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Building compassionate futures: The role of parents in teen empowerment and support

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Abstract

The foundation of a child's development is parental support, which shapes a child's values, self-worth, and life skills via the parent-child bond. The main goals of this study are to investigate the type of parental support and how it affects teens' self-concept and the interaction between parents and children. A hypothesis was developed utilizing a qualitative exploratory study approach, and the Parental Support Scale (PSS) was used to gather data. The investigation found that parental support favourably influences the parent-child connection. Furthermore, it has an impact that goes beyond adolescence, molding the people these adolescents will grow into and strengthening their capacity to make significant contributions to society. Building a solid parent-child bond should thus be seen as an essential investment in the future.

Keywords: Parental support, parent-child relationship, teenagers, self-concept.

Introduction

Adolescence is a developmental stage that occurs when a kid experiences changes in their physical, mental, and social well-being as they go from childhood to maturity. A teenager is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a person who is between the ages of 10 and 19 ^[1]. Teens are more prone to pushing the boundaries of their physical, psychological, and social safety at this period of their lives, which may have a major influence on their development and maturation into adulthood ^[2]. As a result, their psychosocial and physical development is particularly delicate and complex during this time. Numerous parental engagement factors, such as warmth, responsiveness, encouragement, and general parental involvement, have been associated with improved teen health outcomes, according to newly published research ^[3].

Parental Support

Children benefit from positive parenting from infancy through maturity. Helping parents raise their kids in a way that improves their results and well-being is the goal of the Child and Family Agency and its partners. Sufficient parental guidance can enhance family harmony and reduce future issues. Parenting support programs have the potential to improve community well-being and promote unity and collaboration. Parental support may also reduce inequality, enhance relationships, enhance education, boost the economy, and protect the environment in addition to helping society make better use of its resources.

Teenagers' perception of their parents' care, approval, and willingness to help them in life determines how supportive they are seen to be. Teens must, at the very least, perceive an emotional support system in which they believe that their parents are concerned about their choices if they are to feel that they are receiving perceived parental support. Therefore, parental support is vital for creating optimism and hope for the future as well as helping teens cope with the issues they encounter during this developmental stage. Adolescents who believe they have a lot of parental support, for instance, have higher self-confidence and control views. Having the best interests of the kid at heart while simultaneously being present, involved, and helpful is what it means to be a supportive parent. It includes:

- Actively encouraging them to do their best with school, their hobbies and interests
- Listening without judgment and seeking to understand their concerns and challenges
- Acknowledging their achievements and supporting them through mistakes and challenges

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- Setting consistent expectations and consequences to help them to feel secure and able to predict outcomes
- Treating them fairly and developing a trusting relationship.

A trustworthy connection between parents and kid is more important for influencing a youngster than how much authority parents provide and how many lectures they give. Although it could seem like they're attempting to push you away, what's really happening is that they're pushing themselves away from their parents in order to make their own decisions in life and forge their own identities as distinct, independent individuals. Their family's love, support, trust, and optimism provide them a sense of safety and security and serve as effective defense against peer pressure, obstacles in life, and setbacks.

Self-Concept of Adolescents

It is best to think of self-concept as a continuum with possible high, medium, and low points. Quantification of self-concept is common in empirical research. Both high and low levels of self-concept may be damaging to a person's emotional health and social interaction, it is vital to consider this when thinking about this. In fact, the optimal degree of self-concept is thought to be represented by the continuum's midway. In interpersonal relationships, those who fall into this range are seen to be more socially dominant. Research indicates that there are notable differences between those who have strong and low self-concepts. Those with high self-esteem prioritize personal growth and development more than those with poor self-esteem. Depression is one of the many negative consequences that are associated with having a low self-esteem.

Rosenberg and Owen (2001) offer the following description of low-concept people based on their empirical study. Individuals with low self-esteem tend to exaggerate the worst parts of events and are more worried about failing. For instance, individuals commonly misunderstand criticism in comments. They are more likely to experience social anxiety and interpersonal uneasiness. People find it hard to interact with people because they are uncomfortable, timid, and can't completely express themselves in social circumstances. Furthermore, depressed individuals usually have pessimistic opinions about other people and social groups.

One of the most important and significant elements determining a child's later mental health is their adolescent self-concept. The relationship between teens' psychological health and supportive parents has been demonstrated in earlier research. In order to better understand this connection, this study will look at the following three aspects of parental support: (1) interest (2) conduct (3) allocation of resources. The goal of psychological well-being is to embrace healthier and more beneficial emotions rather than stressing negative ones.

Relationship between parental support and self-concept

Parental support is defined as the active participation and communication between a parent and their kid as well as the school. This includes observing teenage activities, developing effective communication strategies, and ensuring both quantity and quality of genuine engagement^[4]. While meeting the adolescent's demand for independence, parents should make an effort to have an impact on their kids' life. A child's physical, mental, and social development can be positively or negatively impacted by the kind and quantity of

parental support they get^[5]. Further research on the effects of parental support on teens' health and well-being might provide valuable direction for therapeutic approaches and clinical practice^[6]. The impact of parental support on teenagers' self-concept has been well demonstrated.

Parental traits including "less warmth, more interparental conflict, over-involvement, and aversiveness" have been associated with an increased risk for both teenage depression and anxiety disorders, according to research on the relationship between these traits and these problems^[7]. The parent-child relationship unquestionably has an impact on the child's development into adulthood, even if teens are also heavily impacted by their classmates throughout this time. One negative social experience that might have an impact on teenage development is bullying. Bullying is a violent and menacing behavior that targets many kids and teens in school. Studies show that bullying has a major impact on the development of teenagers since it can lead to issues later in life such as depression, aggression, hyperactivity/inattention, and even cognitive impairment. Fascinatingly, family support was found to be a protective factor for emotional resilience against victimization in a comprehensive review of protective variables that interrupt the cycle of events from bullying at school to internalizing concerns. When compared to peer-to-peer interactions, adolescents reported reduced levels of despair, suicidal thoughts, and loneliness. Additionally, having "warm parents, parents support, and parental attachment" was found to be a significant resilience component that protected against bullying at school.

Parental support is a collection of behaviors that include engaging in ritualistic and purposeful activities with children to help them feel secure, happy, and lead more fulfilled lives. The extent to which teenagers feel and perceive their parents—including how much time they spend with them and whether they believe their parents are listening to them—are important indicators of the perceived amount and caliber of parental engagement. The involvement of parents is beneficial to teens in many ways. Because parents differ in their personalities and ways of behaving, there may be more heterogeneity in the stimuli that children are exposed to as a result of more paternal engagement^[8].

Teenagers' attitudes towards their parents, including how much time they spend with them and whether they believe they are interested in what they have to say, are all important indicators of the perceived level of parental participation. Children who dine and converse with their parents on a regular basis perform better on a variety of well-being markers. On a number of well-being metrics, children who have ritualised meals and chats with their parents perform better^[9]. Therefore, while poor family relationships can worsen the negative effects of deprivation on children's self-concept, good family relationships may prevent further declines in subjective self-concept. Early teenage self-concept and parental participation appear to be directly related in a way that is unrelated to cultural background.

Objective

1. To evaluate the extent of parental support received by teenagers in various domains, including emotional, instrumental, and informational support.
2. To measure the level of self-concept among teenagers, focusing on aspects such as self-esteem, identity, and personal values.
3. To examine the relationship between self-concept and parental support in teenagers, assessing how different

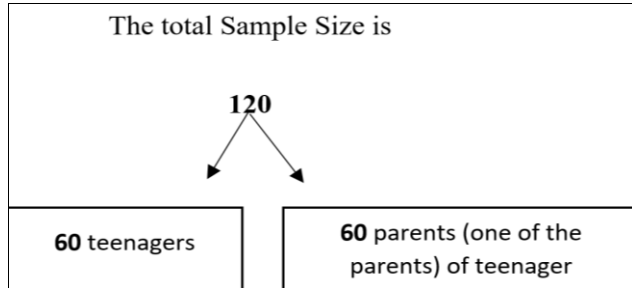
types of parental support influence self-perception and development.

Hypothesis

There will be a difference in the level of parental support and self-concept of teenagers.

Methodology

Participants



Description of the Research Design

In order to get data from people inside certain networks, this study used a snowball sampling approach, which is especially useful when it comes to delicate subjects like self-concept and parental support. The main goal was to investigate the connection between self-concept (dependent variable) and parental support (independent variable).

The idea of parental support encompasses emotional, instrumental, and informational assistance, whereas self-concept is evaluated based on aspects like identity and self-esteem. A systematic questionnaire with established measures like the Parental Support Scale (PSS) was used to gather the data. The data were analyzed using statistical techniques, such as t-tests and correlation analysis, to ascertain the significance of the association between the variables.

Qualitative components were added to the results using open-ended questions and interviews, which gave participants' experiences and perceptions of parental support more depth. The research was enhanced by the use of mixed techniques, which provided a thorough knowledge of the ways in which parental support affects teenagers' self-concept.

Tools

1. Parental support scale by Dr. Shobha Nandwana and Dr. Nimmi Asawa
2. Assessing what kids think about themselves: a guide to adolescent self-concept for out-of-school time program practitioners by Alena M. Hadley, M.S., Elizabeth C. Hair, Ph.D., and Kristin Anderson Moore, Ph.D.

Procedure

The study's goal was to ascertain how supportive parents are of their adolescent kid and how that support affects the youngster's perception of themselves. A list of the parents' addresses was gathered from the school registrations of the relevant schools in order to properly identify the subject for the current study.

Results

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of level of parental support to their teenagers

Frequency (%)	Interest	Behaviour	Resource Provision
High Support	47 (78%)	59 (98%)	49 (81%)
Low Support	13 (21.6%)	1 (1.6%)	11 (18.7%)

The observations are taken from Table 1, where 78% of parents show a high degree of interest in having contact with teachers, being friends with their children, understanding and listening to their sentiments, and being aware of their interests and those of their friends. On the other hand, 98% of parents exhibit good parenting behaviors in the form of childrearing techniques, which stand for consideration, sharing, warmth, acceptance, oversight, rejection, encouragement, and adoration. In terms of giving their adolescent children material, financial, and non-tangible resources like guidance, social interaction, and values, 81% of parents have demonstrated a high degree of support.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of level of self-concept in teenagers

Scores	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	2	3%
High level	50	83%
Normal	8	14%
Low level	0	0%
Very low level	0	0%

The Table is the source of the observations. 2. Only 3% of children have a very high level of self-concept, whereas 83% of children have a high level of self-concept and 14% have a typical level of self-concept among teens. Self-concept, also known as self-evaluation or self-perception, is the culmination of a person's views about their own qualities. Teens' self-concept is a reflection of how they see themselves in the areas (or domains) where they value achievement. It is possible for a teenager to have a poor self-concept in certain areas and a favourable one in others.

According to research, each person has an overall or global self-concept that represents how they view their own value. The causation of an adolescent's self-concept is complicated and changeable. In other words, issues and challenges can contribute to a weaker sense of self, but poor self-esteem can also result in issues. For example, studies have discovered that degrees of self-worth in each of the aforementioned domains are connected with behaviours and accomplishments relevant to success in those areas of development. For example, a strong physical self-concept is linked to greater physical activity, and a high intellectual self-concept is linked to improved academic achievement in teenagers. Positive peer connections and general family satisfaction are two indicators of positive development that have been connected to positive overall self-concepts.

Parental Support to Teenager

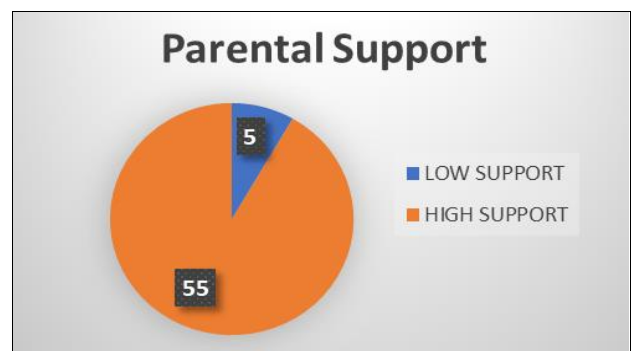


Fig 1: The total level of parental support among teenagers

The above graph shows how supportive parents are of their teenagers. Of the sixty parents, fifty-five are concerned about

their kids' relationships with their schools, their interactions with teachers, their comprehension and receptivity to their feelings, and their knowledge of their friends and hobbies. Parents that practice positive parenting exhibit the following behaviors when raising their children: warmth, acceptance, supervision, rejection, encouragement, affection, help with decision-making, problem-solving, and sharing. In terms of providing them with physical resources like guidance, social interaction, and values in addition to intangible resources like money and material things, parents have shown a high degree of support for their adolescent children.

Self-concept among teenagers

Table 3: Difference in the level of self-concept among teenagers

Source	N (total number)	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation (SD)	T-Value	Tabulated value
Boys	34	99.5	9.4	0.4	1% = 2.58
Girls	20	100.8	11.2		5% = 1.96

The comparison of teenage boys' and girls' self-concept levels is shown in Table 3. The findings show that females (N = 20) have a slightly higher mean score of 100.8 and a standard deviation of 11.2 than boys (N = 34), who have a mean self-concept score of 99.5 with a standard deviation of 9.4. In terms of significance, the computed t-value (0.4) is significantly less than the critical values at the 1% (2.58) and 5% (1.96) levels. We accept the null hypothesis, which states that there is no statistically significant difference in the degree of self-concept between boys and girls, because the t-value does not surpass the tabulated values.

This result suggests that gender does not significantly influence the teens in this sample's self-concept, indicating that both groups have comparable levels of self-perception. The alternative hypothesis was rejected, which emphasizes the likelihood that any variations in self-concept scores that are seen are just the result of chance rather than a real underlying gender difference.

Correlation between the parental support and self-concept

Table 4: Relationship between parental support and self-concept.

Variables	Correlation	DF	P-Value
Parental support	0.03	55	p>0.7

The association between teenage self-concept and parental support is seen in Table 4. These two variables have a p-value of more than 0.7, a degree of freedom (DF) of 55, and a correlation coefficient of 0.03. This implies that while there is a positive association between parental support and self-concept, it is quite modest.

The p-value indicates that the observed link is not statistically significant, even if the correlation is positive and substantially bigger than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Better self-concept among teens may be correlated with greater levels of parental support, according to the data, but this impact is unlikely to be statistically significant due to the tiny correlation and high p-value. In other words, although there is a slight positive tendency between the two variables, the data does not indicate a meaningful or significant association between parental support and self-concept in this specific group.

Conclusion of the study

In this study, the researcher found that teenage self-concept is

greatly influenced by parental support. The formation of a positive and caring self-concept is facilitated by positive parental support; on the other hand, negative or insufficient support may hinder this process. Adolescents may explore their identities and develop a strong, positive self-concept as they make the transition from childhood to adulthood with the help of their loving and supporting families, which provides a solid foundation. It is crucial to understand that not all parental assistance is created equal and that differences exist in terms of its character and quality. For example, highly restrictive or judgmental parenting can have harmful impacts on an adolescent's self-concept, perhaps leading to insecurity or self-doubt. In order to help their teenagers develop resilience and a healthy self-concept, parents must strike a balance between providing advice and support and allowing them the opportunity to become autonomous and independent.

Limitations

According to the literature, all studies have certain limitations. Additionally, the current study identifies the following limitations:

1. **Limited Sample Size:** The study's tiny sample size may have limited how far the results may be applied to the general public.
2. **Age Group Restriction:** Adolescents from a variety of age groups were not included in the study, which may have led to a more thorough knowledge of the connection between self-concept and parental support. Instead, the study only looked at young adults.
3. **Lack of culture Consideration:** Despite the possible influence of cultural variations on parenting styles and the formation of adolescents' self-concepts, the research did not thoroughly examine cultural aspects.
4. **Limited Geographic Scope:** The results may not apply to other towns or areas because the sample may have come from a particular geographic location.

Implications

The results of this study provide important new information about the role that parental support plays in a teen's development. The study highlights the beneficial association between self-concept and parental support, which serves as more evidence of the significance of caring and supportive parenting techniques in promoting adolescents' identity formation and self-esteem. According to these findings, parents who consistently offer their children emotional support, direction, and encouragement aid in the formation of a stronger, more positive self-concept in their teenagers—a critical component of their overall growth and wellbeing. Additionally, by knowing this dynamic, parental education programs may be improved and caregivers can be assisted in creating surroundings that support good psychological development. By promoting open communication and combining support with autonomy, parents may play a vital role in developing their teens into strong, self-assured adults.

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