reasons: first, the sample is African- American students, the ethnic discrimination, racism historical patterns and ethnic inequality in America make African- American youth get less education success and disable to discover their education identity. Second, the sample of present study is Kurd students whose cultural differences with other Iranian ethnics are to a less extent than prevalent and significant cultural differences between American and African- American, the reason is that Iranian ethnics have common and shared historical and cultural experiences. Kurd people are Iranian in terms of language, physical appearance and as a kind of Aryan ethnic in terms of language, morality, life experiences are very similar to other ethnic groups in Iran. So getting successful ethnic identity is not their main concern since ethnic identity has been formed in them to some extent and they want to use it as a supportive factor in getting occupation and education identity in light of their ethnic identity. So future education and future occupation related to education is one of their concerns in our society. It seems that students could have a positive orientation toward their future education by increasing self- esteem and satisfying their self-confirmative and prove their abilities. In addition, one should not expect that ethnic identity to be a powerful predictor against self-esteem for future education orientation and education performance, since the strong and close relation between self-esteem and education engagement in many researches has been proved.

Corresponding Author:
Armindokht Ahmadi
MA in Psychometry, Central Tehran branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
E-mail: armindokhta@yahoo.com

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