The Link Between Identity Style and Intimacy Balance: Does Emotional Intelligence Provide the Key?

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Abstract

The relationships between identity processing styles (informational, normative, and diffuse-avoidant), emotional intelligence (EI), and various forms of intimacy were examined. Two hundred and thirty one young adult men \((N = 71)\) and women \((N = 160)\) completed measures of identity styles, identity commitment, and intimacy, with a sub-sample \((N = 146; 37 \text{ men and 109 women})\) also completing the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso EI Test. Both the informational and normative identity styles were positively related to the measures of intimacy, whereas the diffuse identity style was inversely related to intimacy. Hierarchical regressions revealed that only the informational style made a unique positive contribution to intimacy balance over-and-above identity commitment. The informational style was also positively related to EI, the diffuse style was inversely related to EI, and EI was positively related to intimacy. Structural equation modeling confirmed that EI mediates the relationships between identity processing and intimacy for the informational and diffuse styles.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... ii

Table of Contents ........................................................................................................................... iii

List of Tables .................................................................................................................................. vii

List of Figures ................................................................................................................................ viii

Acknowledgements ....................................................................................................................... ix

INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................................. 1

Erikson’s Lifespan Theory ............................................................................................................. 3

Overview of the Psychosocial Stages ......................................................................................... 3

Character Strengths and Virtues ................................................................................................. 4

The Importance of Identity and Intimacy .................................................................................... 7

Research on Identity Achievement: Identity Status and Identity Style ................................... 9

Previous Research on Links Between Identity and Intimacy .................................................... 17

The Present Approach to Identity and Intimacy Links .............................................................. 20

An individual difference approach to intimacy: Styles of love .............................................. 21

A self-focused approach to the study of intimacy: Self-expansion theory .............................. 22

A general approach to intimacy: Psychosocial balance ............................................................. 24

The Role of Emotionality in Identity and Intimacy ................................................................. 25

Emotionality and identity ........................................................................................................... 26

Emotionality and intimacy .......................................................................................................... 31

Summary of Objectives and Hypotheses .................................................................................... 32

Research question 1: Predictive relationships between identity styles and intimacy ............ 32
Research question 2: Predictive relationships between
identity styles and emotional intelligence

Research Question 3: Is the relationship between identity style
and intimacy balance mediated by emotional intelligence?

METHOD

Participants
Procedures
Measures

Identity Style Inventory – Revised
Love Attitudes Scale
The Inclusion of Other in Self Scale
Inventory of Psychosocial Balance: Intimacy subscale
The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test

RESULTS

Overview of the Analyses and Preliminary Data Screening
Preliminary Analyses of Gender Differences
Research question 1: Predictive relationships between
identity styles and intimacy:

Correlational Relationships
Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Research question 2: Predictive relationships between
identity styles and emotional intelligence

Correlational Relationships
Research Question 3: Is the relationship between identity style
and intimacy balance mediated by emotional intelligence? .......... 51

Structural Equation Modeling ........................................... 51

DISCUSSION ........................................................................... 55

Research question 1: Predictive relationships between
identity styles and intimacy: ............................................... 55

Love Attitudes ..................................................................... 55

Inclusion of Other in Self .................................................... 57

Intimacy Balance ............................................................... 59

Research question 2: Predictive relationships between
identity styles and emotional intelligence .......................... 62

Research Question 3: Is the relationship between identity style
and intimacy balance mediated by emotional intelligence? .... 64

Gender Differences ............................................................ 66

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research .................. 68

Conclusions ........................................................................ 69

REFERENCES ......................................................................... 70

Appendix A – Participant Information and Informed consent: Part 1........ 81
Appendix B – Participant Information and Informed consent: Part 2 ........ 83
Appendix C – Demographics Questionnaire ............................... 85
Appendix D – Identity Style Inventory – Revised ......................... 87
Appendix E – Love Attitudes Scale – Short form ......................... 89
Appendix F – Inclusion of Other in the Self (IOS) Scale ............... 91
LIST OF TABLES

1. Means and standard deviations for all variables as a function of gender ................................................................. 44

2. Patterns of correlations between identity style and intimacy measures ................................................................. 47

3. Results of Regression Analyses Predicting Intimacy Balance ................................................................. 49

4. Patterns of Correlations Between Emotional Intelligence, Identity Styles and Intimacy Measures ................................................................. 50
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Hypothetical path model of the predictive relationships between
the three identity styles, emotional intelligence and intimacy
balance. ................................................................. 52

Figure 2. Path diagram of the predictive relationships between the informational
identity style, emotional intelligence and intimacy balance, including the
standardized path coefficients. ..................................................54
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The Link Between Identity Style and Intimacy Balance:
Does Emotional Intelligence Provide the Key?

INTRODUCTION

The most important psychological development that is believed to occur during adolescence is the development of a clear ego identity. Ego identity has been defined as “an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs and individual history” (Marcia, 1980, p. 159). The concept of ego identity has been discussed within the fields of psychoanalysis, ego psychology, and developmental psychology for over a hundred years; yet, in modern psychology the concept of identity is best recognized as part of the lifespan development model proposed by Erikson (1963, 1968). Within this model, the formation of identity is the key developmental task or crisis of the period of adolescence, although the maintenance of one’s identity is believed to continue throughout adulthood, particularly during early adulthood. Thus, according to Erikson, identity provides an important basis for the key developmental task of early adulthood, the formation of intimate connections with others.

Considerable research in developmental and social psychology has focused on the formation, maintenance, and dynamics involved in intimate relationships; yet, less research has been focused on examining Erikson’s original hypothesis about the important link between identity and intimacy. A few studies have examined this link by measuring individuals’ status with regard to the resolution of the developmental tasks of identity and intimacy (e.g., Fitch & Adams, 1983; Orlofsky, Marcia & Lesser, 1973; Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982). Nevertheless, little previous research has examined the link between identity and intimacy by focusing on individual differences in identity processing styles.
Considerable research has determined that individuals prefer to use one of three styles of processing identity-related issues and concerns. The informational style is characterized by strong commitment to one's sense of identity, as well as open-mindedness and self-awareness. The normative style is also strong in commitment, but is low in openness and self-awareness. Finally, the diffuse-avoidant style is low in identity commitment and is associated with low self-esteem and avoidance of identity-related questions (Berzonsky, 2003; Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000; Dollinger, 1995). These three styles of social-cognitive identity processing have been found to be differentially related to aspects of personality and social functioning that provide a basis for potential predictive links with intimacy. For example, both the informational and normative identity styles are positively related to openness to feelings (Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992) and seeking emotional and instrumental social support (Beaumont & Seaton, 2008). Yet, the informational style is more strongly associated with emotional intelligence (EI; Seaton & Beaumont, in press), and the diffuse-avoidant style is negatively associated with all of these aspects of emotional and interpersonal functioning (Beaumont & Seaton, 2008; Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992; Seaton & Beaumont, in press). Thus, it may be that the three styles are associated with different aspects of intimacy and emotional intelligence.

The purpose of this thesis was to systematically examine the predictive links between individual differences in identity styles and aspects of intimacy by focusing on three related research questions: (1) Do the three identity styles predict different patterns of intimacy?; (2) Do the three identity styles differentially predict aspects of emotional intelligence?; and, (3) Is the predictive link between identity styles and intimacy mediated by emotional intelligence? Examination of these research questions will fill a gap in the literature by
focusing on the potential link between the Eriksonian psychosocial stages of identity and intimacy from an individual differences perspective (i.e., differences in identity style). Consistent with the social-cognitive processing framework provided by the identity style concept, this research addressed the thesis that the predictive link between identity and intimacy is mediated by emotional intelligence. That is, it was hypothesized that not only are the three identity styles differentially related to intimacy, the link between the two committed identity styles and intimacy is due to the positive influence of emotional intelligence. To provide a context for these research questions, the following review will cover literature on identity, intimacy, emotional intelligence, and the potential links between these constructs.

*Erikson’s Lifespan Theory*

*Overview of the psychosocial stages.* Erikson’s (1963, 1968, 1982) psychosocial stage theory is a well-known approach to studying development across the lifespan. Erikson proposed that eight universal stages of psychosocial development occur throughout the lifespan with the first stage, “trust versus mistrust,” occurring during infancy and forming a basis for security in a social world. This initial psychosocial task is followed by three developmental periods focused on the development of autonomy and self- or emotion-regulation during childhood: “autonomy versus shame and doubt”; “initiative versus guilt”; and, “industry versus inferiority.” These early developments in the area of self and emotions culminate in a period of more focused identity formation occurring during adolescence, one that is focused on the development of “ego identity versus role confusion.” Finally, the identity formation stage is followed by three psychosocial tasks that are linked to normative social and self-developments that are of concern during early, middle, and late adulthood,
namely the crises of “intimacy versus isolation,” “generativity versus self-absorption,” and “integrity versus despair” (Erikson, 1963, 1968, 1982).

In each of Erikson’s proposed developmental stages, the individual is faced with an age-appropriate crisis, or developmental task, the challenge of which is to find an adaptive response or “balance” to the inner conflict created by the changing demands of his or her outer environment. For example, in the first stage, trust versus mistrust, optimal development involves becoming neither overly trusting nor mistrusting, but attaining a “favourable ratio” of trust in others as well as the self. Erikson’s eight stages are hierarchical and follow an epigenetic principle in that development proceeds through all stages in a fixed order, and the successful resolution of each task is partly determined by the balance achieved during earlier stages.

Recent research using a self-report measure of Eriksonian constructs, the Inventory of Psychosocial Balance, has yielded some support for Erikson’s epigenetic principle, at least in so much as scales designed to measure adjustment that occurs earlier in Erikson’s model do indeed predict conceptually later psychosocial attainments (Domino & Affonso, 1990). However, studies relying on methodological approaches that can more systematically assess this supposition (e.g., longitudinal designs and path analyses) are sorely lacking. Nevertheless, it is generally accepted in the literature that psychological maturity with regard to earlier psychosocial tasks affords the development of future psychological adjustment, as proposed by Erikson.

Character strengths and virtues. Less often discussed in the literature are the strengths or virtues associated with each stage or crisis of Erikson’s theory. “The terms ‘virtue’ and ‘strength’…used interchangeably by Erikson…imply instinctual, inherent, and
internal strengths gained by healthy individuals” (Markstrom, Sabino, Turner, & Berman, 1997, p. 706). Erikson (1963) proposed that with the successful resolution of each psychosocial crisis, an individual will gain the associated virtue, which in turn will aid in the successful resolution of the next stage. In fact, all of the virtues are present throughout the life cycle, but the potential for each virtue to become fully realized occurs in association with each developmentally appropriate stage (Markstrom et al., 1997).

*Hope* is the virtue that arises from the successful resolution of the first stage, followed by *will* from stage two, *purpose* from stage three, and *competence* from stage four. In adolescence and adulthood, the virtues of *fidelity, love, care,* and *wisdom* are developed as individuals successfully resolve the crisis presented in the identity, intimacy, generativity and integrity stages. It is the balanced resolution of a task or crisis that leads to the actualization of each character strength, and with each strength, the individual will be prepared to deal with the challenge of the task presented in the next developmental stage (Erikson, 1963). It is through this progressive unfolding of the eight stages and the development of each virtue that an individual’s ‘character’ or personality develops.

Although Erikson’s conceptualization of character development is a less often examined component of his psychosocial theory, more recent work has begun to consider empirically the concept of character or ego strengths and virtues. Specifically, Erikson’s original concept of ego strengths was further elucidated by Markstrom et al. (1997) who provided operational definitions as well as a measure of Erikson’s eight psychosocial virtues. Following Erikson’s theoretical writings, Markstrom et al. conceptualized the virtues as indicators of optimal adaptation of the individual within her or his social environment. Thus, Markstrom et al. consider the eight virtues taken together to be indicative of an individual’s
overall ego strength or resiliency, with the concept of ego-resiliency consisting of the capacity to maintain psychic balance and self-control in response to changing environmental circumstances (e.g., Block & Kremen, 1996). Although each virtue is present throughout an individual’s lifespan, it reaches its time of ascendance towards the completion of the corresponding psychosocial stage. Thus, theoretically, the presence of the virtues should provide evidence of the successful resolution of the corresponding psychosocial stage (Markstrom et al., 1997).

On a broader level, the study of character strengths and virtues has been one of the main topics under study within the new and developing field of positive psychology. Positive psychology aims to scientifically study optimal human functioning and to understand and foster the human qualities that lead to greater fulfillment in the lives of individuals (Compton, 2005; Linely, Joseph, Harrington, & Wood, 2006). Peterson and Seligman (2004) have recently compiled a catalogue of universal social, emotional, and personality factors that appear to act as character strengths and virtues in the lives and identities of adults. According to these authors, virtues are fundamental qualities valued universally by humankind (wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence), whereas character strengths are the psychological processes or mechanisms that provide the means by which the virtues are displayed. In creating their handbook, these authors compiled a comprehensive list of human virtues based on the psychological literature (e.g., Erikson’s work) on the topic of character strengths and virtues, as well as social, philosophical, historical, cultural, and religious traditions. Thus, Peterson and Seligman identified universal virtues mentioned in the world’s great wisdom traditions (Confucianism and Taoism; Buddhism and Hinduism; and Judeo-Christianity and Islam), empirical sources
(psychological research and the mental health field) as well as the media and popular culture (e.g., song lyrics, greeting cards) for mention of human virtues. Their efforts resulted in a classification system that included six virtues with 24 strengths that are considered to be universal, as well as a self-report measure, the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths. Thus, Erikson’s theory has also provided the basis, in part, for the new positive psychology approach to the study of character strengths.

The importance of identity and intimacy. The two stages (and virtues) that received the most attention in Erikson’s writings, as well as in subsequent research, are the psychosocial tasks of identity (fidelity) and intimacy (love) that occur in adolescence and early adulthood. According to Erikson (1963, 1968), the task faced by adolescents is to determine their place in society and formulate a sense of identity by exploring ideological, occupational, and sexual values. Erikson (1968) considered the period of adolescence to be the pivotal time for individuals to develop a clear ego identity, “characterized by the actually attained but forever to-be-revised sense of reality of the Self within social reality” (p. 211). Thus, Erikson believed that adolescence and young adulthood were socially accepted periods for individuals to explore and commit to personal values and an individual identity, though the newly defined and unified self-identity should be flexible and continually changing. The successful resolution of the identity versus role confusion stage occurs when balance is achieved on the identity task, with an individual becoming neither overly committed to a rigid identity (fanaticism) nor lacking a coherent self-concept (repudiation). Successful resolution or balance also results in the development of the vital strength of fidelity (being true to oneself), which allows the individual to become an independent and contributing member of the broader community. However, if an individual is unable to settle on a
meaningful identity, and is uncertain of his or her place in society, he or she will experience role confusion or identity diffusion. Thus, depending on the breadth and depth of the identity search, Erikson (1963, 1968) proposed that by late adolescence or early adulthood many individuals formulate a clear sense of identity ("identity achievement"), whereas some youth do not develop a clearly defined identity ("identity diffusion"). Due to the hierarchical developmental succession of Erikson’s developmental stages, it is generally accepted that a state of identity diffusion results in negative psychological consequences during adulthood (e.g., Marcia, 1993).

Following the identity stage, the task faced by young adults is to achieve a balanced level of intimacy, becoming neither overly promiscuous nor too isolated. If this balance is achieved successfully, the individual will ascend this stage with the virtue of love. Intimacy refers to the ability to form close, committed, and mutual relationships, whereas love includes “mutual devotion” (Erikson, 1968). The virtue of love is an indicator of the successful resolution of the intimacy stage, and consists of strong mutual and reciprocal interpersonal commitments between equals (Markstrom et al., 1997) without the loss of personal identity of either individual (Markstrom & Kalmanir, 2001). According to Erikson, intimacy and love occur in good marriages, but also between friends, family members, and neighbors. Within heterosexual romantic relationships, an intimate and mutual connection involves sexual intimacy that promotes production and procreation, leading to offspring and care. When an individual does not attain such intimate connections with others during early adulthood, he or she may either form stereotyped relationships at best, or isolate him or herself, becoming distant and rejecting at worst (Erikson, 1959, 1968).
Erikson emphasized the strong link between the successful resolution of the identity crisis and the achievement of intimacy in early adulthood, stating that "it is only when identity is well on its way that true intimacy – which is really a counterpointing as well as fusing of identities – is possible" (Erikson, 1968, p. 135). He further postulated, "It is only after a reasonable sense of identity has been established that real intimacy with the other sex (or, for that matter, with any other person, or even with oneself) is possible" (Erikson, 1959, p. 95).

Similarly, in terms of the ego strengths, the attainment of the virtue of love is strongly supported by fidelity (loyalty and commitment to freely chosen values; Markstrom et al., 1997). Identity commitment (fidelity) establishes an individual’s ability to maintain commitments to ideological sources, and in love, such commitment is transferred to mutual, interpersonal commitments (Markstrom et al.). Thus, the virtues of fidelity and love share the underlying trait of commitment, and the development of a strong personal identity prepares an individual for the kind of commitment necessary to form intimate interpersonal connections (Markstrom & Kalmanir, 2001). The general goal of this thesis is to add to the literature on Eriksonian psychosocial development by focusing on potential links between identity and intimacy. Before elaborating on this goal, the following review will provide details about research evidence on Erikson’s concept of identity and the link between identity and intimacy/love.

Research on Identity Achievement: Identity Status and Identity Style

Erikson’s conceptualization of the adolescent identity crisis as ending in either identity achievement or identity diffusion was further elucidated by Marcia (1966, 1967,
who provided an operational definition and an interview measure of Erikson’s original concept of identity. Marcia conceptualized identity development as the advancement toward identity achievement via two processes (exploration and commitment) in two domains (occupation and ideology). Based on evidence of the presence or absence of current or past identity exploration and commitment experiences, individuals can be categorized into one of four statuses based on resolution of the identity task: achievement (commitment and past exploration); foreclosure (commitment without previous exploration); diffusion (the absence of both exploration and commitment); and, moratorium (current exploration, but no evidence of commitment; Marcia, 1993).

Considerable research using Marcia’s measure has delineated the specific dispositional aspects and correlates of the four identity statuses. Individuals classified in the identity achievement category are committed to a personal identity after having first gone through a period of ‘identity crisis.’ These individuals have been found to have an internal locus of control, demonstrate the highest levels of ego development, high levels of openness, extraversion, and conscientiousness along with low levels of neuroticism, and have been found to employ problem solving coping strategies (Adams & Shea, 1979; Clancy & Dollinger, 1993; Dellas & Jernigan, 1987; Grotevant & Adams, 1984). Individuals classified in the foreclosed identity status are characterized by firm identity commitments without having endured a period of exploration or ‘identity crisis.’ Instead, such individuals conform to social norms or the identity imposed on them by parental figures (Beaumont & Zukanovic, 2005). Foreclosed individuals demonstrate high levels of authoritarianism and obedience to authority, an external locus of control, and low openness (Clancy & Dollinger; Dellas & Jernigan; Marcia, 1966, 1967; Streitmatter & Pate, 1989). Diffuse individuals are
characterized by a failure to take seriously identity issues, and consequentially, display a lack of commitment to occupational and ideological objectives (Beaumont & Zukanovic). Individuals in this category have been found to display an external locus of control, low levels of ego development, openness, extraversion, and conscientiousness as well as high levels of neuroticism, and avoidant coping strategies (Adams & Shea; Clancy & Dollinger; Dellas & Jernigan; Grotevant & Adams). Finally, moratorium individuals are currently experiencing an identity crisis, and these individuals have been found to have an internal locus of control, low levels of extraversion, and conscientiousness as well as high levels of neuroticism (Clancy & Dollinger; Dellas & Jernigan).

In addition to finding different patterns of characteristics associated with the four identity statuses, research has also confirmed that the statuses differ in terms of psychological adjustment. For example, individuals categorized in the identity achievement status demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and low levels of anxiety; however, foreclosed individuals often demonstrate the highest levels of self-esteem along with the lowest anxiety of the four identity statuses (Marcia, 1967, 1993). In contrast, diffusion and moratorium individuals display the lowest levels of self-esteem and the highest levels of anxiety (Marcia, 1993), providing evidence of the importance of the formation of a clear identity for positive psychosocial adjustment.

Despite being a prolific paradigm, Marcia’s identity status approach has been criticized in recent years because it provides only a static outcome with regard to the search for identity (one that may only be relevant for adolescents), and it does not adequately capture the more dynamic processing aspects of identity that were originally conceptualized by Erikson (e.g., Berzonsky & Adams, 1999). For example, Erikson (1959) suggested that “a
sense of identity... is never gained nor maintained once and for all. Like a ‘good conscience’ it is constantly lost and regained…” (p. 118). To re-focus identity research on the processes by which individuals form and revise a sense of identity, Berzonsky (1988, 1989, 1990, 1992a, 1993, 2000, 2004) developed a paradigm that defined identity in terms of individual differences in “self-theories” that reflect differential patterns of social-cognitive processing. According to Berzonsky, there are three styles of theorizing about the self: (1) scientific theorists who rely upon an “information-oriented” identity style; (2) dogmatic theorists who use a “norm-oriented” identity style; and, (3) ad hoc theorists who use a “diffuse/avoidant” identity style. The informational identity style is used by individuals who actively confront identity issues by evaluating self-relevant information. The normative identity style is used by individuals who deal with identity issues by conforming to the decisions of significant others, such as parental figures. Finally, individuals who use the diffuse-avoidant identity style tend to be low in self-awareness and avoid dealing with identity issues. Research has shown substantial convergence between the identity styles and the identity statuses as conceptualized by Marcia, with the informational style being preferred by individuals in the achievement and moratorium statuses, the normative style preferred by foreclosed individuals, and the diffuse style preferred by those in the diffusion status (e.g., Berzonsky, 1990, 1992a; Berzonsky & Niemeyer, 1994; Streitmatter, 1993).

Berzonsky (1988, 1989) claimed that by late adolescence, individuals should be capable of using all three identity styles; however, individual differences should be evident in the preference for a particular style. To assess the degree to which individuals prefer to use the three identity styles, Berzonsky (1989, 1992b) created the Identity Style Inventory, which includes scales measuring aspects of the information-oriented, norm-oriented, and diffuse-
avoidant styles, as well as a separate scale measuring the degree of commitment that an individual feels towards his or her particular identity. The measure can yield both categorical and continuous data either by categorizing individuals into their preferred style based on their highest z score for each identity style sub-scale or by using the raw sub-scale scores.

Considerable research using Berzonsky's measure has delineated the specific social-cognitive processing and dispositional aspects of the three identity styles. The use of an informational style has been found to be positively associated with introspection, self-reflectiveness, personal expressiveness, an internal locus-of-control, the use of problem-focused coping (Berzonsky, 1989, 1990, 1993; Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992), as well as with the five factor personality traits of conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience (Dollinger, 1995). Normative individuals demonstrate high levels of agreeableness, extroversion, and conscientiousness, but low levels of openness and self-reflectiveness, and they have been found to employ avoidant coping strategies, to procrastinate in the face of decisions, to have a high need for structure and a low tolerance for ambiguity, and to be conservative and authoritarian in their sociocultural views (e.g., Berzonsky, 1992a, 1993, 1994; Berzonsky & Ferrari, 1996; Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992; Dollinger, 1995; Schwartz, Mullis, Waterman, & Dunham, 2000; Soenens, Duriez, & Goossens, 2005). Finally, the use of a diffuse-avoidant style is positively associated with neuroticism and the use of more avoidant coping strategies, and is negatively associated with personal expressiveness, self-awareness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (e.g., Berzonsky & Sullivan; Dollinger).

In addition to finding different patterns of characteristics associated with the three identity processing styles, research has also confirmed that identity style differentially
contributes to the development of identity achievement as originally conceptualized by Erikson. That is, both the informational and the normative styles have been found to be positively associated with commitment to one’s identity, whereas the diffuse-avoidant style negatively predicts identity commitment (e.g., Berzonsky, 1992a). Thus, although there are clearly three patterns of individual differences with respect to style of social-cognitive processing used to construct and maintain identity, generally speaking there appear to be only two patterns of differences with regard to identity commitment.

Research that considers links between identity style and psychosocial outcome variables reveals two patterns of results that may reflect individual differences in identity commitment rather than differences in identity styles. That is, the diffuse identity style (along with its relatively low identity commitment) is associated with negative outcomes, such as poor academic performance, depression, eating disorders, conduct problems, and emotional disorders (e.g., Adams, Munro, Munro, Doherty-Poirer, & Edwards, 2005; Boyd, Hunt, Kandell & Lucas, 2003; Nurmi, Berzonsky, Tammi, & Kinney, 1997; Wheeler, Adams, & Keating, 2001), whereas the use of the two committed identity styles (informational and normative) predict more positive outcomes, such as environmental mastery (Vleioras & Bosma, 2005a) and positive adaptation to university (Berzonsky & Kuk, 2005). Berzonsky (2003) suggested that commitments might serve a number of important functions related to well-being. For example, commitments may provide people with a sense of purpose and goals to strive for, committed values can simplify one’s perceptual world by providing a foundation against which to judge new information, and commitment to beliefs or decisions can free up mental resources that can then be allocated to other processes.
Although individuals who use either the informational or normative identity styles report high levels of commitment, the nature of the identity commitments held by individuals who use these two styles may be qualitatively different. In Erikson's original theory, identity exploration was assumed to be behind changes in identity commitment; however, the process by which informational and normative individuals reach their commitments is different (self-evaluated vs. foreclosed), and the resulting maintenance of these commitments may be based on different processes (Berzonsky, 2003). Informational individuals follow the traditional process of exploration, whereas normative individuals' commitments are emotionally grounded (Berzonsky, 2003). Vleioras and Bosma (2005b) explored a model for changes in identity commitment based on emotions and found that emotions resulting from a mismatch between current commitments and one's environment triggered exploration. Thus, an 'identity crisis' as conceptualized by Erikson may be triggered not only by cognitive dissonance, but also by emotional distress (Marcia, 2002). However, normative individuals are closed to new information (rather than explorative) and may respond to such emotional upheaval in a defensive manner (Berzonsky, 1990).

Despite the different patterns of social-cognitive, attributional, and dispositional qualities associated with the informational and normative styles, relatively few studies have found differences between these two styles in terms of psychological outcomes. One variable that appears to result in differences between the two committed identity styles is self-esteem; yet, the findings associated with this variable appear to be inconclusive. For example, Nurmi et al. (1997) found that among young adults, information-oriented individuals reported the highest levels of self-esteem. However, in a recent study of early, middle, and aging adults, informational individuals were found to have similar reported levels self-worth and life
distress as diffuse individuals, whereas normative individuals showed the highest perceived self-worth and lowest levels of reported distress (Beaumont & Zukanovic, 2005). These findings point to the importance of studying several aspects of psychological functioning in order to delineate the complex forms of adjustment associated with the different identity styles.

The general goal of more recent research on identity styles has been to describe the different types of positive outcomes associated with the two committed identity styles, and this research has revealed that the informational and normative styles are similar in some aspects of positive adjustment and different in others. For example, both the informational and normative styles predict types of positive coping, such as seeking emotional and instrumental social support (Beaumont & Seaton, 2008). However, the informational style is unique because it is associated with curiosity/exploration, proactive coping (Seaton & Beaumont, in press), mature defense mechanisms (Seaton & Beaumont, 2008), positive growth (Vleioras & Bosma, 2005a), life management (Berzonsky & Kuk, 2005), as well as aspects of personal wisdom (self-transcendence, self-actualization, the presence of meaning; Beaumont, 2007) and spirituality (Beaumont, Scammell, & Pratt, 2008). Overall, these findings suggest that the personality and cognitive characteristics underlying the informational style provide a basis for a different type of adjustment than does the normative style. The present research is focused on examining this supposition in the context of intimacy and emotionality.
Previous Research on Links Between Identity and Intimacy

Despite the vast amount of research conducted on Erikson's concept of identity, considerably less research has focused on the importance of identity for the development of intimate connections. Identity researchers have, however, hypothesized about the nature of the link between identity and intimacy following from Erikson's original suppositions. For example, Marcia (2002) wrote a conceptual paper about whether the various identity statuses (achievement, foreclosure, moratorium, diffusion) differentially predict the status of resolution with regard to the intimacy task. Marcia predicted that individuals in the diffusion or moratorium statuses would be the least likely to be able to develop intimate connections, whereas identity achieved individuals should display the greatest capacity for 'true' intimacy. Finally, he proposed that foreclosed individuals might display a pseudo-intimacy. "Such persons would likely marry those who were 'suitable' for them and fulfill judiciously their expected spousal roles. However, just as their identities lack a self-reflective depth, so might their intimate relationships" (Marcia, 2002, p. 12).

Marcia's theoretical predictions were based on previous studies focused on testing Erikson's hypothesis regarding the connection between having a clear sense of identity and the successful resolution of the intimacy crisis in early adulthood. For the most part, this research has established that higher identity commitment leads to balance on the intimacy task. For example, Orlofsky, Marcia, and Lesser (1973) used an interview measure to assess participants' identity statuses as well as their development with regard to Erikson's intimacy stage. Based on their responses to intimacy related questions, individuals were categorized into five statuses with regard to the development of intimacy according to the degree of mutuality, closeness, responsibility, and commitment to others. Individuals categorized as
intimate have several close interpersonal relationships, as well as a relatively committed relationship characterized by mutuality and closeness with a romantic partner. Individuals categorized in the preintimate status also have several close friendships; but, although they date, they have not experienced a deep, mutual romantic relationship. Individuals were characterized as having stereotyped relationships if they had several friends and dated regularly, but lacked the depth of mutually satisfying relationships in both friends and relationship partners. A subcategory of the stereotyped relationship status is that of pseudointimacy, which is experienced by the individual who has made a relatively lasting commitment to a relationship partner resembling the intimate individual, but the relationship is stereotyped and superficial. Finally, individuals categorized as isolated are those who lack any enduring social relationships, date infrequently, and generally withdraw from others. These authors found identity achieved individuals to have the greatest capacity for intimacy (intimate or preintimate), whereas the foreclosure and diffusion individuals attained only stereotyped and superficial (pseudointimate) forms of intimacy. Individuals in a moratorium were found to be the most variable, and diffused individuals were the most isolated, as Erikson proposed.

The finding that identity achieved individuals of both sexes attained the highest levels of intimacy on Orlofsky et al.'s interview measure has been replicated by several others (e.g., Fitch & Adams, 1983; Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982). In a longitudinal study, the lack of identity achievement in young adult men predicted isolation at midlife (defined as being more likely to remain unmarried), although this was not the case for young women. Yet, identity achieved women did experience more marital stability in middle adulthood (fewer
breakups) than did women with lower levels of identity achievement (Kahn, Zimmerman, Csikszentmihalyi, & Getzels, 1985).

The ego strengths of fidelity and love have also been linked to identity and intimacy in one study of young adults. Using a measure of psychosocial ego strengths created by Markstrom et al. (1997), along with an inventory of Erikson’s psychosocial stages, Markstrom and Kalmanir (2001) found that resolution of the identity task predicted the virtue of fidelity among both men and women. More interesting, though, is the finding that the resolution of both the identity and intimacy stages predicted the virtue of love among women, whereas resolution of the identity stage was the only predictor of love among men. The researchers suggested that this finding might be evidence that for women, identity is partly defined in the context of relationships. Thus, for women as compared to men, the stages of identity and intimacy are more closely related; an explanation that has been suggested by Erikson as well as subsequent identity researchers (e.g., Josselson, 1996).

Considerably less research has established whether identity processing (style) rather than formation (status/achievement) is related to aspects of intimacy. Previous research on identity style has revealed individual differences in characteristics that may be associated with the capacity for intimacy. For example, both the informational and normative styles (in comparison to the diffuse style) are positively associated with the personality trait of agreeableness (Dollinger, 1995) and the affiliative cognitive strategy of seeking social support (Berzonsky, Nurmi, Kinney, & Tammi, 1999). Thus, it is likely that the active social capacities that are evident for informational and normative individuals may predispose them to the ability to form intimate relationships.
Only two studies have directly examined the relationship between identity styles and intimacy, and both have found a unique pattern associated with the informational style. First, Berzonsky and Kuk (2005) found that undergraduate students who used an informational identity style were better adjusted to university with respect to the development of intimacy. Similarly, in a sample of young and middle-aged adults, Beaumont and Pratt (2007) found that both the normative and informational styles positively predicted Eriksonian intimacy balance. Yet, within a path model that included identity and generativity balance, in addition to intimacy balance, only the informational style was found to have a direct positive link with intimacy. Together, these studies provide some preliminary evidence regarding the potential link between identity style and intimacy; however, a more systematic examination of the types of intimacy predicted by the three identity styles, as well as an examination of the role of emotionality, is still warranted.

The Present Approach to Identity and Intimacy Links

As research on the link between intimacy and identity style is only in its infancy, a more thorough examination of the aspects of intimacy and love predicted by the identity styles is needed. The present research addressed the question of whether different styles of identity exploration predict different forms of intimacy/love. Thus, this research will fill a gap in the literature by focusing on the potential link between identity and intimacy within an individual differences framework (i.e., identity style). Specifically, this thesis systematically examined the predictive links between identity styles and three forms of intimacy: (1) individual differences in styles of love attitudes; (2) a self-focused approach to the study of intimacy; and, (3) Eriksonian intimacy balance (a replication of Beaumont & Pratt, 2007).
An individual difference approach to intimacy: Styles of love. Lee (1973) developed a multidimensional approach to the study of love that offers six different love ‘styles’. This approach considers love to be a multifaceted construct, having primary, secondary, and tertiary components. Different love styles, or approaches to love, result as a mix of the components, much like colors on a color wheel (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1989; Hendrick & Hendrick, 2003). The underlying assumption of the theory of love styles is that no one person exhibits an ideal love type, and all persons exhibit some of each love style (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2003). Thus, Lee delineated six different styles of love based conceptually on Greek nouns: Eros, Ludus, Storge, Pragma, Mania, and Agape. Eros is an intense and passionate love involving commitment, in which an individual desires to intimately ‘know’ their partner on all levels. Ludus is game-playing love, in which the individual avoids commitment and emotional intensity, and instead may balance several relationships at one time. Storge is friendship love, involving a comfortable, steady, and secure companionship in which an individual desires a partner who reflects similar values and attitudes to their own so that they can become both their lover as well as their best friend. Pragma, is practical love based on rational decisions as to who would serve as a ‘good match’ or be an ‘appropriate partner.’ Mania is possessive, dependent love, characterized by an emotional roller coaster with obsession and insecurities as well as devotion and yearning for love. Finally, Agape is altruistic love, which reflects a deep spiritual love that transcends the self. The altruistic agape lover truly is selfless, putting their partner’s welfare before their own (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2003).

The love attitudes scale (LAS) was developed by Hendrick, Hendrick, and Dicke (1998) based on Lee’s (1973) conceptualization of love styles. The love attitude scale, along
with the passionate love scale (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986), are the two most commonly used love scales in modern research. However, the passionate love scale measures only the single construct of intense passionate love, so the LAS was included in this study to capture a richer conceptualization of the complex nature of love, as well as to capitalize on the individual difference perspective of the love styles.

_A self-focused approach to the study of intimacy: Self-expansion theory._ Aron and Aron (1986) developed a theory of love based on the Eastern concept that a central component of human motivation is _self-expansion_. The premise of self-expansion theory is that people seek to expand the self towards including everything and everyone in a quest towards being and knowing everything (Aron & Aron, 1996). Romantic love derives from this basic motivation for self-expansion, as the individual is driven towards a reciprocal inclusion of significant others in the self through close relationships (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2003). Thus, the Aron and Aron approach to the study of intimacy is known as “inclusion of other in self.”

Grounded in the self-expansion model, the inclusion of other in one’s self denotes a close relationship or union. The term self-expansion is not intended to imply the acquisition of resources at the expense of others, but “to connote a broadened identity or awareness, which usually leads to greater altruism, not less” (Aron & Aron, 1996, p. 50). The experience of close relationships is an unselfish and mutual sharing of the now overlapping selves (Aron & Aron, 1997). The experience of self-expansion is favorable because it leads to the increased influence and capability of a broader identity (Aron & Aron, 1996). Likewise, the inclusion of other in the self need not imply the loss of one’s unique identity, although the authors admit that for some individuals with underdeveloped identities this may be the case.
For example, in describing the possible meaning of the IOS scale, women in one study rated loss of identity themes somewhat higher than men, although the difference was not significant, and themes of union, closeness, and interconnectedness were rated higher by both genders than was loss of identity (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992). Thus, Aron et al. (1992) concluded that participants interpret the IOS scale mainly in terms of interconnectedness and closeness.

The general paradigm of love as including other-in-self fits well with current research on intimacy, a construct often deemed virtually indistinguishable from closeness (Aron, Aron, Tudor, & Nelson, 1991). Researchers in the field of intimacy often converge on the idea that the exchange of self-relevant information or sharing of the self is central to an intimate relationship (Reis & Shaver, 1988; as cited in Aron et al., 1991). Likewise, close relationships have been thought of in terms of union or attachment (Aron et al.). Erikson’s conceptualization of intimacy as a union in which those with well-developed identities can begin to merge the self with another (or the fusing of identities, as Erikson, 1968, describes ‘true’ intimacy) fits well with the model of including other in the self.

Love or affection is a main component of intimacy (Hook, Gerstein, Detterich & Gridley, 2003), and romantic-partnered love is embedded in the emotions and behavior that sustain our survival (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2003). Considering the concept of ‘love’ in a study of identity and intimacy fits well with Erikson’s theoretical implication that the virtue of love ascends from a balanced resolution of the psychosocial stage of intimacy, a stage that is preceded by identity formation. In addition, Erikson (1968) often speaks of love as synonymous with intimacy, or “mutual devotion” and states that love “serves the need for a new and shared identity” (p. 137). Furthermore, despite the theoretical implications of the
link between identity and the inclusion of other in self form of intimacy, a study relating identity style to the inclusion of other in the self scale has not yet been conducted.

*A general approach to intimacy: Psychosocial balance.* The Inventory of Psychosocial Balance (IPB) developed by Domino and Affonso (1990) assesses all eight of Erikson’s psychosocial stages. The general assumption of the IPB is that each of Erikson’s psychosocial stages represents a developmentally appropriate challenge to be met, and an individual must find the appropriate balance between the positive and negative aspects of the task at hand. Thus, intimacy in the form of psychosocial balance involves achieving the appropriate balance in interpersonal relationships, becoming neither overly promiscuous nor enduringly isolated.

In summary, the first goal of the proposed research is to address Erikson’s supposition about the links between identity and intimacy within an individual differences framework by exploring predictive relationships between identity styles (informational, normative, and diffuse-avoidant) and the achievement of intimacy balance and different types of intimacy/love, as conceptualized by Hendricks and Hendricks (1986) and Aron and Aron (1986). The second goal of the proposed research is to explore the predictive relationship between the identity styles and aspects of emotionality. Finally, the third goal is to address the supposition that emotional intelligence meditates the positive relationship between identity style and intimacy balance. Before outlining more specific hypotheses for these three research questions, it is necessary to review literature on the conceptual links between emotionality and identity and intimacy.
The Role of Emotionality in Identity and Intimacy

In Erikson’s stage theory, identity resolution is one of many ‘crises’ in development; a word suggesting the salient emotional upheaval that characterized each stage of development. The identity crisis, as conceptualized by Erikson, is a time of emotional upheaval provoked by the need to develop a coherent and adaptive self-concept (i.e., determine one’s role in society, make a career choice, etc.). Furthermore, in Erikson’s original theory, the developmental task of identity achievement (with optimal development involving emotional competency and balanced identity formation) precedes that of intimacy, or the capacity to form committed and intimate relationships. Previous researchers have proposed that emotion plays a pivotal role in the formation and maintenance of identity (e.g., Haviland, Davidson, Ruetsch, Gebelt & Lancelot, 1994; Strayer, 2002; Vleioras & Bosma, 2005b), as well as in identity commitments (e.g., Berzonsky, 2003), such that identity commitment itself is an emotion-laden construct (Strayer, 2002). However, the emotional aspects of identity development have been largely ignored in identity theory and research, although emotions and emotional processing have been shown to be important in socio-cognitive attributions and appraisals (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). This research will address this gap in the literature by investigating the role of identity styles in predicting emotional processing in young adults as originally conceptualized by Erikson, as well as addressing the novel thesis that the predictive link between identity and intimacy is mediated by emotional intelligence. It is hypothesized that not only are the three identity styles differentially related to intimacy and emotional intelligence, the link between the two committed identity styles and intimacy is due to the positive influence of emotional intelligence.
Emotionality and identity. Emotions are not simply by-products of cognition, but instead can organize and motivate cognition and actions (Strayer, 2002). “Optimal development maximizes emotional competencies (e.g., emotional awareness, expression, and experience), increasing both stability (a system property) and flexible choice (a voluntary property). Resiliency rather than either rigidity or formlessness characterizes this developmental trajectory” (Strayer, 2002, p. 50). Thus, emotions also influence the assimilative and accommodative process itself, an equilibrium process that differentiates the identity statuses as well as the styles (Strayer). The underlying premise of the concept of emotional intelligence is that individual differences exist in the ability to effectively use emotions, and these individual differences may be embedded in underlying skills (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Emotions can occur in response to environmental stimuli, can serve to organize responses, or can precede cognitive appraisals, and emotional processing has been shown to be important for socio-cognitive attribution style (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). This construct is theoretically consistent with both the conceptualization of social-cognitive identity processing by Berzonsky (1988, 1989), and Erikson’s (1968) theoretical assumption that an individual’s identity is a dynamic process of change and continuing differentiation, affected by an individual’s emotions and appraisals. Thus, although the research is scant in the area of identity and emotions, inferences can be drawn between the constructs of emotional intelligence and identity processing.

Overall, there has been very little research on the links between identity style and emotion; however, some insight can be gained from reviewing the literature on the identity statuses, as research has shown substantial convergence between the identity styles and the identity statuses as conceptualized by Marcia (e.g., Berzonsky, 1990; Berzonsky, 1992a;
Berzonsky & Niemeyer, 1994; Streitmatter, 1993). Individuals displaying the identity achievement status are autonomous yet intimate in relationships, display secure attachments, function well under stress, and demonstrate high levels of moral reasoning, indicating an optimum integration of emotion and cognitive reasoning (see review by Strayer, 2002).

Emotional intelligence is classified by Mayer et al. (2000) as a subset of social intelligence, and it consists of an interaction between emotion and cognition. Individuals displaying the foreclosed status, like individuals with a normative identity style, are less cognitively complex, less anxious, but display more authoritarian moral reasoning than individuals in the other statuses (Strayer). These individuals would be expected to experience the most guilt and anxiety when exploring away from accepted standards (Strayer). Finally, individuals with a diffuse identity would be expected to experience the most negative emotions, such as hostility, due to their inherent lack of interest (Strayer).

The aforementioned research linking the identity statuses with different aspects of emotionality fits with theoretical expectations based on the different processes of assimilation and accommodation associated with the identity statuses and styles. Assimilation refers to the process of assimilating new information into one’s existing worldview, whereas accommodation involves changing one’s worldview to accept the new information (Berzonsky, 1990). The balanced use of assimilation and accommodation that characterizes the informational and identity achieved individuals should pull for the most emotional intelligence. Normative individuals, like individuals categorized as having a foreclosed identity status, have firm commitments without considering alternatives; they have not gone through an identity crisis. Instead, normative individuals rely primarily on the use of assimilation and seem to have an unwillingness to explore and/or express the emotions
necessary to “figure out” an identity for themselves. Such an exploration would involve self-
examination and ultimately the disintegration of the firm identity commitment normative
individuals rigidly defend (Marcia, 2002). Instead, such individuals may display a defensive
regulation or control of their emotions. Finally, diffuse individuals rely predominately on the
use of accommodation, and are consequently unable to manage any emotional upheaval,
explaining the association between this style and the neuroticism dimension of the Big Five
personality characteristics.

Further evidence that the construct of emotional intelligence differentiates between
the three identity styles comes from a lifespan perspective of identity development. Findings
indicated that more informational, and fewer normative and diffuse, women are found with
increasing age (Beaumont & Pratt, 2007); however, the same trend is not true of men
(Beaumont & Pratt; Beaumont & Zukanovic, 2005). Given the norm in Western society for
men to be less emotionally expressive than women, it is possible that there is a link between
emotional development and identity formation that is producing these gender differences.
Men have been found to display lower emotional intelligence scores on both self-report and
ability measures of the construct, supporting the supposition that women in Western societies
may be socialized with greater emotional autonomy than men (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey,
2000; Schutte et al., 1998).

The emotion-relevant findings from the identity style literature, although few, parallel
the few findings from the identity status literature. Informational individuals have been found
to score the highest on a measure of emotional autonomy of the three identity styles
(Berzonsky & Kuk, 2005), providing some evidence that they should be emotionally
intelligent. Normative individuals were found to be open to feelings, a dimension of
openness, although they are closed to values and actions, supporting the supposition that they may be more perceptive of emotions in others (Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992); however, the normative identity style is unrelated to empathy, unlike the informational identity style, which is positively related to empathy (Soenens et al., 2005).

Despite the supposition that individuals using the informational style should be more emotionally intelligent than individuals with a normative identity style, in previous research using a self-report measure of emotional intelligence, no group differences emerged for the informational and normative individuals (Seaton & Beaumont, 2006). Nevertheless, both the informational and normative styles positively predicted emotional intelligence over-and-above identity commitment (although the informational style was more strongly correlated with emotional intelligence than was the normative style; Seaton & Beaumont, in press); however, both the normative and informational individuals reported higher levels of emotional intelligence than did individuals with the diffuse identity style, as expected (Seaton & Beaumont, 2006).

One possible explanation for the lack of difference found between the informational and normative identity styles is that the measure of emotional intelligence employed in the study, the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Inventory, is a self-report measure and is considered a mixed model measure. Mayer et al. (2000), divided competing models of emotional intelligence into those that are purely ability models that measure strictly the abilities associated with emotional intelligence (such as the ability to perceive, express, and appraise emotions), and those that these authors labeled “mixed models”. Mixed models include not only the aforementioned properties of emotional intelligence, but also characteristics such as personality traits, virtues, or aspects of well-being and success.
assumed to accompany emotional intelligence. The authors admit that in their earlier conceptualizations of emotional intelligence they did subscribe to a mixed model, but had since then refined their model to a strictly ability based conceptualization. The Schutte et al. emotional intelligence inventory was based on Mayer et al.’s earlier conceptualization and thus subscribes to a mixed model perspective. As discussed previously, both of the committed identity styles (informational and normative) predict well-being, so using a measure of emotional intelligence that includes aspects of well-being may have confounded differences between these two styles strictly in terms of emotional intelligence.

In this thesis, the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT; MHS, 2007) was selected to assess individual differences in the ability to effectively use and deal with emotions. The MSCEIT provides a score for overall emotional intelligence as well as an individual’s specific skills on four branches: emotion perception, using emotions to facilitate thought, understanding emotions, and managing self-relevant and others’ emotions. *Emotion perception* includes the ability to accurately perceive and interpret emotions in the self, others, and emotional stimuli such as stories, art, and music. *Using emotions to facilitate thought* consists of the ability to generate emotions to communicate feelings as well as to employ emotions to aid in some tasks. *Understanding emotions* involves being able to understand complex emotions in self and others, discerning how emotions combine and progress through transitions and delineating complex emotional meanings. Finally, *managing emotions in self and others* involves being open to feelings while being able to regulate moods in order to promote understanding and personal growth (MHS, 2007). The MSCEIT is an ability based measure, requiring participants to complete a series of emotion-related tasks and eliminating the need for self-report. It is believed that this measure will provide a more
accurate reflection of individual differences in the emotion related abilities of the three identity styles than will a self-reported mixed model such as the Schutte et al. emotional intelligence inventory.

*Emotionality and intimacy.* In addition to differentiating between the identity styles, emotional intelligence should be theoretically related to aspects of intimacy and love. Humanity is a virtue that involves interpersonal strengths directed at befriending and caring for others in one-on-one relationships (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The virtue of humanity in Peterson and Seligman’s framework includes the character strengths love, kindness, and social/emotional intelligence. Individuals who exercise the virtue of humanity should display the necessary social and emotional skills to form supportive social relationships (intimacy). Thus, the character strengths underlying the virtue of humanity should be interrelated.

Conceptually, emotional intelligence should provide the cognitive and self-regulation capacities necessary for love, and thus, should be expected to support successful balance in terms of resolving Erikson’s intimacy stage. Supporting these notions, research indicates that emotional intelligence is related to quality of social interactions; in particular, the managing emotions branch of emotional intelligence predicts self-perceived quality of interpersonal relations over and above the positive influences of personality and general intelligence (Lopes, Salovey, & Straus, 2003). For example, spouses who are better at perceiving, managing, and expressing emotions report higher marital satisfaction than do less emotionally intelligent spouses (Fitness, 2001). Thus, together, the results of previous research suggest that there may be complex patterns of relationships between emotionality, intimacy, and identity, providing a basis for the systematic examination of these constructs which is focus of this thesis.
Summary of Objectives and Hypotheses

This thesis builds on the results reported by Seaton and Beaumont (in press) and Beaumont and Pratt (2007) by examining the relationship between identity style, emotionality, and intimacy from an Eriksonian-based theoretical perspective, and it offers an extension of these studies by including more comprehensive measures of emotional intelligence and intimacy. Specifically, this research systematically examined the predictive links between individual differences in identity styles and aspects of intimacy, as well as predictive relationships between identity, intimacy, and emotional intelligence. Finally, this research examined the novel thesis that emotional intelligence mediates the positive relationship between the identity styles and intimacy balance. That is, emotional intelligence was expected to predict successful balance in terms of intimacy by providing positive cognitive and self-regulation capacities necessary for love.

Three research questions were posed: (1) Do the three identity styles predict different patterns of intimacy and love?; (2) Do the three identity styles differentially predict aspects of emotional intelligence?; and, (3) Is the predictive link between identity styles and intimacy mediated by emotional intelligence? The analyses and specific hypotheses are as follows.

Research question 1: Predictive relationships between identity styles and intimacy.

This research objective was addressed by measuring identity styles and three aspects of intimacy: an individual differences measure of ‘love styles’ (LAS), a specific measure of intimacy (IOS scale), and finally a general intimacy measure (intimacy balance). The informational identity style was expected to positively predict intimacy balance, the inclusion of other in self model of closeness, and Eros (passionate love) and Agape (altruistic love) love attitudes. Given the relation between the foreclosed identity status and pseudointimate
types of intimacy outcomes, as well as normative individuals endorsement of intimacy
balance items in Beaumont and Pratt’s (2007) study, it was expected that in the present study
the normative identity style would positively predict intimacy balance and Eros (passionate
love), Pragma (practical love) and Storge (friendship love) love attitudes, but would not
predict intimacy on the inclusion of other in self model of closeness. Finally, it was expected
that the diffuse identity style would negatively predict intimacy balance and the inclusion of
other in self model of closeness, and positively predict the Mania (possessive, dependent
love) and Ludus (game-playing love) love styles, given Erikson’s (1968) proposition that
diffuse individuals can be either fearful in love or playboy types. These hypotheses were
tested via correlation and regression analyses based on the identity scale raw scores.

Research question 2: Predictive relationships between identity styles and emotional
intelligence. The information-oriented style can be considered as providing the greatest
potential for emotional intelligence, due to its penchant for openness, conscientiousness,
agreeableness, self-exploration and introspection, self-reflectiveness, personal
expressiveness, and use of problem-focused coping (Berzonsky, 1989, 1990, 1993;
Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992; Dollinger, 1995). Thus, the informational identity style was
expected to positively predict all aspects of emotional intelligence. The normative style was
also expected to positively predict two of the branches of emotional intelligence (emotion
perception and managing self-relevant and others’ emotions), as research indicates that these
individuals may be more perceptive of emotions in others (Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992).
However, since normative individuals deal with emotional problems in a rigid fashion, this
style was expected to be related to lower levels of emotional intelligence overall. Finally, the
diffuse identity style was expected to negatively predict emotional intelligence. These hypotheses were tested via correlation and regression analyses.

Research Question 3: Is the relationship between identity style and intimacy balance mediated by emotional intelligence? It was expected that any positive and significant relationships between the individual identity styles and intimacy balance will be at least partly mediated by overall emotional intelligence. This research question was addressed using path analysis via structural equation modeling. Specifically, a path model was tested in which identity styles directly predict both emotional intelligence and intimacy balance, and emotional intelligence also predicts intimacy balance. Support for the mediating role of emotional intelligence would be garnered by a significant indirect pathway between identity styles and intimacy via emotional intelligence.
METHOD

Participants

The data collection was conducted in two phases administered via the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) Psychology Research Participation System. All undergraduate students enrolled in psychology classes at UNBC were eligible to participate in Phase 1, which consisted of completion of all of the identity and intimacy measures (described below under Measures). To qualify to participate in Phase 2, which consisted of completing an online version of the emotional intelligence (EI) measure (see MSCEIT description below), participants must have participated in the first phase of data collection.

Phase 1 included a total of 244 undergraduate students (74 men; 170 women). Three men and ten women from the total respondents were extreme outliers in terms of age (ranging from 34 to 45). Given the theoretical focus of this thesis on Eriksonian stages believed to be relevant to adolescents and young adults, these cases were removed resulting in a final sample size of 231 (71 men; 160 women). These participants ranged in age from 17 to 30 ($M = 20.56$, $SD = 2.70$), and the sample was predominately Caucasian (81.4%), followed by Asian (9.5%), other (6.1%), and Aboriginal (3%). The majority of the participants indicated that they were dating one person exclusively (42%) or single and interested in dating (33.8%). The remaining participants were single and not interested in dating (8.2%), married or common-law (6.5%), casually dating one or more people (6.1%), or engaged (3.5%). Phase 2 included the sub-sample of these participants who had chosen to complete the emotional intelligence measure ($N = 146$; 37 men, 109 women).
Procedures

The Phase 1 questionnaires took approximately 45 minutes to complete, and students were compensated with 1% towards their course grade based on the UNBC Psychology Program criteria of 1% per hour spent participating in research. Completion of the MSCEIT took an additional 30 to 45 minutes to complete (MHS, 2007), and the participants who completed this measure were compensated with an additional 1% towards their final grade.

Before completion of the Phase 1 measures, participants were asked to read an introductory information and informed consent page (Appendix A). The online survey was layered in such a way that participants were not able to complete the questionnaires unless they read the information and informed consent pages, and then pressed a "continue" button, which signified their consent to participate in the study. Following the completion of a demographic questionnaire (Appendix C), participants completed the measures described below, which were presented in a randomized order across participants. After completing all of the survey measures, participants were asked if they were willing to be contacted for future research (Appendix H) and again presented with the information letter page (Appendix A) at which point they could print it for their records. Participants were then informed that they could choose to continue and complete Phase 2 for additional credit, or return at a later time and complete Phase 2. Before completing the MSCEIT performance-based measure in Phase 2, participants were asked to read another introductory information and informed consent page (Appendix B). Participants were then directed to the MHS webpage via an internet link, given an access code, and allowed to complete the emotional intelligence measure online.
Measures

Identity Style Inventory - Revised (ISI3; Appendix D). The ISI3 (Berzonsky, 1992b) is a 40-item inventory that measures identity processing orientation or style. The ISI3 is based on Berzonsky’s (1989) original Identity Style Inventory with improved psychometric properties. The ISI3 measures the degree to which individuals tend to use the three identity processing styles identified by Berzonsky: information-oriented (11 items), normative (9 items), and diffuse (10 items). The ISI3 also provides an index of the degree of commitment that one feels towards his or her particular self-identity, by including a separate identity commitment sub-scale (10 items; Berzonsky, 1992b). The ISI3 consists of statements to which participants respond on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from not at all like me (1) to very much like me (5). Scoring requires the summation of responses to items composing each of the styles. Reliability and convergent and divergent validity for the ISI (earlier versions and the ISI3) have been established by Berzonsky (1989, 1992b). In the present study, Cronbach’s alphas were .66 for the information-oriented identity style sub-scale, .59 for the normative identity style sub-scale, .79 for the diffuse-avoidant identity style sub-scale, and .77 for the identity commitment sub-scale.

Love Attitudes Scale (LAS; Appendix E). The short form of the LAS (Hendrick et al., 1998) is a 24 item inventory with four items to assess each of six love styles: Eros, Ludus, Storge, Pragma, Mania and Agape. The short form of the LAS is based on Hendrick and Hendrick’s (1986) original LAS and is reported to have better psychometric properties than the original version (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2003). The LAS consists of statements to which participants respond on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5). Reported alpha coefficient reliabilities range from .75 (Mania) to .88 (Agape).
Test-retest reliabilities ranged from .63 (Pragma) to .76 (Storge; Hendrick et al., 1998).

Extensive psychometric work has confirmed the validity and reliability of the LAS (earlier versions and the short form; e.g., Hendrick & Hendrick, 1989; Hendrick & Hendrick, 1990).

In the present study, Cronbach’s alphas were .71 for Eros, .65 for Ludus, .80 for Storge, .65 for Prgama, .51 for Mania, and .75 for Agape.

**The Inclusion of Other in Self Scale** (IOS; Appendix F). The inclusion of other in the self scale is a one item pictorial representation of the degree of closeness an individual feels toward a significant other. The measure is based on a self-expansion model of love which suggests that a central component of human motivation is self-expansion and people seek to expand the self by including significant others in the self through close relationships. An extensive series of studies has confirmed the construct validity of the inclusion of other in self paradigm (Aron et al., 1991).

The figures in the IOS scale depict a series of pairs of circles that range in degree of overlap from not at all, to almost completely. “The figures were designed so that (a) the total area of each figure is constant (thus as the overlap of the circles increases, so does the diameter), and (b) the degree of overlap progresses linearly, creating a seven-step, interval scale” (Aron et al., 1992, p.597). In one study where participants could freely vary the size of the circles using a computerized version of the IOS scale, no correlation was found between circle size and the nearness of the centers of the circles, indicating that asymmetry and variations in circle size were not important in the IOS scale (Aron et al., 1992). A series of studies conducted by Aron et al. (1992) has established the alternate-form and test-retest reliability of the IOS scale, as well as its convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity.
Finally, these authors found that participants interpret the IOS scale mainly in terms of interconnectedness and closeness.

In the present study, each participant was asked to complete the measure three times: once for their closest, deepest, most involved, and most intimate romantic relationship, once for their closest, deepest, most involved, and most intimate nonromantic friendship, and once for their closest family member (in randomized order). If participants indicated that they did not have, or have not had, a close other in any of these areas, they could skip that series. Participants were asked to choose the picture that best represents their relationship with the person they are thinking of. Scoring required assigning a numerical value to respondents' choices ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 represented no overlap and 7 represented the most overlap. If participants indicated that they did not and have not ever had a close relationship, they were assigned a score of 0.

*Inventory of Psychosocial Balance (IPB): Intimacy subscale* (Appendix G). The IPB (Domino & Affonso, 1990) was designed to assess respondents' progress with regards to the resolution of Erikson's eight psychosocial stages. The IPB is a 120-item personality inventory with 15 items to assess each of Erikson's eight developmental stages. Only the intimacy subscale was included in the present study. The intimacy subscale of the IPB is appropriate for adolescents and young adults (Domino & Affonso). The intimacy subscale of the IPB consists of 15 statements to which participants respond on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly disagree* (1) to *Strongly agree* (5), so raw scores can range from 15 to 75. Reported alpha coefficient reliabilities range from .68 for a sample of college students to .86 for a sample of adults. Validity and reliability data on the IPB are presented by Domino.
and Affonso (1990). In the present study, the Cronbach’s alpha for the intimacy subscale of the IPB was .71.

The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). The construct of emotional intelligence (EI) consists of the ability to identify, understand, express, and regulate emotions in the self and others (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002). The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) is a 141-item ability measure that assesses respondents’ overall emotional intelligence as well as their specific skills on four branches: emotion perception, using emotions to facilitate thought, understanding emotions, and managing self-relevant and others’ emotions. Each branch is assessed with two tasks. Branch 1, perceiving emotions, is measured by faces and pictures tasks. The faces task consists of viewing pictures of faces and rating the extent to which certain emotions are present on a five point scale ranging from Not Much (1) to Very (5), and the pictures task consists of viewing pictures of landscape and abstract designs and making the same ratings as in the faces task. Branch 2, using emotion to facilitate thought, is measured with a sensation task in which participants match sensations to emotions, for example rating how hot or cold envy is, as well as with a facilitation task in which participants judge the extent to which certain moods assist specific cognitive and behavioral tasks, such as how useful joy is when planning a party. Branch 3, understanding emotions, is measured with blends and changes tasks. The blends task concerns the ability to analyze complex emotions. Using a multiple choice format, respondents are instructed to identify the emotions that combine to form a specific emotion; for example, by identifying that malice is a combination of aggression and envy. In the changes task, respondents identify an emotion that results from the intensification of other emotions, such as depression resulting from the intensification of
sadness and fatigue. Finally, branch 4, managing emotions, is measured with emotion management and emotion relationships tasks. In the emotion management task, participants judge the extent to which certain actions will be effective in achieving an emotional outcome in a story. For example, they would judge the extent to which actions the character could take would reduce his or her anger, or prolong his or her joy. In the emotional relationships task, participants judge the extent to which certain actions will be effective in managing another person’s feelings (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2003).

The MSEIT is distributed by Multi-Health Systems (MHS), and responses are scored by the test publisher and are evaluated according to a group consensus scoring method. In group consensus scoring, each participant’s response is scored according to its convergence with the proportion of the normative sample endorsing the same response. “For example, if .51 of the participant group reported that anger was somewhat present (“4” on the scale), then a participant who chose “4” would receive 0.51 for the item. If the participant believed anger was definitely not present (“1” on the scale), and only 0.06 of the sample agreed, then the individual would receive a 0.06 for the item” (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2000, p.274). The normative sample consists of 5,000 respondents, the majority of which reside in the U.S., but many are also from Canada, the United Kingdom, Malta, South Africa, Australia, and Switzerland (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, 2002). Experts from the emotion field have also scored the items, and expert and group consensus scoring have been found to closely converge (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2003; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2002). The emotional intelligence scores provided by MHS are computed as percentiles, and standardized to that of a normal curve with an average of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 for ease of interpretability.
RESULTS

Overview of the Analyses and Preliminary Data Screening

Before analyses were conducted, the data set was examined for missing data, outliers, and normality. There were no missing scores for any of the scale items; however, there was a small amount of missing data for some of the demographics variables. Examination of the data for normality revealed a few outliers, but the distributions were not skewed. Two individuals reported being unable to view the IOS scale pictorial measure (the graphics did not load on their computer screens), so their responses on these items were removed.

SPSS Missing Variables Analysis (MVA) was conducted treating the cases who did not complete phase 2 (the MSCEIT) as missing data in order to determine whether the samples of individuals who did and did not complete phase 2 differed on any of the other study variables. The MVA was not significant (Little’s MCAR $\chi^2[13] = 15.04, p = .31$), indicating that the sub-sample of individuals who completed the MSCEIT did not differ from those who chose not to complete the MSCEIT on any of the other study variables. Finally, two individuals scored well below average on the MSCEIT (37.35 and 39.99, $z = -3.92$ and -3.75, respectively), and below the critical $z$-score cutoff to be deemed as outliers (3.29; Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007). The MSCEIT scores for these two individuals were removed from further analyses, resulting in a final sample of 144 (36 men; 108 women) for analyses involving MSCEIT scores.

First, preliminary analyses examining gender differences in mean scores on all variables and in the strength of correlations among variables were conducted. Next, three sets of analyses were conducted in order to examine the research hypotheses: (1) intercorrelations among identity style and intimacy variables to examine patterns of relationships between
identity styles, identity commitment, love attitude styles, IOS model of love, and intimacy balance, as well as hierarchical regressions controlling for identity commitment to determine the unique positive contribution of the individual identity styles to intimacy balance; (2) intercorrelations among identity styles and emotional intelligence (EI) to examine patterns of relationships between each of the identity styles and each separate branch of emotional intelligence; and, (3) structural equation modeling (SEM) procedures to examine the hypothesized path model in which the predictive relationships between identity styles and intimacy balance are mediated by emotional intelligence. A more conservative alpha level of .01 was used for all correlations, while a standard alpha of .05 was used for regression analyses. Criteria for model acceptance are described in the SEM section.

Preliminary Analyses of Gender Differences

Descriptive statistics for all variables are presented in Table 1. Two separate multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs) were conducted to examine possible gender differences for Phase 1 analyses (identity and intimacy variables) and Phase 2 analyses (MSCEIT variables). For Phase 1, the multivariate effect of gender was significant, $F (1, 227) = 3.95, p < .001, \eta^2 = .21$. Using a Bonferroni adjusted $p$ value of .0036 (.05/14), the univariate effect of gender was significant for intimacy balance, and the Ludus love attitude style. Similar to previous research on identity styles, there were no significant gender differences in scores on the three identity style scales or on the identity commitment subscale. For Phase 2, the multivariate effect of gender was not significant, $F (1, 142) = 1.99, p = .083, \eta^2 = .07$. 

43
Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for all variables as a Function of Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Range of Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M (SD)</td>
<td>M (SD)</td>
<td>M (SD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>35.82 (6.59)</td>
<td>36.13 (6.71)</td>
<td>35.68 (6.55)</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>15.00 - 50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational</td>
<td>37.06 (5.25)</td>
<td>37.87 (5.82)</td>
<td>36.70 (4.96)</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>20.00 - 51.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative</td>
<td>27.56 (4.80)</td>
<td>27.94 (4.75)</td>
<td>27.39 (4.83)</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>13.00 - 40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>26.78 (6.26)</td>
<td>27.92 (6.91)</td>
<td>26.28 (5.90)</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>12.00 - 46.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimacy IPB</td>
<td>57.79 (6.65)</td>
<td>55.77 (6.58)</td>
<td>58.68 (6.50)</td>
<td>9.18*</td>
<td>38.00 - 70.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros</td>
<td>3.88 (.72)</td>
<td>3.71 (.79)</td>
<td>3.96 (.67)</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>1.50 - 5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludus</td>
<td>2.22 (.79)</td>
<td>2.52 (.93)</td>
<td>2.08 (.68)</td>
<td>16.28*</td>
<td>1.00 - 4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storge</td>
<td>3.25 (.92)</td>
<td>3.24 (.91)</td>
<td>3.26 (.93)</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>1.00 - 5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragma</td>
<td>2.48 (.80)</td>
<td>2.52 (.83)</td>
<td>2.46 (.78)</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>1.00 - 4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mania</td>
<td>2.93 (.75)</td>
<td>3.00 (.72)</td>
<td>2.90 (.76)</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.00 - 4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agape</td>
<td>3.16 (.74)</td>
<td>3.37 (.79)</td>
<td>3.06 (.70)</td>
<td>8.70</td>
<td>1.00 - 4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOS romantic</td>
<td>4.21 (2.41)</td>
<td>4.28 (2.45)</td>
<td>4.17 (2.40)</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>0 - 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOS friend</td>
<td>4.58 (1.76)</td>
<td>4.41 (1.94)</td>
<td>4.66 (1.67)</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>0 - 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOS family</td>
<td>4.76 (1.89)</td>
<td>4.59 (1.98)</td>
<td>4.84 (1.86)</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>0 - 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total EI</td>
<td>98.32 (13.99)</td>
<td>93.22 (16.06)</td>
<td>100.02 (12.86)</td>
<td>6.65</td>
<td>55.40 - 142.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceiving</td>
<td>102.29 (15.30)</td>
<td>98.83 (16.51)</td>
<td>103.44 (14.77)</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>50.49 - 132.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using</td>
<td>97.50 (15.02)</td>
<td>92.30 (17.50)</td>
<td>99.23 (13.76)</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>37.95 - 125.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>96.45 (11.63)</td>
<td>93.57 (14.83)</td>
<td>97.41 (10.25)</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>54.28 - 120.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing</td>
<td>95.76 (11.11)</td>
<td>91.45 (12.29)</td>
<td>97.20 (10.36)</td>
<td>7.57</td>
<td>60.77 - 116.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: *p < .0036 (Bonferroni adjustment); Phase 1 N = 71 men, 158 women; Phase 2 N = 36 men, 108 women.
To further examine possible gender differences, separate inter-correlations among variables were computed for men and for women, and then z-test comparisons between the strength of corresponding correlations for men and women were conducted. These analyses resulted in only a chance level of significant gender differences in the strength of correlations, with only 2 out of 110 z-tests being significant. Specifically, the strength of the correlations between the informational identity style and intimacy balance were significantly different for men and women ($r = .48, p < .001$, for men; $r = .21, p < .01$, for women; $z = 2.19, p < .05$), and the strength of the correlations between the managing emotions EI branch score and the agape love style were significantly different for men and women ($r = .21, ns$, for men; $r = -.20, p < .05$, for women; $z = 2.10, p < .05$). As there were so few gender differences in the F-test and z-test results, a decision was made to conduct subsequent correlation, regression, and SEM analyses with the sample as a whole.

Research Question 1: Predictive Relationships between Identity Styles and Intimacy

Correlational relationships. Pearson correlations revealed that, consistent with previous studies, the three identity styles were significantly ($p < .001$) correlated with scores on the identity commitment sub-scale. The diffuse style was negatively correlated with commitment ($r = -.50$), whereas both the informational and normative styles were positively correlated with commitment ($r = .46$; and $r = .43$, respectively). The informational style was also negatively correlated with the diffuse style ($r = -.24, p < .001$), but was uncorrelated with the normative style ($r = .06, p = .37$). Likewise, the normative style was uncorrelated with the diffuse style ($r = .02, p = .74$).
Patterns of intercorrelations among identity and intimacy variables were also examined and are presented in Table 2. As hypothesized, intimacy balance was positively correlated with identity commitment, the informational and the normative identity styles, and was inversely related to the diffuse identity style. However, contrary to predictions, only identity commitment was related to the Eros love style and IOS for romantic partner, whereas the informational style was unrelated to any of the love styles or IOS measures of intimacy.

As predicted, the normative style was positively related to Pragma, and unrelated to the IOS for romantic partner. However, contrary to predictions, the normative style was unrelated to Eros and Storge, and unexpectedly related to Mania and IOS for family member. The diffuse style was positively related to the Ludus love style, and negatively related to the IOS for romantic partner as expected; but, contrary to predictions, the diffuse style was unrelated to Mania.

**Hierarchical regression analyses.** As just presented, zero-order correlations revealed different patterns of relationships between the identity styles and intimacy balance. However, identity commitment was also correlated with the identity styles and intimacy balance. As a result, hierarchical regressions were conducted to determine the unique positive contribution of each identity style to intimacy balance over-and-above the potential confounding influence of identity commitment.

A series of hierarchical regression analyses were performed with the identity style sub-scale scores as the predictor variables and intimacy balance as the criterion variable. In all regressions, identity commitment scores were entered on Step 1, so that the potential contribution of identity commitment in the relationship between identity style and intimacy could be controlled. Separate regressions were conducted with each of the identity style
Table 2

Patterns of Correlations between Identity Style and Intimacy Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Identity Commitment</th>
<th>Informational Style</th>
<th>Normative Style</th>
<th>Diffuse Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intimacy IPB</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludus</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.25**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storge</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragma</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mania</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agape</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOS romantic</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.25**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOS friend</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOS family</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>-.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: N = 231 for all correlations except those including IOS scales where N = 229; * p < .01; ** p < .001
scores entered on Step 2. Table 3 provides a summary of the statistics from these hierarchical regression analyses.

The regression equation for Step 1, with only identity commitment as the predictor variable, was significant. When identity commitment was controlled, the diffuse identity style continued to make a unique negative contribution to the prediction of intimacy balance, whereas only the informational identity style made a unique positive contribution to the prediction of intimacy balance when added on Step 2.

Research Question 2: Predictive Relationships between Identity Styles and Emotional Intelligence

Correlational relationships. Pearson correlations revealed that, consistent with previous studies, significant correlations were found for all combinations of the emotional intelligence branches (p < .001): $r = .65$ for perceiving and using emotions; $r = .35$ for perceiving and understanding as well as with managing emotions; $r = .46$ for using and understanding emotions and $r = .50$ for using and managing emotions; and, $r = .46$ for understanding and managing emotions. Finally, total emotional intelligence was significantly (p < .001) related to all emotional intelligence branch scores ($r = .79, .84, .68, and .74$ for perceiving, using, understanding and managing emotions, respectively).

Patterns of intercorrelations among emotional intelligence, identity, and intimacy variables were also examined and are presented in Table 4. As hypothesized, total emotional intelligence (EI) was positively related to identity commitment, the informational identity style, and negatively related to the diffuse identity style. Likewise, three of the four emotional intelligence branches (using, understanding, managing) were positively related to
Table 3.

Results of Regression Analyses Predicting Intimacy Balance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Step 1 $R^2$</th>
<th>Step 1 Beta Commitment</th>
<th>Step 2 Beta Commitment</th>
<th>Step 2 Beta Identity Style</th>
<th>Step 2 Increase $R^2$</th>
<th>Step 2 Total $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informational</td>
<td>.09***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.02*</td>
<td>.11***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative</td>
<td>.09***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>.26***</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.09***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>.09***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>.03**</td>
<td>.12***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: $N = 231, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001$
Table 4

Patterns of Correlations Between Emotional Intelligence, Identity Styles and Intimacy Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total EI</th>
<th>Perceiving Emotions</th>
<th>Using Emotions</th>
<th>Understanding Emotions</th>
<th>Managing Emotions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identity Commitment</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.33**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational Style</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative Style</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffuse Style</td>
<td>-.43**</td>
<td>-.28*</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>-.29*</td>
<td>-.42**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intimacy measures

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intimacy IPB</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludus</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storge</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragma</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mania</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agape</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOS romantic</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOS friend</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOS family</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: N = 144; * p < .01; ** p < .001
commitment, two of the four branches (understanding, managing) were positively related to
the informational identity style, and all four of the emotional intelligence branch scores were
negatively related to the diffuse identity style; however, neither total EI nor any of the four
branches were related to the normative identity style. Finally, total EI, along with two branch
scores (using and managing) were also correlated with intimacy balance.

Research Question 3: Is the Relationship between Identity Style and Intimacy Balance
Mediated by Emotional Intelligence?

Structural equation modeling. SEM procedures were used to examine support for the
hypothesized path model examining whether emotional intelligence mediated the relationship
between identity styles and intimacy balance. To examine this hypothesis, a full model that
included both direct and indirect predictive pathways from identity styles to both emotional
intelligence and intimacy was tested. As displayed in Figure 1, in the full hypothesized model
the three identity styles directly predicted intimacy and indirectly predicted intimacy via
emotional intelligence. If emotional intelligence fully mediates the relationship between
identity style and intimacy, then the direct pathways to intimacy balance will not be
significant. If emotional intelligence partially mediates the relationship between identity style
and intimacy, then both the direct and indirect pathways to intimacy will be significant.

The SEM analyses were conducted using maximum likelihood estimation via Amos
16.0 software. The sample size ($N = 144$) was deemed appropriate for assessing the
hypothetical model given the guideline specified by Kline (2005) that the number of cases to
free parameters be no less than a 5:1 ratio. Several fit indices were examined to determine
whether the predicted model could be considered as a reasonable approximation: (1) an
Figure 1. Hypothetical path model of the predictive relationships between the three identity styles, emotional intelligence, and intimacy balance.
adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) within the parameters of .9 and unity; (2) a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) with a value of .08 or lower; and, (3) a non-significant chi-square statistic (Byrne, 2001; Kline, 2005). Finally, the significance levels of the standardized coefficients for each path were evaluated at an alpha level of .05.

The SEM results indicated that the full model was not supported (AGFI = .89, RMSEA = .11). Several of the hypothesized path coefficients were significant: informational style to emotional intelligence ($\beta = .19$); informational style to intimacy ($\beta = .22$); normative style to intimacy ($\beta = .27$); and, diffuse style to emotional intelligence ($\beta = -.38$). However, the remaining paths were not significant: normative style to emotional intelligence ($\beta = -.01$); diffuse style to intimacy ($\beta = .14$); and, emotional intelligence to intimacy ($\beta = .16$). Thus, an alternative trimmed model was subsequently tested by removing all of the nonsignificant pathways accept the link between emotional intelligence and intimacy. Because this link was crucial for testing mediation, and because that pathway coefficient was marginally significant ($p = .06$), it was not trimmed from subsequent model testing.

When the trimmed model was analyzed, all pathway coefficients were significant (see Figure 2), and the fit indices indicated a reasonable fit with an AGFI of .92 and chi-square of 10.78 ($p = .056$). The RMSEA indicated marginal fit with an index of .089. Thus, the results of the SEM procedures indicated that the best fitting model was the one depicted in Figure 2 in which the direct links between the informational and normative style and intimacy balance were retained, as well as the indirect links between the informational and diffuse styles to intimacy via emotional intelligence. These results confirm the hypothesis that emotional intelligence mediates the relationships between identity styles and intimacy, but only for the informational style (partial mediation) and diffuse style (full mediation).
Figure 2. Path diagram of the predictive relationships between the informational identity style, emotional intelligence, and intimacy balance, including the standardized path coefficients. Note: * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this thesis was to systematically examine the predictive links between individual differences in identity styles and aspects of intimacy by focusing on three related research questions: (1) Do the three identity styles predict different patterns of intimacy?; (2) Do the three identity styles differentially predict aspects of emotional intelligence?; and, (3) Is the predictive link between identity styles and intimacy meditated by emotional intelligence? It was hypothesized that the three identity styles would be related to different patterns of intimacy, and the link between the identity styles and intimacy would be mediated by emotional intelligence. For the most part, these hypotheses were supported. Detailed discussion of the findings is presented below.

Research Question 1: Predictive Relationships between Identity Styles and Intimacy

Overall, hypotheses for types of love styles and inclusion of other in self were at least partially supported for the normative and diffuse identity styles, but not for the informational style. However, support was garnered for hypotheses regarding intimacy balance for all identity styles.

Love attitudes. The informational identity style was expected to be positively related to Eros (passionate love) and Agape (altruistic love) love attitudes. The normative identity style was expected to positively predict Eros (passionate love), Pragma (practical love) and Storge (friendship love) love attitudes. Finally, it was expected that the diffuse identity style would positively predict the Mania (possessive, dependent love) and Ludus (game-playing love) love styles.
Hypotheses for the informational style were not supported, as the informational style was unrelated to Eros or Agape love styles as was expected; however, identity commitment was related to the Eros love style. Nevertheless, some of the hypotheses for the normative and diffuse styles were supported. The normative style was positively related to Pragma, as hypothesized; but it was unrelated to Eros and Storge. The unexpected finding was that the normative style, rather than the diffuse style, was positively related to the Mania love attitude. Finally, the diffuse style was positively related to Ludus, as hypothesized.

The finding that the diffuse style was related to the Ludus love style supports Erikson’s (1968) assertion that individuals in a state of identity diffusion may be ‘players,’ moving from one relationship to the next with no sense of commitment. However, the diffuse style was unrelated to Mania, and instead, the normative style was unexpectedly related to this love attitude. It is possible that the obsessive, dependent love characterizing the Mania love style requires a blind commitment to another person – a commitment that individuals who use the diffuse style are unwilling to make. The use of a normative style, on the other hand, may promote such possessive, devoted love, given the willingness of individuals who use this style to make strong, inflexible, emotionally based commitments (Berzonsky, 2003).

The relationship between the normative style and Pragma (practical love) can be understood in terms of their reliance on social norms and standards even in matters of love. Marcia (2002) suggested that foreclosed individuals would likely make practical choices in love, and choose significant others whom they deemed to be “suitable” for them. Given the relation between the normative identity style and the foreclosed identity status, the present results support Marcia’s prediction. Normative individuals appear to display what Erikson
(1968) referred to as 'stereotyped' relationships, lacking in warmth, closeness, and true intimacy.

*Inclusion of other in self.* It was hypothesized that the informational identity style would be positively related, and the diffuse style negatively related, to the inclusion of other in self (IOS) model of closeness, whereas the normative style was not expected to be related to a self-expanded form of intimacy. The hypothesis for the informational style was not supported. The informational style was unrelated to any of the IOS scales. However, the hypotheses regarding the diffuse and normative styles were supported; the use of a diffuse identity style was negatively related, and the normative style was unrelated, to IOS for romantic partner. Again, there was an unexpected finding for the normative style in that this style was positively correlated with IOS for family member.

Possible explanations can be proposed for the lack of support for the hypothesized relationship between the informational identity style and IOS for romantic partner by focusing on the unique characteristics associated with the use of an informational identity style and the nature of the IOS measure. The informational style is associated with self-reflectiveness, introspectiveness, and an emphasis on personal identity or heightened self-focus (Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992; Vleioras & Bosma, 2005a). Individuals who prefer to use an information-oriented approach to identity formation possess an autonomous orientation towards the self; they are motivated to pursue autonomy, rather than being motivated by an interpersonal self-determinism like normative individuals (Soenens, Berzonsky, Vansteenkiste, Beyers, & Goossens, 2005). Thus, given that the measure of IOS for romantic partner assesses a reciprocal inclusion of a specific significant (romantic) other in the self suggests that young adults who use an informational identity style are simply more
self-focused and value autonomy and independence above the reciprocal sharing of a mutual identity. In other words, informational individuals may be more 'single-minded' in terms of their pursuit of independent personal growth. This supposition can be supported by research showing that the informational style is the only style that positively predicts self-actualization and self-transcendence (Beaumont, 2007). Of course, in contrast, the impersonal causality orientation of diffuse individuals (Soenens et al., 2005) may account for the negative association with the IOS (romantic) measure.

The normative identity style, on the other hand, was related to characteristic styles of love indicative of a more stereotyped forms of intimacy; thus, the fact that this style was unrelated to the IOS for romantic partner may be further indication of an inability to truly 'open up' and share an intimate romantic connection with another. However, the fact that the normative style was positively related to IOS for family member could reflect the fact that their identities are formed through the adoption and internalization of the prescriptions and values of significant others, usually family members (Berzonsky, 2008; Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000). For the normative style user, the sense of self is based in a social identity (Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992), and this may account for why their sense of identity can include other family members. In fact, Mathies and Adams (2004) found that degree of family cohesion positively predicted only the normative style. However, it is important to note that this parent influence is not simply authoritarian. It is the combination of authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles that predicts the young adults' use of a normative identity style (Berzonsky, 2004). Thus, it is likely that the opinions and influences of parents simply matter to normative individuals.
The idea of “mattering” proposed by Marshall (2001; Mak and Marshall, 2004) is conceptually similar to IOS model of closeness. Marshall proposed that within relationships an individual is driven to connect with others, as well as to determine the relevance of the self in the eyes of significant others. The concept of mattering appears similar to that of inclusion of other in self, as both may share the underlying assumption that individuals are motivated by self-expansion to connect with others and the desire not to drift through life unnoticed (Mak & Marshall, 2004). However, the measure of mattering in intimate relationships developed by Mak and Marshall measures one’s appraisal of his or her significance to another person and includes the tendency for individuals to seek clarification of their self-conceptions. Thus, the construct of mattering in relationships may be better suited to assess Erikson’s supposition that for younger individuals who are still dealing with identity issues, intimacy primarily consists of a process of reflecting and clarifying one’s identity. Future research is needed in order to determine if this is indeed the case.

*Intimacy balance.* Although the findings did not support all of the hypotheses regarding the love styles and IOS scales, all of the identity styles were significantly related to intimacy balance in the expected directions. That is, as hypothesized, both the informational and normative styles were positively related to intimacy balance, but the diffuse style was negatively related to intimacy balance.

Results of the regression analyses further revealed that the informational style continued to positively predict intimacy balance over-and-above the influence of identity commitment. In contrast, the normative style no longer predicted intimacy balance when commitment was controlled, suggesting that the simple correlation found between the normative style and intimacy balance is due to the confounding influence of identity.
commitment. Finally, the diffuse style continued to negatively predict intimacy balance when identity commitment was controlled.

Previous authors have hypothesized that the diffuse identity style is related to low levels of adjustment due to a lack of identity commitment (e.g., Vleioras & Bosma, 2005a). Yet, in the present study, the diffuse identity style continued to negatively predict low intimacy balance beyond its inverse relationship with identity commitment. This finding is consistent with the results of more recent research on identity styles in which the diffuse style continued to negatively predict both proactive coping and self-reported emotional intelligence beyond having low commitment (Seaton & Beaumont, in press). It may be that other dispositional aspects of the diffuse processing style account for the relationship with negative adjustment. For example, in addition to predicting low commitment, this style is positively associated with neuroticism and the use of more avoidant coping strategies, and negatively associated with personal expressiveness, self-awareness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and empathy (e.g., Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992; Dollinger, 1995; Soenens et al., 2005).

Likewise, as the normative and information-oriented identity styles are both associated with forming firm commitment to one’s identity, commitment has been theorized to account for the relationship between these two styles and positive outcomes (e.g., Vleioras & Bosma, 2005a). In terms of intimacy, identity commitment may result in a certain degree of personal stability and facilitate personal relationships or interpersonal commitments. After all, it is easier to maintain relationships when committed values are shared. In Erikson’s theory, the developmental task of identity achievement precedes that of intimacy, or the
capacity to form committed and intimate relationships. Thus, having a committed identity and value system should aid in the formation of relationships.

The existing research examining the link between identity styles and intimacy, however, suggests a unique pattern associated with the informational style. First, Berzonsky and Kuk (2005) found that undergraduate students who used an informational identity style were better adjusted to university with respect to the development of intimate connections with others. Similarly, consistent with the present findings, Beaumont and Pratt (2007) found that although both the informational and normative styles positively predicted intimacy balance, within a path model that included identity and generativity balance, in addition to intimacy balance, only the informational style was found to have a direct positive link with intimacy.

The present finding that the informational style predicted intimacy balance over-and-above the positive influence of identity commitment, whereas the normative style did not, highlights the importance of the unique characteristics of the informational style in predicting aspects of psychosocial balance. The findings in the present study are also consistent with previous findings indicating that the informational identity style is uniquely associated with curiosity/exploration and proactive coping (Seaton & Beaumont, in press), mature defense mechanisms (Seaton & Beaumont, 2008), positive growth (Vleioras & Bosma, 2005a), life management (Berzonsky & Kuk, 2005), spirituality (Beaumont, Scammell, & Pratt, 2008), and personal wisdom, meaning, and happiness (Beaumont, 2007). Overall, these findings suggest that the personality and cognitive characteristics underlying the informational identity style may provide a basis for a different type of adjustment than does the normative
style. The present findings suggest that this more mature or positive adjustment includes intimacy balance, but is not particularly predictive of different forms of intimacy/love.

Research Question 2: Predictive Relationships between Identity Styles and Emotional Intelligence

The informational identity style was expected to positively predict total emotional intelligence, as well as all four branches of emotional intelligence, whereas the normative style was expected to be positively related to the perceiving and managing branches of emotional intelligence. In contrast, the diffuse style was expected to negatively predict all emotional intelligence scores.

Only partial support was garnered for hypotheses regarding the informational style, as the informational style was positively related to total emotional intelligence, understanding emotions, and managing emotions, but contrary to predictions, the informational style was unrelated to the using and perceiving branches of emotional intelligence. No support was found for the predictions for the normative style. That is, the normative style was unrelated to any aspects of emotional intelligence. Finally, the hypothesis regarding the diffuse style were supported; the use of diffuse style was inversely related to all aspects of emotional intelligence.

The present finding that the diffuse identity style was negatively related to emotional intelligence fits with the literature suggesting that the use of a diffuse style is related to maladaptive decisional strategies, such as buck-passing and procrastination, as well as a plethora of negative outcomes, including debilitating anxiety, conduct disorder, and low levels of academic achievement (Adams et al., 2001; Boyd et al., 2003; Berzonsky, 1989;
It is possible that the negative relationship between the diffuse identity style and emotional intelligence is contributing to some of the adjustment problems observed in individuals who use this style; however, future research is required to determine the extent to which that may be the case.

The finding that only the informational identity style positively predicted overall emotional intelligence also fits with previous literature that informational individuals have the highest levels of emotional autonomy of the three identity styles (Berzonsky & Kuk, 2005), and again highlights the importance of an informational identity style for predicting socio-emotional adjustment. The information-oriented style can be considered as providing the greatest potential for emotional intelligence, given the balanced use of both assimilation and accommodation that characterizes this style. The normative identity style, on the other hand, is predominately associated with the use of assimilation, reflecting an inability or unwillingness to question aspects of the self that are challenged. These individuals can generally be seen to possess an unwillingness to explore and/or express the emotions necessary to “figure out” and self-explore identity issues.

The finding that the normative identity style was unrelated to emotional intelligence is inconsistent with previous research in which the normative style was positively related to emotional intelligence (Seaton & Beaumont, in press). One possible explanation for the lack of difference found between the informational and normative identity styles in that study is that the measure of emotional intelligence employed, the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Inventory, is a self-report measure and is considered a mixed-model measure, meaning it includes not only properties of emotional intelligence, but also characteristics such as personality traits, virtues or aspects of well-being and success assumed to accompany
emotional intelligence (Mayer et al., 2000). As both of the committed identity styles (informational and normative) predict well-being, it is possible that the use of a measure of emotional intelligence that includes aspects of well-being may have confounded true differences between these two styles in terms of emotional intelligence. Another possible explanation is that because of a greater focus on social norms and expectations, individuals who prefer to use the normative style reported greater emotional intelligence than was actually the case due to a self-presentation bias, whereas the use of an ability measure in the present study eliminated any potential socially desirable responding.

Research Question 3: Is the Relationship between Identity Style and Intimacy Balance Mediated by Emotional Intelligence?

Along with being differentially related to each of the three identity styles, emotional intelligence (along with the using and managing emotions branch scores) was found to be correlated with intimacy balance. It was hypothesized that emotional intelligence would mediate the link between the identity styles and intimacy balance. When the identity styles, emotional intelligence, and intimacy were considered together in the SEM analyses, partial support was found for the hypothesized model. Specifically, support was found for the hypothesized path model in which the diffuse style negatively predicted emotional intelligence, which in turn, predicted intimacy balance. The results also indicated that the informational style directly predicted intimacy, as well as indirectly predicted intimacy via emotional intelligence. Thus, the mediation model was partially supported for the informational identity style, as the direct link between the informational style and intimacy remained significant after the entry of the indirect link via emotional intelligence. Finally, the mediation model was not supported for the normative identity style, as the link between this
style and emotional intelligence was not significant, and the direct link between the 
normative style and intimacy remained significant in the final model.

The path model findings suggest that the use of a diffuse identity style hinders 
emotional intelligence, which in turn, leads to lower levels of intimacy balance. Emotional 
intelligence consists of the ability to think clearly about and reason with emotions, as well as 
to perceive and manage emotions in the self and others (Mayer et al., 2002). It appears that 
the low ability of diffuse individuals to perceive and manage emotions in self and others is 
directly impacting the quality of their interpersonal relationships in terms of intimacy 
balance.

The differential findings between the informational and normative styles within the 
path model provide further evidence that these two styles may predict intimacy balance via 
different processes. Although the normative identity style was directly related to intimacy, it 
was unrelated to emotional intelligence. The relative inflexibility of normative style may be 
leading to lower overall levels of emotional intelligence, and the relative lack of emotional 
skills suggests that the normative style might be characteristic of a relative immature or 
stereotyped type of intimacy as suggested by Marcia (2002). It is also clear that the intimacy 
balance associated with the use of a normative style is primarily accounted for by a firm, yet 
inflexible, identity commitment (recall the regression results in which the normative style did 
that normative individuals form premature identity commitments that are emotional in nature, 
and thus cognitively nonrational and automatic. In other words, although he claims that the 
identity commitments of normative individuals are emotional in nature, they are not 
cognitively skilled because they are unexamined. Following from Mayer et al.’s (2000)
conceptualization of emotional intelligence as largely a cognitive capacity, the present findings add to the literature by suggesting that the commitments of normative individuals are in fact emotionally unskilled. Thus, the positive link between the normative style and intimacy is based on identity commitments that are not based in the cognitive skills underlying emotional intelligence.

Individuals who use the informational identity style, on the other hand, may be more balanced in terms of the emotional and cognitive elements of intimacy given the direct link to intimacy as well as the indirect link through emotional intelligence. This supposition can be supported by Berzonsky’s (1988, 1990, 2003) theory that the explorative appraisal processes that underlie the identity commitments of information-oriented individuals affords depth and stability necessary for integrated and adaptive functioning. Thus, it may be that for the information-oriented individual, the processing of interpersonal concerns involves the cognitive abilities that form a basis for emotional intelligence. In other words, the primary difference between the two highly committed identities may be in terms of the skills employed to accomplish psychosocial balance; information-oriented individuals may use emotional intelligence to accomplish the task of intimacy balance, whereas normative individuals may accomplish intimacy balance based solely on having a firm commitment to a sense of self.

**Gender Differences**

Although this research was focused primarily on delineating the complex relationships between intimacy, emotional intelligence, and the three identity styles, the
importance of gender differences in research on identity and intimacy warrants mention. In the present study, few gender differences were found; women reported significantly higher levels of intimacy balance, as well as lower Ludus love attitudes than men, consistent with previous research using both the seven item and four item versions of the LAS (see Hendrick, Hendrick, & Dicke, 1998 for a summary).

The fact that no gender differences emerged on the measure of emotional intelligence is contrary to the findings of Mayer et al. (2002), as these authors reported that gender differences exist in normal populations. In particular, women have been found to score higher on all scales of the emotional intelligence measure; however, gender differences on the MSCEIT are typically small, and the small sample size of men completing the measure in the present study may have contributed to the null-finding, as the mean scores for women were higher than those of the men on all of the emotional intelligence scales.

Some researchers have suggested that identity formation and the development of intimate connections with others are overlapping stages/processes (e.g., Montgomery, 2005), and that for women especially, the identity formation may be grounded in the context of intimate relationships (e.g., Josselson, 1996; Markstrom & Kalmanir, 2001). Although in the present study few gender differences were found, the sample consisted of university students. Young adults attending university may be more likely to be affluent, and afforded an extended opportunity for identity exploration, at least in terms of education and career choices, regardless of gender. It is possible that greater gender differences in the relationship between identity and intimacy exist in the general population.
Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Although this research represented an initial attempt to assess differences in performance-based emotional processing associated with the identity styles, some possible limitations to this study require mention. First, the single measurement time design did not allow for the assessment of whether identity leads to intimacy; the present results only indicate that the two developmental tasks are correlated. Longitudinal research is required in order to evaluate the complex relationships between identity formation and the development of intimate connections with others across early adulthood. Likewise, a narrative research approach may be useful in deciphering whether individual differences exist in the degree of independence or autonomy of one’s identity from their intimate relationships, and whether individuals can mutually share overlapping selves without the loss of unique identity, as suggested by the IOS theory.

The ability-based measure of emotional intelligence used in this research was a small step towards including measures other than self-report when delineating the patterns of adjustment associated with the identity styles. The inconsistent findings using this ability measure with those of the self-report measure for the normative identity style along with the potential suggestion that the normative style may be more highly related to self-presentational biases than either of the other two styles, provides further evidence that researchers should continue to investigate the differences between the identity styles while taking into consideration the drawbacks of self-report methodologies. The use of alternate measures of intimacy from those included here would also be valuable, such as longitudinal research evaluating relationship outcomes, and research incorporating the views and beliefs of both partners in a relationship.
Conclusions

The results of this study provide an important addition to the literature on social-cognitive identity processing as it represents an initial attempt to delineate the complex relationships between the informational, normative, and diffuse-avoidant identity processing styles, performance-based emotional processing, and intimacy, as well as to address the issue of whether the predictive link between identity and intimacy is mediated by emotional intelligence. The results revealed the importance of the identity styles and identity commitment in the prediction of intimacy. In terms of emotional processing, the pattern of results indicated that of the three identity styles, only the informational style was positively associated with emotional intelligence, highlighting the importance of an informational identity style for predicting adjustment. Finally, emotional intelligence was found to mediate the predictive link between identity and intimacy for the informational and diffuse styles. In conclusion, this research adds to the literature by providing evidence regarding the nature of interpersonal processing related to different styles of identity exploration and commitment.
REFERENCES


Appendix A

Part I

Survey Introduction
This study consists of an online survey, which you may now participate in. You will receive credit immediately upon completion of the survey. The survey consists of a number of likert scale questions, and may be divided into a number of sections. You must complete all sections in one sitting, as you are not allowed to resume at another time from where you left off. While you are participating, your responses will be stored in a temporary holding area as you move through the sections, but they will not be permanently saved until you complete all sections and you are given a chance to review your responses.

ABOUT THE STUDY:
This research is being conducted by Cherisse Seaton (MSc Psychology, candidate) and Dr. Sherry Beaumont. The purpose of this study is to determine whether people’s emotional responses and love/intimacy style are related to their personal development in the areas of identity and well-being. You are being asked to complete online surveys regarding your daily life, experiences, and feelings. The questionnaires will take approximately 60 minutes to complete. If you are a student in Psyc 101, 102, 215, 216, or 260 (or HHSC 103) you will be compensated for completion of these questionnaires with 1% extra bonus mark to be added to your final grades as computed by the online participant system.

Your responses to the questions are considered confidential. Only the researchers and Ms Orlando, the system administrator, will have access to the completed data, which will be kept in a locked and secure place for seven years, after which they will be destroyed. Only the online system records that you have participated in this study, so that you will receive course credit; information regarding your specific answers will be kept separately from your identity, preserving anonymity. There are no risks associated with this research. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time without consequence. If you have any questions or concerns, or you wish to obtain a copy of the study results, please contact either Dr. Sherry Beaumont (960-6501 or beaumont@unbc.ca) or Cherisse Seaton (edgar@unbc.ca). Any complaints regarding this study should be directed to the Office of Research, UNBC, 960-5820.

Additionally, some of the scales in the survey address psychological well-being. You may find that thinking about these issues raises thoughts or feelings that you want to discuss further. If you would like to discuss the study or any of the feelings it provoked confidential counseling services are available at UNBC through student services (960-6364; http://www.unbc.ca/counsel/).

PLEASE READ
Informed Consent Form

By clicking “Continue” following this form indicates that I have read the letter about the research project on adult development being conducted by Dr. Sherry Beaumont and
Cherisse Seaton and I consent to participate in this study. Specifically, I confirm that:
(1) I am being asked to complete questionnaires that will take approximately 60 minutes of my time;
(2) I understand that all the information gathered for this project is to be used for research purposes only and will be considered confidential;
(3) I will receive ONE research credit (1% bonus mark) for completion of these questionnaires if in Psyc 101, 102, 215, 216, or 260 or HHSC 103;
(4) There are no risks associated with this research, however, my participation in this research study is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty;
(5) The purposes, procedures, and benefits of this project have been explained to me;
(6) I can request a summary of the study results in May 2008 from either Dr. Sherry Beaumont (960-6501 or beaumont@unbc.ca) or Cherisse Seaton (edgar@unbc.ca);
(7) I have read and understand this informed consent and the attached information letter;
(8) I consent to participating in this study.

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THANK YOU for your participation.

NOTE: You will be automatically logged out after 30 minutes of inactivity, so please keep this in mind when completing lengthy sections.

Would you like to participate in the survey?

YES: Start Survey  No: Decline to Participate

82
Appendix B

Part II

Study Introduction

This study consists of a series of questions presented online, which you may now participate in. You will receive credit upon completion of the questions. The survey consists of a number of likert scale questions, as well as multiple choice questions and may be divided into a number of sections. You must complete all sections in one sitting, as you are not allowed to resume at another time from where you left off; please ensure that you have enough time to complete the study before continuing.

ABOUT THE STUDY:
This research is being conducted by Cherisse Seaton (MSc Psychology, candidate) and Dr. Sherry Beaumont. The purpose of this study is to determine whether people’s tendencies to use different emotional styles are related to their personal development in the areas of identity and intimacy. You are being asked to complete online questions regarding emotions in pictures, thoughts, and experiences. The questionnaires will take approximately 60 minutes to complete (there are 141 questions for you to answer). If you are a student in Psyc 101, 102, 215, 216, or 260 (or HHSC 103) you will be compensated for your time with 1% extra bonus mark to be added to your final grades as computed by the online participant system.

Your responses to the questions are considered confidential. Only the researchers and Ms Orlando, the system administrator, will have access to the completed data, which will be kept in a locked and secure place for seven years, after which they will be destroyed. Only the online system records that you have participated in this study, so that you will receive course credit; information regarding your specific answers will be kept separately from your identity, preserving anonymity. There are no risks associated with this research. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time without consequence. If you have any questions or concerns, or you wish to obtain a copy of the study results, please contact either Dr. Sherry Beaumont (960-6501 or beaumont@unbc.ca) or Cherisse Seaton (edgar@unbc.ca). Any complaints regarding this study should be directed to the Office of Research, UNBC, 960-5820.

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(3) I will receive ONE research credit (1% bonus mark) for completion of this measure if in Psyc 101, 102, 215, 216, or 260 or HHSC 103;
(4) There are no risks associated with this research, however, my participation in this research study is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty;
(5) The purposes, procedures, and benefits of this project have been explained to me;
(6) I can request a summary of the study results in May 2008 from either Dr. Sherry Beaumont (960-6501 or beaumont@unbc.ca) or Cherisse Seaton (edgar@unbc.ca);
(7) I have read and understand this informed consent and the attached information letter;
(8) I consent to participating in this study.

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THANK YOU for your participation.

**NOTE:** You will be automatically logged out after 30 minutes of inactivity, so please keep this in mind when completing lengthy sections.

Would you like to participate in the study?
Appendix C

Demographics Information

The following demographic information is collected to allow us to accurately describe the sample of participants.

1. Age (Numerical value in years please): ______
2. Gender: male_____ female _____
3. Sexuality: Heterosexual______ Homosexual_______ Bisexual_______
   Unsure____
4. Ethnicity:
   _____ Aboriginal
   _____ African-Canadian
   _____ Asian
   _____ Caucasian
   _____ Other
5. Occupation:
   Employed full-time ____ Employed part-time ____ Student ____ Unemployed ____
   Disabled ____ Unemployed ____ Other ____
6. Check your **highest** education level completed:
   Elementary school
   ______ Secondary school
   ______ High School diploma
   ______ Trade or technical school
   ______ Some college
   ______ College diploma
   ______ Some university
   ______ University degree
   _____ Other
7. Current relationship status:
Single, interested in dating ____ Single, not interested in dating ____
Casually dating one or more people ____ Dating one person exclusively ____
Engaged ____
Married/common law ____ Divorced/separated ____ widowed ____

8. Based on Your Current Relationship Status, What is the Length of Time You Have
   Been Single/Dating or in a Committed Relationship:
   Please Respond in Months ____

9. On Average, How Many People do You Date in any Given Year: _____

10. How many times have you been in love?
    
    1 2 3 4
    Never Many times

11. Are you in love now?
    
    Yes____ No____
Appendix D

Identity Style Inventory

INSTRUCTIONS
You will find a number of statements about beliefs, attitudes, and/or ways of dealing with issues. Read each carefully, then use it to describe yourself. Circle the number which indicates the extent to which you think the statement represents you. There are no right or wrong answers. For instance, if the statement is very much like you, circle 5, if it is not like you at all, circle 1. Use the 1 to 5 point scale to indicate the degree to which you think each statement is uncharacteristic (1) or characteristic (5) of yourself.

1. Regarding religious beliefs, I know basically what I believe and don't believe.  1 2 3 4 5
2. I've spent a great deal of time thinking seriously about what I should do with my life.  1 2 3 4 5
3. I'm not really sure what I'm doing in school; I guess things will work themselves out.  1 2 3 4 5
4. I've more-or-less always operated according to the values with which I was bought up.  1 2 3 4 5
5. I've spent a good deal of time reading and talking to others about religious ideas.  1 2 3 4 5
6. When I discuss an issue with someone, I try to assume their point of view and see the problem from their perspective.  1 2 3 4 5
7. I know what I want to do with my future.  1 2 3 4 5
8. It doesn't pay to worry about values in advance; I decide things as they happen.  1 2 3 4 5
9. I'm not really sure what I believe about religion.  1 2 3 4 5
10. I've always had purpose in my life; I was brought up to know what to strive for.  1 2 3 4 5
11. I'm not sure which values I really hold.  1 2 3 4 5
12. I have some consistent political views; I have a definite stand on where the government and country should be headed.  1 2 3 4 5
13. Many times by not concerning myself with personal problems, they work themselves out.  1 2 3 4 5
14. I'm not sure what I want to do in the future.  1 2 3 4 5
15. I'm really into my major; it's the academic area that is right for me.  1 2 3 4 5
16. I've spent a lot of time reading and trying to make some sense out of political issues.  1 2 3 4 5
17. I'm not really thinking about my future now; it's still along way off. 1 2 3 4 5
18. I've spent a lot of time and talked to a lot of people trying to develop a set of values that makes sense. 1 2 3 4 5
19. Regarding religion, I've always known what I believe and don't believe; I never really had any serious doubts. 1 2 3 4 5
20. I'm not sure what I should major in (or change to). 1 2 3 4 5
21. I've known since high school that I was going to college and what I was going to major in. 1 2 3 4 5
22. I have a definite set of values that I use in order to make personal decisions. 1 2 3 4 5
23. I think it's better to have a firm set of beliefs than to be openminded. 1 2 3 4 5
24. When I have to make a decision, I try to wait as long as possible in order to see what will happen. 1 2 3 4 5
25. When I have a personal problem, I try to analyze the situation in order to understand it. 1 2 3 4 5
26. I find it's best to seek out advice from professionals (e.g., clergy, doctors, lawyers) when I have problems. 1 2 3 4 5
27. It's best for me not to take life too seriously; I just try to enjoy it. 1 2 3 4 5
28. I think it's better to have fixed values, than to consider alternative value systems. 1 2 3 4 5
29. I try not to think about or deal with problems as long as I can. 1 2 3 4 5
30. I find that personal problems often turn out to be interesting challenges. 1 2 3 4 5
31. I try to avoid personal situations that will require me to think a lot and deal with them on my own. 1 2 3 4 5
32. Once I know the correct way to handle a problem, I prefer to stick with it. 1 2 3 4 5
33. When I have to make a decision, I like to spend a lot of time thinking about my options. 1 2 3 4 5
34. I prefer to deal with situations where I can rely on social norms and standards. 1 2 3 4 5
35. I like to have the responsibility for handling problems in my life that require me to think on my own. 1 2 3 4 5
36. Sometimes I refuse to believe a problem will happen, and things manage to work themselves out. 1 2 3 4 5
37. When making important decisions I like to have as much information as possible. 1 2 3 4 5
38. When I know a situation is going to cause me stress, I try to avoid it. 1 2 3 4 5
39. To live a complete life, I think people need to get emotionally involved and commit themselves to specific values and ideals. 1 2 3 4 5
40. I find it's best for me to rely on the advice of close friends or relatives when I have a problem. 1 2 3 4 5
Appendix E

Love Attitudes Scale – Short form

INSTRUCTIONS

Listed below are several statements that reflect different attitudes about love. For each statement choose the response beside the statement that indicates how much you agree or disagree with it. The items refer to a specific love relationship. Whenever possible, answer the question with your current partner in mind. If you are not currently dating anyone answer the questions with your most recent partner in mind. If you have never been in love, answer in terms of what you think your responses would most likely be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree with the statement</th>
<th>Disagree with the statement</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>Agree with the statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree With the statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Eros</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>My partner and I have the right physical “chemistry” between us</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I feel that my partner and I were meant for each other</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My partner and I really understand each other</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>My partner fits my ideal standards of physical beauty/handsomeness</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ludus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I believe that what my partner doesn’t know about me won’t hurt him/her</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I have sometimes had to keep my partner from finding out about other partners</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>My partner would get upset if he/she knew some of the things I’ve done with other people</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I enjoy playing the “game of love” with my partner and a number of other partners</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Storge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Our love is the best kind because it grew out of a long friendship</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Our friendship merged gradually into love over time</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Our love is really a deep friendship, not a mysterious, mystical emotion</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Our love relationship is the most satisfying because it developed from a good friendship</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pragma
13. A main consideration in choosing my partner was how he/she would reflect on my family 1 2 3 4 5
14. An important factor in choosing my partner was whether or not he/she would be a good parent 1 2 3 4 5
15. One consideration in choosing my partner was how he/she would reflect on my career 1 2 3 4 5
16. Before getting very involved with my partner, I tried to figure out how compatible his/her hereditary background would be with mine in case we ever had children 1 2 3 4 5

Mania
17. When my partner doesn’t pay attention to me, I feel sick all over 1 2 3 4 5
18. Since I’ve been in love with my partner, I’ve had trouble concentrating on anything else 1 2 3 4 5
19. I cannot relax if I suspect that my partner is with someone else 1 2 3 4 5
20. If my partner ignores me for a while, I sometimes do stupid things to try and get his/her attention back 1 2 3 4 5

Agape
21. I would rather suffer myself than let my partner suffer 1 2 3 4 5
22. I cannot be happy unless I place my partner’s happiness before my own 1 2 3 4 5
23. I am usually willing to sacrifice my own wishes to let my partner achieve his/hers 1 2 3 4 5
24. I would endure all things for the sake of my partner 1 2 3 4 5
Appendix F

Inclusion of Other in the Self (IOS) Scale

1.) INSTRUCTIONS: Please think of your closest, deepest, most involved, and most intimate romantic relationship and choose the letter corresponding to the picture below that best describes your relationship with that person.

![Diagram of overlapping circles representing different levels of inclusion]

The picture that best describes my relationship with a romantic partner is:

a)  

b)  

c)  

d)  

e)  

f)  

g)  

☐ I do not/have not had a romantic relationship and wish to skip this question
2.) INSTRUCTIONS: Please think of your closest, deepest, most involved, and most intimate nonromantic friendship and choose the letter corresponding to the picture below that best describes your relationship with that person.

a) b) c) d) e) f) g)

The picture that best describes my relationship with my friend is:

a) b) c) d) e) f) g)

☐ I do not / have not had a close friendship and wish to skip this question.
3.) INSTRUCTIONS: Please think of your closest family member and choose the letter corresponding to the picture below that best describes your relationship with that person.

a) b) c) d)

The picture that best describes my relationship with my family member is:

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

☐ I do/have not had a close family member and wish to skip this question
Appendix G

Inventory of Psychosocial Balance: Intimacy subscale

INSTRUCTIONS: For each statement please indicate whether you:

1 strongly disagree  2 disagree  3 are uncertain  4 agree  5 strongly agree

There are no right or wrong answers – what you honestly think is the right answer for you.

1. I have experienced some very close friendships
2. There have been at least several people in my life with whom I have developed a very close relationship
3. I often feel lonely even when there are others around me
4. I am a loner
5. There have been times when I felt extremely close to someone I loved.
6. There have been people in my life with whom I have been willing to share my innermost thoughts.
7. There have been several times in my life when I felt left out
8. I have never met anyone whom I really admired
9. I feel inspired when I read about someone who overcame major obstacles and achieved a significant goal
10. When I have an orgasm I lose the sense of who and where I am
11. Overall, my sexual life has been satisfactory
12. It would be difficult for me to have sexual intercourse with a person I did not love
13. When I was a teenager I had a very close friend with whom I shared many experiences
14. I enjoy being with people
15. I can be friendly to strangers
Appendix H

Are you willing to be contacted at a future time to be given the option to participate in further research?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If so, please complete the demographic information below as completely as possible so that the researchers are able to reach you in the future. This information will be kept separate from the completed questionnaires in a locked and secure location on campus (Dr. Beaumont’s research lab).

First Name__________________________
Last Name__________________________

Email address________________________

Telephone number_____________________

Current Address: Street_____________________
          City__________________________
          Province/state________________
          Postal code___________________

Permanent Address:

☐ Check if same as above

          Street__________________________
          City__________________________
          Province/state________________
          Postal code___________________