Who Am I in the Classroom? The Influence of Self-Identity Status on Academic Achievement

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ABSTRACT

The concept of self-identity has been a central theme in research for centuries, exploring the fundamental question of what defines an individual over time. This quantitative study aimed to explore the relationship between self-identity status and academic achievement among 155 senior high school students at the Philippine International School-Qatar, utilizing a stratified random sampling technique. The findings indicated that while the majority of students were performing well academically and had explored various aspects of their personal identity, they were still in a transitional phase of identity development. This suggests that even though students may demonstrate strong academic abilities, their sense of self is still evolving and has not yet fully crystallized. Furthermore, when students were grouped according to their grade level or academic strand, no significant relationship was found between self-identity status and academic achievement. This lack of a clear connection suggests that academic performance may be influenced by other factors, such as teaching methods, external support systems, or individual life circumstances, rather than by self-identity alone. However, a significant relationship emerged when students were grouped by gender, suggesting that gender may influence how self-identity and academic achievement intersect. The study recommends that future research further examine the specific impacts of each identity status on students' academic performance.

1. Introduction

The concept of self-identity has served as the foundation for research for centuries and has been the center of numerous studies and debates. Dainton (2016) argues that the sense of self is neither static nor monolithic but rather a dynamic, ever-changing process shaped by people and experiences. This challenges the common idea of a fixed and unchanging personality and paves the way for new ways to conceptualize how an individual is characterized and how one defines their identity. In a 2022 study by *Identities in Action*, self-identity is defined as the attainment of ethnic identity and its relationship to self-esteem, noting that this attainment process helps individuals develop positive self-esteem within their ethnic group (Grindal et. al, 2022).

Furthermore, an individual's close connection to their sense of self can even alter the nature of their interactions with others (Price, 2021). Thus, it is reasonable to state that one's self-identity could also reflect their capabilities and performance in a scholastic setting. Self-identity is a factor that many students continue to navigate throughout their lives. According to Kolonko (2022), a persistent inner critic in a person's mind, which can undermine their confidence and make them feel hopeless, may be present in those who lack a strong sense of self-identity. Such individuals struggle with making decisions and often feel directionless. On the contrary, students who have a strong sense of self-identity are confident in their abilities, have discernment, and can create and achieve goals. Through these factors, the status of self-identity can be a factor that correlates with or influences academic achievement. Developing an individual's self-identity may lead to improvements in academic performance and achievement (Toti et.al, 2020).

Additionally, self-concept, which is closely related to self-identity, fosters positive academic behaviors and perspectives, such as persistence in academic tasks, making beneficial academic choices, cultivating educational objectives, and achieving academic success.

The concept of self-identity has been extensively researched in the existing literature. However, there is still a critical gap in understanding how self-identity specifically affects the academic performance of Senior High School (SHS) students in a diverse cultural setting such as the Philippine International School Qatar (PISQ). By emphasizing the dynamic nature of self-identity, as argued by Dainton (2016), this introduction highlights the need to delve deeper into how students' evolving sense of self interacts with their academic performance. While studies, such as that of *Identities in Action* (2022), have examined self-identity in specific cultural contexts, there is a lack of comprehensive research linking cultural, social, and personal identities to SHS students' academic achievement. Therefore, the study's unique niche lies in its focus on the nuanced interplay between self-identity and academic success within the diverse and multicultural environment of PISQ. This emphasis on context-specific dynamics is essential for developing targeted interventions and educational strategies that cater to students' holistic development (Kanna et al., 2024).

The study identifies a significant gap in the existing literature, specifically regarding the impact of self-identity on the academic performance of Senior High School (SHS) students in a multicultural setting like the Philippine International School Qatar (PISQ). Despite the substantial research on self-identity and academic achievement, there is a lack of research that integrates cultural, social, and personal identities in understanding how they influence academic outcomes in diverse contexts. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the intricate, context-specific dynamics of self-identity and academic success within PISQ, which is a multicultural environment.

The study's contributions and global implications are underscored by its potential to advance current knowledge in the field of identity and education while offering insights that extend beyond the immediate context of the Philippine International School Qatar (PISQ). By examining the intricate relationship between self-identity and academic achievement among Senior High School (SHS) students, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of how personal identity influences educational outcomes. This understanding is particularly crucial in multicultural educational settings like PISQ, where students navigate diverse cultural, social, and personal identities (Worthy, Lavigne, and Romero, 2020). The study's findings are poised to shed light on the complex interplay between self-concept, cultural background, and academic success, offering valuable insights for educators and policymakers. Furthermore, by bridging theoretical frameworks with practical applications, the study aims to inform the development of tailored interventions and educational strategies that foster a supportive learning environment (Lopez-Gazpio, 2023). These contributions have implications beyond the confines of PISQ, resonating with educational institutions globally that strive to create inclusive and empowering learning environments for students from diverse backgrounds. Ultimately, the study's significance lies in its potential to influence educational practices and policies on a broader scale, contributing to the enhancement of academic outcomes and overall well-being among SHS students worldwide.

This study aims to contribute to the growing body of research on self-identity and its impact on high school students' academic performance. By examining the complex interplay between self-identity, cultural background, and academic achievement, this study aims to provide valuable insights that can inform educational strategies and interventions. By understanding how students perceive themselves, how they manage their identity, and how they engage with academic tasks, we can provide educators and policy makers with important information to create a supportive and nurturing learning environment.

Furthermore, exploring the complexities of self-identity can shed light on the various challenges students face in their academic journey and offer solutions to improve their overall well-being and educational outcomes. Ultimately, this study seeks to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks and practical applications, paving the way for a more holistic approach to education that recognises and nurtures the multiple aspects of students' identity and potential. To summarise, this framework aims to provide evidence for improving educational strategies and interventions to promote the overall well-being and academic performance of high school students. This provides a comprehensive overview of the most important aspects of the key foundations of this study.
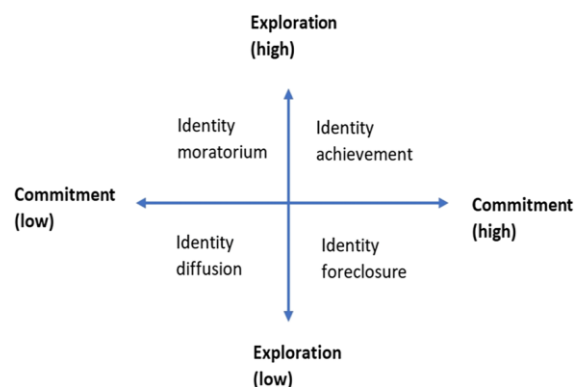
Figure 1. Marcia's Identity Status Model

This study examined the relationship of self-identity on the Senior High School (SHS) students' academic achievement in Philippine International School Qatar. Subsequently, this study answered the following:

1) What is the level of academic achievement of SHS students based on their First Midterm General Averages in the Academic Year 2023-2024?

2) What is the status of SHS students' self-identity when grouped in terms of Identity Diffusion, Identity Foreclosure, Identity Moratorium, and Identity Achievement?

3) What significant difference lies between the level of SHS students' academic achievement when grouped according to grade level, and strand?

4) What is the association between the academic achievement and self-identity status of SHS students?

This study aiming to inform educational strategies and interventions. Understanding how students perceive and manage their identities, and how this affects their academic engagement, can help create supportive learning environments and address challenges in students' academic journeys. Grounded in Erikson's psychosocial development theory and Marcia's identity statuses, the study examines how identity formation in adolescence influences academic outcomes. Bhat (2022) Highlights the link between self-identity and academic achievement, suggesting psychosocial factors play a key role, while Branje, De Moor, Spitzer, and Becht (2021) emphasize the importance of understanding identity formation in relation to academic performance. Ultimately, this framework aims to enhance educational practices that support students' well-being and academic success.

2. Literature Review

The literature review section looks at James Marcia's Identity Status Theory along with Bandura's theory on self-efficacy and examines the role it plays in shaping students' beliefs and behaviours. The review highlights gaps in existing research, particularly in relation to the nuanced relationship between self-identity and academic success in multicultural contexts.

2.1 Theories of Self-Identity

Numerous research have examined the connection between psychological factors like self-concept (self-identity), personality traits, and emotional intelligence to academic success. One prominent theory is Bandura's concept of self-efficacy, which assumes that a person's belief in their abilities has a direct impact on their behaviour and performance (Schunk and DiBenedetto, 2021). Studies such as Tus (2020) look at the role of self-efficacy in academic contexts and emphasise its importance for students' self-confidence and motivation.

However, Tus's findings suggest that while self-efficacy is important, it does not always directly correlate with academic performance, indicating a potential gap in understanding the nuanced relationship between self-perception and actual performance. It has also been discussed that schools should not only focus on the academic aspects but also on students' personal and social skills (Herrera et. al, 2020). The link between children's academic self-concept and their actual performance only begins to emerge in later primary school years. However, it is imperative to conduct future longitudinal studies to confirm these age-related discoveries and examine the developmental sequence more thoroughly (Cvencek et.al, 2017).

2.2 Self-Identity and Academic Achievement

The link between self-identity and academic success is a focus of the literature. Studies examine how students' beliefs, motivations and cultural backgrounds influence their educational outcomes. Altamimi (2022) examines factors such as gender, nationality, grade point average and chosen academic discipline in Qatar and reveals differentiated patterns in students' academic performance. Similarly, a study from the Philippines (Fontanilla, 2016) examines the changes in motivation and self-identity of Filipino English students and emphasises the non-linguistic outcomes of language learning. While these studies provide valuable insights, there remains a need to explore the specific mechanisms through which self-identity impacts academic success, particularly in different cultural contexts such as Qatar and the Philippines.

Monika and Kaur (2017) looked into the relationship between academic achievement and one's self-concept. They found that the development of a child's self-concept, which includes their self-perception and self-confidence, is influenced by factors such as parents' parenting style, experiences of failure, depression and self-criticism. Creating a positive learning environment in the classroom, guided by principles of educational psychology, can enhance students' self-esteem and lead to better academic performance. In essence, a child's self-concept is shaped by various factors, and educational psychology can play a vital role in fostering a positive environment that supports academic achievement.

Likewise, a further research study examined if an individual's self-concept and perception of their proficiency in mathematics and reading can predict their future performance in maths and reading regardless of their current level of achievement and found positive results.

2.3 Cultural Context of Self-Identity

Cultural context plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's self-identity, especially in multicultural environments such as Qatar and the Philippines. In Qatar, as Hopkyns (2014) and Hillman et al. (2018) point out, the linguistic landscape and cultural hybridity influence how Qatari students perceive themselves. Similarly, Filipino identities are characterized by a "third space" that reflects the intersection of Eastern and Western influences (Aguila, 2015). These studies emphasize the dynamic nature of self-identity, which is shaped by linguistic practices, cultural norms and global influences. However, there is a gap in understanding how individuals deal with conflicting cultural identities and how this dynamic affects their academic experiences.

2.4 Research Gap and Summary

While existing studies provide valuable insights into self-identity, academic achievement, and cultural influences, there are notable gaps that this study aims to fill. First, there is a need for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement, taking into account contextual factors and cultural nuances. Second, exploring the mechanisms through which self-identity influences academic outcomes, especially in multicultural contexts, can provide a deeper understanding of students' experiences and challenges. Finally, examining how cultural conflict and hybrid identities impact academic success can contribute to more inclusive and culturally sensitive educational practices.

This study aims to address these gaps by employing a comprehensive methodology that incorporates qualitative and quantitative approaches and provides a holistic analysis of the complex dynamics of self-identity and academic success in different cultural contexts. In summary, the diverse range of literature examined emphasises the central role of self-identity in shaping and influencing academic achievement among students, highlighting the complex interplay between psychological factors and educational outcomes.

3. Methodology

This quantitative study utilised an inferential approach to assess the difference of the association of senior high school students' self-identity with their academic achievement. In research designs that utilised an inferential approach, it is used for making predictions, drawing conclusions, and generalising findings beyond the specific data collected. Inferential statistics make inferences about a population from a sample. Therefore, employing an inferential approach was deemed the most appropriate design for this study which make it possible to make comparisons between

the groups and to determine statistically significant differences between these groups.

The study's research design utilised a quantitative inferential technique to examine the relationship of a student's self-identity on their academic achievement in senior high school (SHS). This approach was chosen as it is well suited for making predictions, drawing conclusions and results beyond the data collected. To ensure a representative sample, the researchers used stratified random sampling, in which the population of Grade 11 and 12 students at the Philippine International School-Qatar (PISQ) in academic year 2023-2024 was divided into smaller subgroups based on their sectioning during the start of the academic year. This sampling procedure allowed for a more concise and even selection of participants ensuring a balanced representation of both grade levels. The study was conducted in Doha, Qatar, on the premises of Philippine International School-Qatar, which provided a favourable environment for data collection and analysis.

In terms of respondents and sampling technique, the study focused on students in grades 11 and 12 of the Senior High School (SHS) division of the Philippine International School Qatar (PISQ) in the school year 2023-2024. Stratified random sampling was used, a method in which the population is divided into smaller groups or strata based on common characteristics and then individuals are randomly selected from each stratum (Simkus, 2023). The population of SHS students was calculated using the Slovin formula with a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 margin of error. This resulted in a rounded total of 155 students from the SHS department at PISQ, including 67 respondents from grade 12 and 88 from grade 11. This sampling procedure ensured an equal and unbiased representation of students from different academic levels.

Ethical considerations such as informed consent and confidentiality were emphasised during data collection. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, their rights and the confidentiality of their responses. Informed consent was obtained and the data was anonymised and kept confidential throughout the research process. Overall, the methodology employed in this study was carefully designed to ensure robustness, validity and ethical integrity in data collection and analysis.

3.1 Respondents and Sampling Technique

Students in grades 11 and 12 at the Senior High School (SHS) Department studying at Philippine International School Qatar (PISQ) in the 2023-2024 academic year were the study's respondents. Using stratified random sampling, the total population of this study was calculated and rounded up to 155 students from the SHS department of PISQ, of which there were 67 respondents in Grade 12 and 88 in Grade 11.

This study used stratified random sampling as its sampling method. According to Simkus (2023), by using stratified random sampling, researchers can choose a final sample by randomly selecting individuals from each stratum after dividing the population into smaller groupings, or strata, based on shared features. The Slovin formula was used to calculate the population of SHS students with a 95% confidence interval and a margin of error of 0.05. The calculated population was divided by the total number of SHS students and multiplied by the population of the subgroups (Grade 11 and Grade 12) which determined the appropriate number of students to sample from each subgroup. Subsequently, a simple random sampling method was employed to ascertain the quantity of samples required for each section per class. By this process, it ensured that the sample accurately represented the chosen characteristic in an equal and unbiased manner.

3.2 Research Instrument

The research instrument comprised of two sections, namely section 1; Profile, and section 2; Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status II. Profile section covered age, academic strand, gender, and general average for the midterms of the 1st semester of academic year 2023-2024, while in section 2, the researchers utilised the Revised Version of the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status, commonly referred to as EOM-EIS II, used in a 2022 study on the psychometric properties of the EOM-EIS II among adolescents in Malaysia (Arifain et.al., 2022).

The questions focused on both the ideological and intrapersonal content domains of identity. Specifically, the instrument consisted of 67 items, 3 in Profile and 64 in the EOM-EIS II which identified the identity status of the respondents. The questionnaire utilised a 6-point Likert scale with response options ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Moderately Disagree, (3) Disagree, (4) Agree, (5) Moderately Agree, to (6) Strongly Agree. Lastly, scoring was based on the sum of each category's score, with the highest sum of scores being the identity status of the respondent. The statements were later revised to better fit current grammatical standards, as recommended upon oral review of the study.

Participants' informed consent was acquired during data collection and the questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms to ensure ease of access and anonymity of respondents. This approach to data collection helped to gain comprehensive insights into the connection between the target population's self-identity and academic achievement.

3.3 Data Analysis

To facilitate the data collection, the following scaling was used:

Table 1. Verbal Interpretation of EOM-EIS II

Identity Status	Greatest Sum of Scores	Verbal Interpretation
Diffusion	96	Low Level of Commitment and Exploration
Moratorium	96	Low Level of Commitment and High Level of Exploration
Foreclosure	96	High Level of Commitment and Low Level of Exploration
Achievement	96	High Level of Commitment and Exploration

Table 2. Descriptors, Grading Scale, and Remarks by DEPED

Descriptor	Grading Scale	Remarks
Outstanding	90-100	Passed
Very Satisfactory	85-89	Passed
Satisfactory	80-84	Passed
Fairly Satisfactory	75-79	Passed
Did Not Meet Expectations	Below 75	Failed

The Philippines' Department of Education's (DepEd) grading scale description is displayed in this table. The summary of a student's academic performance is shown to the parents and the guardians every quarter of the academic year which contains the descriptor, the grading scale and the remarks.

To summarize, the process of data analysis was facilitated by the use of scaling mechanisms such as the Verbal Interpretation of the EOM-EIS II and the Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) grading scale. These tools allowed for the categorization of students' identity status and academic performance

based on their scores and provided clear verbal interpretations and grading descriptors. The integration of these scaling methods ensured a comprehensive assessment of both the self-identity status and academic achievement of high school students and facilitated the interpretation and communication of results to parents and guardians.

4. Result

This quantitative study aimed to explore the relationship between self-identity status and academic achievement among 155 senior high school students at the Philippine International School-Qatar, utilizing a stratified random sampling technique.

Table 3. Level of Academic Achievement of Senior High School Students

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Grade 11	89.193	3.14719	Very Satisfactory
Grade 12	91.014	2.60822	Outstanding

The table presented provides an overview of the academic performance of Senior High School (SHS) students, with a focus on Grade 11 and 12 respondents. The data is expressed in terms of means and standard deviations and provides an indication of the consistency and quality of academic performance of these students. The table presented provides an overview of the academic performance of Senior High School (SHS) students, with a focus on Grade 11 and 12 respondents. The data is expressed in terms of means and standard deviations, providing an indication of the consistency and quality of academic performance of these students. Based on the results, the academic achievement of the Grade 11 respondents obtained a mean score of 89.19 (SD = 3.15) and the Grade 12 respondents obtained a mean score of 91.01 (SD = 2.6) which was verbally interpreted as "very satisfactory" and "outstanding" respectively. The standard deviation (SD) indicates the extent to which the individual academic grades deviate from the mean value of the mean score. In this context, a relatively low standard deviation, for both, indicates that the students' academic achievement in Grades 11 and 12 is closely grouped around the mean, signifying a high degree of consistency in their performance.

These findings are consistent with previous research by Cano (2022), who also examined the academic performance of SHS students using mean score calculations. Cano's study, which included a large sample of 1,913 students, yielded results that are consistent with the current study, indicating a general

level of achievement among SHS students. The outcome revealed that the academic achievement of SHS students was generally considered "proficient," consistent with the findings mentioned beforehand. Likewise, with a study conducted by Mark Alipio (2020) that compared the academic achievement of different strands in SHS, they acquired a "Very Satisfactory" level of academic achievement in the strands STEM and HUMSS. This was also the case with Tus's (2020) study which revealed that the majority of senior high school students, accounting for a percentage of 54.62%, achieved the academic performance rating classified as "Very Satisfactory".

Essentially, the cumulative evidence from these studies underscores the commendable academic level of SHS students. They demonstrate not only their individual achievements, but also the robustness of the educational system and teaching methods that contribute to such consistent and high-quality performance

Table 4. Percentage of Each Identity Status among SHS Students

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Verbal Interpretation
Achievement	Grade 11	50	32.3	High Level of Commitment and Exploration
Grade 12	Grade 12	41	26.5	
Moratorium	Grade 11	21	13.5	Low Level of Commitment and High Level of Exploration
	Grade 12	18	11.6	
Foreclosure	Grade 11	8	5.2	High Level of Commitment and Low Level of Exploration
	Grade 12	3	1.9	
Diffusion	Grade 11	9	5.8	Low Level of Commitment and Exploration
	Grade 12	5	3.2	
	Total	155	100.0	

This table presents the percentage of students who fell under each of the identity statuses and indicated the frequency and percentage. Starting with the Grade 11 data, the frequency of identity diffusion (1) was 9, which meant that 5.8 percent of respondents fell under diffusion. The frequency of identity foreclosure was 8, meaning that 5.2 percent of respondents fell under foreclosure. The frequency of identity moratorium was

21, meaning that 13.5 percent of respondents fell under identity moratorium. Lastly, identity achievement had a frequency of 50, meaning that 32.3 percent of respondents fell under identity achievement. For the Grade 12 data, the frequency of identity diffusion (1) was 5, which meant that 3.2 percent of respondents fell under diffusion. The frequency of identity foreclosure was 3, meaning that 1.9 percent of respondents fell under foreclosure. The frequency of identity moratorium was 18, meaning that 11.6 percent of respondents fell under identity moratorium. Lastly, identity achievement had a frequency of 41, meaning that 26.5 percent of respondents fell under identity achievement and thus made identity achievement the most common identity status among respondents.

These results align with a study by Sarouphim and Issa (2020) on the identity status of Lebanese adolescents, which found a prevalence of moratorium status, indicating a high level of exploration regarding life goals but lower commitment. Notably, a significant proportion of respondents categorized as Moratorium still exhibited tendencies toward the 'Achieved' identity status, reflecting trends observed in Year 12 data. Similarly, Pelco and Ball (2018) introduced the concept of 'Emerging Achievement', where 32% of respondents showed positive commitment to choices, identification with them, and in-depth analysis of values, although their scores were lower than those in the Achievement category. Overall, these findings highlight the complex nature of identity formation among high school students, revealing a balance between exploration and commitment during their developmental stages.

Table 5. Independent t-Test of Academic Achievement when grouped by Grade Level and by Academic Strand

Variables	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed) / p-value	Remarks
Grade Level	-3.937	.000	S
Academic Strand	-3.045	.003	S

This table presents the independent t-test for the academic achievement of the SHS students, when grouped by grade level, which shows the t-value and p-value. The data analysis resulted in a t-value of -3.839 when equal variances were assumed, which indicates that there is a notable difference in academic achievement among SHS students across grade levels. The negative t-values suggest that the mean academic achievement scores for different grade levels are significantly lower than the overall mean. The analysis also resulted in the p-value of .000 when equal variances were assumed, this indicates there is a significant difference between academic achievement

when grouped by grade level, providing evidence to reject the null hypothesis and supporting the presence of a statistically significant difference.

The second row on the other hand presents the independent t-test for the academic achievement of the SHS students, when grouped by academic strand, which shows the t-value and p-value. The data analysis resulted in a t-value of -3.045 when equal variances were assumed, which indicates that the mean academic achievement scores for different academic strands are significantly lower than the overall mean. The analysis also resulted in the p-value of .003 when equal variances were assumed, this indicates there is a significant difference between academic achievement when grouped by academic strand, presenting proof for the existence of a statistically significant difference and rejecting the null hypothesis.

These findings conformed to the findings of Baron (2022) as they noted that students' academic performance (achievement) varies significantly between strands with a p-value of .00001. Furthermore, these findings also conform with Cano's 2022 study which saw a significant difference in their academic achievement (performance) when grouped by grade level as well as strand with a z-score of -5.752 and a significance of .000, though it should be noted that this was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, utilising data derived from students in the midst of online learning modalities. In addition, a comparative study entitled "A Comparative Study of the Academic Performance of STEM and Non-STEM Graduates in College and Advanced Algebra" by Bautista et al. (2021) found a significant difference in academic performance between STEM and non-STEM students. This suggests that STEM students are likely to have better academic performance than non-STEM students, further highlighting the impact of academic specialization on student outcomes.

Independent t-tests were conducted to analyze the academic achievement of senior high school (SHS) students, considering both their grade level and academic specialization. The results revealed significant differences, with negative t-values and statistically significant p-values indicating that these factors have a notable effect on students' academic performance. Specifically, the analysis showed that grade level progression and the type of academic specialization significantly influenced students' academic outcomes. These findings align with those of prior research, which also highlights the importance of these variables in shaping student achievement. Moving forward, the insights gained from this study can guide the development of more targeted educational strategies and interventions. Such efforts would aim to enhance academic success and promote greater equity within the SHS system, ensuring that all students, regardless of their specialization, have the opportunity to thrive.

Table 6. Association of Academic Achievement and Self-Identity Status when Grouped According to Sex, Strand and Grade Level

Variables	p-Value	Remarks	Verbal Interpretation
Sex	0.072	S	Convincing
Strand	0.780	NS	No Evidence
Grade Level	0.632	NS	No Evidence

Lastly, this table presents the Chi-Square test of academic achievement and self-identity status grouped by sex, strand, and grade level indicating the variables and p-value. The data analysis yielded a p-value of 0.072 for the "variable "gender," indicating that there is a significant ("Convincing") association between academic achievement and self-identity status when grouped by sex. However, the data analysis for the variables "Strand" and "grade level" yielded p-values of 0.780 and 0.632, indicating that there is no significant ("No Evidence") association between academic achievement and self-identity status when grouped according to strand and grade level.

These findings conform to a similar study conducted by Fadjukoff et.al., (2016), wherein using the chi-square, they gathered results that women surpassed men in achieving identity at younger ages, but by age 50, gender gaps narrowed across most areas except for religious identity. While women experienced a decrease in overall diffusion over time, around 20% of men still exhibited diffusion at ages 42 and 50 which proves that self-identity is significantly associated with sex. Another similar study by Maia et.al., (2015) has shown that there is a difference in identity status between men and women and that this pattern could be influenced by cultural roles and traditional views. A study by Sharma (2019) underpins these observations and shows that girls in secondary school tend to have a higher status in identity formation despite lower overall performance compared to boys. These collective research findings underscore the complicated relationship between gender, academic achievement and self-identity status and highlight the need to further explore and understand this dynamic in the school and social context.

In summary, while a significant relationship was found between academic achievement and self-identity status based on gender (p = 0.072), no significant relationships were observed for school branch and grade level (p = 0.780 and p = 0.632, respectively). These findings mirror previous research indicating gender differences in self-identity development and suggest that further research is needed on how cultural and educational factors relate to identity formation.

5. Discussion

This study provides important insights into the relationship between self-identity and academic achievement among senior high school (SHS) students. The majority of respondents demonstrated strong academic performance, suggesting that SHS students are generally motivated and committed to achieving high academic standards. The high mean scores observed in this study are indicative of a positive academic self-identity, where students view themselves as capable learners and achievers. Such a positive self-perception is critical, as it can significantly enhance motivation, foster engagement, and drive academic success. This finding is consistent with existing literature, which highlights the role of self-identity in academic outcomes (Schunk, 2003).

Furthermore, a supportive learning environment, including dedicated educators, resources, and positive peer interactions, is crucial for academic performance (Soe, 2020). Research consistently shows that external factors, like social support from peers, teachers, and family, enhance academic achievement (Khan, 2023). Soe (2020) notes that social support helps students excel academically and cope with psychological challenges. Peer interactions also shape academic self-efficacy and motivation. Altermatt (2016) finds that peer academic support predicts self-efficacy, a key factor in academic success. Garrote (2020) adds that interactions with high-achieving peers improve performance by fostering a supportive environment. Beyond academics, peer support also addresses emotional and psychological needs, vital for sustained motivation (Khan, 2023).The quality of peer interactions can amplify the impact of other support systems. Zhao (2022) Emphasize that positive peer relationships enhance academic outcomes and strengthen the effects of parental and teacher support. This interconnectedness underscores the importance of a holistic support system for academic success (Wang & Neihart, 2015).

As students' progress through the senior high school curriculum, they encounter increasing academic challenges. The observed differences in academic achievement between different tracks, particularly between the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) and the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) strands, suggest that the difficulty levels inherent in these disciplines may shape students' academic self-concept differently. STEM subjects, which are centered around complex scientific and mathematical concepts, often present more immediate academic challenges compared to HUMSS subjects, which focus on humanities, social sciences, and the arts. These disciplinary differences in curriculum design likely contribute to variations in students' academic identities and achievements, as highlighted by Hsieh et al. (2019).

An important finding of this study is that most students fall within the "Achievement" identity status, which indicates that they have explored various aspects of their identity, such as values, goals, and relationships, and have made informed decisions regarding their future paths. This sense of direction fosters greater confidence and resilience in navigating academic and personal challenges. These results support Erikson's (1968) model of identity development, which underscores the importance of achieving a stable identity during adolescence. Additionally, the presence of students in the "Moratorium" identity status suggests that many students are still in a transitional phase of identity formation. This period of active exploration and questioning is a normative part of adolescent development, indicating that students are engaged in an ongoing process of self-discovery before arriving at a stable sense of identity.

However, the study also found that a small number of students fall under the "Diffusion" identity status, which is a concerning finding. Students in this status have not committed to exploring or shaping their identities, suggesting a lack of direction or motivation. Identity diffusion may lead to feelings of confusion, apathy, or disengagement, which can negatively affect both academic achievement and personal well-being. As such, these students may require additional support to help them engage in the process of identity exploration and to foster a clearer sense of purpose.

Regarding gender and cultural influences, the study found no significant differences in identity status based on academic strand or grade level. This suggests that academic choices and progression through grade levels may not strongly influence students' self-perceptions or academic self-concept. While gender roles and societal expectations have been shown to affect identity development and academic outcomes in previous research (Eccles et al., 1993), this study found no significant associations between these factors and academic achievement. This underscores the complexity of self-identity, which is shaped not only by academic achievement but also by a broader range of personal, social, and cultural factors. Personal beliefs, values, and social connections all play a crucial role in how students perceive themselves in relation to their academic success.

In conclusion, this study offers several important contributions to understanding the relationship between self-identity and academic achievement in senior high school students. The findings suggest that a positive self-identity, coupled with a supportive learning environment, is essential for fostering academic success. Differences in academic performance between the HUMSS and STEM strands highlight the varying levels of academic challenge inherent in different disciplines, which may influence students' academic self-concept.

Furthermore, while the majority of students exhibit a stable sense of self through the "Achievement" identity status, many are still navigating the transitional phase of identity exploration, reflecting the dynamic nature of self-identity development during adolescence. The presence of students in the "Diffusion" status raises concerns, as these students may be struggling to find direction and purpose, potentially leading to disengagement. Despite these contributions, there are limitations to the study that warrant further exploration. For instance, the cross-sectional design does not allow for a detailed analysis of how self-identity and academic achievement evolve over time. Future research could adopt a longitudinal approach to track changes in self-identity and academic performance throughout the high school years. Additionally, future studies could explore the impact of external factors, such as parental involvement, peer influence, and school culture, on self-identity and academic success. Expanding the scope to include students from diverse educational settings, including both urban and rural schools, would provide a broader understanding of how socio-cultural factors influence academic identity formation. Finally, future research could focus on the students in the "Diffusion" status to explore how this identity status affects their long-term academic trajectories and mental well-being, and to identify strategies for supporting students at risk of disengagement.

6. Conclusions

The study highlights the interplay between academic achievement and identity development among senior high school students, offering several key insights. It reveals that students' high academic performance reflects not only a commitment to their studies but also a supportive educational environment fostering positive academic self-identity. Furthermore, the transitional identity phases of moratorium and achievement underline the active exploration and self-discovery characteristic of adolescent development. A significant finding is the differentiation in academic performance across grade levels and strands, suggesting varying academic challenges and curricular demands. Moreover, the study underscores the influence of societal and cultural norms, particularly gender-based expectations, on the intersection of academic success and identity formation. Notably, it identifies gaps in the influence of specific academic fields or grade advancement on self-identity, emphasizing the multifaceted factors shaping identity beyond academics. These findings contribute to understanding the dynamic nature of identity and its implications for educational strategies. Future research should investigate the longitudinal effects of identity development on academic performance and explore targeted interventions in multicultural and gender-diverse contexts to support holistic student growth.

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