Predictors of Self-Esteem among Adolescence: The Role of Home Environment

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Abstract- **Adolescent self-esteem is an important marker of psychological well-being and is greatly affected by the home environment. The current study attempted to explore the predictive value of the dimensions of the home environment on the self-esteem of adolescents. A total of 150 adolescents from Kerala were taken for the study. The study used the Home Environment Inventory (Mishra) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. The regression equation was significant, and it accounted for 74.6% of the variation in self-esteem (R^2 = .746). Parental control was identified as the strongest negative predictor, followed by social isolation, deprivation of privileges, permissiveness, punishment, and protectiveness. On the other hand, nurturance was identified as the strongest positive predictor, followed by conformity and rejection. The study highpoints the importance of balanced and culturally sensitive parenting styles in fostering healthy self-esteem in adolescents.**

Keywords: Adolescents; Self-esteem; Home environment

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence represents a critical developmental phase that bridges childhood and adulthood, typically spanning the ages of 10 to 24 years. This period is marked by rapid biological maturation, cognitive growth, and significant psychosocial transitions. Successful adjustment during this stage plays a vital role in shaping long-term psychological well-being. Self-esteem is a fundamental psychological construct during adolescence and refers to an individual's overall evaluation of self-worth and personal value (Rosenberg, 1965). Higher levels of self-esteem are connected with emotional resilience, effective coping strategies, academic confidence, and healthier social relationships (Mann et al., 2022). In contrast, adolescents with low self-esteem are more vulnerable to psychological difficulties such as anxiety, depression, reduced academic self-efficacy, and engagement in maladaptive behaviors (Sowislo & Orth, 2013).

Among the various contextual factors influencing adolescent self-esteem, the home environment occupies a particularly significant position. The family represents the most immediate and influential microsystem in an adolescent's life, shaping emotional development through daily interactions, parenting practices, and relational patterns. The home environment encompasses both material and psychosocial elements, including emotional climate, parental warmth, discipline strategies, communication styles, and levels of autonomy and monitoring. A supportive and emotionally responsive home environment fosters security and positive self-evaluation, whereas environments characterized by excessive control, inconsistency, or emotional neglect may undermine adolescents' self-esteem and psychological adjustment (McKinney & Renk, 2018).

The development of self-esteem is greatly affected by the quality of the home environment, especially during adolescence. There is a growing body of research that points to the importance of family interactions, parenting, and emotional environments in the development of adolescents' perceptions of self-esteem. Early research has shown that family conflict, control, and negative emotional environments are related to lower levels of self-esteem, indicating that poor home conditions are detrimental to positive self-evaluation (Hoxsey, 1990).

Later longitudinal and developmental research further emphasized the long-term impact of family support on the development of self-esteem. Orth and Robins (2019) found that adolescents who grew up in supportive and accepting family environments had more stable and positive self-esteem across all stages of development. These results emphasize the importance of parental acceptance, support, and

emotional availability in the development of healthy self-concepts.

Studies focusing on the specific dimensions of the home environment have shown complex patterns of association with self-esteem in adolescents. Bakhshi and Singh (2017) revealed that dimensions such as nurturance, punishment, rejection, and protectiveness were significantly related to self-esteem in adolescents, showing considerable differences according to gender. Parental warmth and emotional sensitivity were identified as strong predictors of high self-esteem. Johnson and Johnson (2018) found that adolescents who experienced greater warmth from their parents showed significantly higher levels of self-esteem. Likewise, Wang (2020) found that parental warmth was a protective element that reduced the negative impact of family conflict on the self-esteem of adolescents.

The general psychosocial qualities of the home environment have also been shown to be related to academic and emotional functioning. Kaur, Rana, and Kaur (2009) found that adolescents from positive home environments showed not only higher self-concept but also better academic performance, suggesting a holistic relationship between emotional and academic functioning. The importance of family atmosphere has also been recognized in clinical samples. Marqués et al. (2021) found that improved family environment was related to increased self-esteem and decreased psychological symptoms in individuals with early psychosis, underlining the therapeutic potential of family-based interventions.

In the Indian setting, various studies have reiterated the importance of family environment in the development of self-esteem among adolescents. Sharma and Sharma (2015) found that adolescents who rated their family environments as supportive and cohesive had significantly higher self-esteem than those who had negative family dynamics. Likewise, Singh and Srivastava (2018) found that emotional support, open communication, and positive parental attitudes were linked to higher self-esteem among Indian adolescents. These studies highlight the importance of family cohesion, emotional bonding, and interpersonal relationships in Indian families.

The existing literature clearly defines the importance of the home environment in the development of self-esteem in children and adolescents. However, there exist some gaps in the existing literature. Although a vast amount of literature supports the relationship between the home environment and self-esteem, most studies have been conducted among Western populations or on specific aspects like parental warmth and conflict. There is a lack of empirical studies on the Indian context that investigate the various aspects of the home environment simultaneously using indigenous standardized tools. This creates a need for the current study. Furthermore, although indigenous tools like Mishra's Home Environment Scale are available for the assessment, their use in recent empirical studies is limited, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other cultures. Although a number of studies have been conducted on the various aspects of the home environment, fewer studies have been conducted on the use of regression-based models to quantify the predictive power of certain family variables on self-esteem in adolescents.

The current study aims to fill the above-mentioned gaps in the existing literature.

Significance of the Study

The importance of the current study lies in the fact that it investigates the predictive role of the home environment with respect to self-esteem, which is a crucial marker of psychological well-being. Although previous research has already confirmed the link between family environment and self-esteem, there is a need for more studies to be conducted on the predictive role of various aspects of the home environment on self-esteem, especially in the Indian scenario.

Through the identification of crucial predictors in the family, the current study aims to make a contribution to the field of developmental psychology by providing cultural evidence for the development of interventions that target families in order to improve the well-being of adolescents. The current study can be of importance to parents, teachers, and mental health professionals, as the identification of crucial predictors in the home environment can help in the development of interventions that target families in order to improve the self-esteem of adolescents.

Operational Definitions

Operational definitions are very important in research as they enable the researcher to give specific meanings to the concepts under study. In

this study, there are three concepts that have been operationally defined.

Home Environment: Refers to the psychological and social conditions of the family as perceived by the adolescent. The 10 dimensions measured in the present study are:

A-Control: Measures parental authority, monitoring, discipline, and regulations in the home.

B-Protectiveness: Assesses efforts to shield children from harm, danger, and negative influences.

C-Punishment: Evaluates severity, frequency, and appropriateness of disciplinary measures.

D-Conformity: Gauges emphasis on family adherence to customs, expectations, and societal norms.

E-Social Isolation: Examines restrictions on social interactions, family cohesion, and external connections.

F-Reward: Measures use of incentives, praise, and positive reinforcement for good behavior.

G-Deprivation of Privileges: Assesses withdrawal of privileges (e.g., technology, recreation) as discipline.

H-Nurturance: Evaluates emotional support, warmth, affection, and empathy from caregivers.

I-Rejection: Measures emotional distance, neglect, hostility, and feelings of abandonment.

J-Permissiveness: Gauges leniency, freedom, and allowance for self-governance in the home.

Self-Esteem: is an individual's overall evaluation of self-worth.

Adolescence: Refers to the developmental period between 10 and 19 years of age, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO).

METHOD

Objective of the Study

To examine the predictive capacity of various dimensions of the home environment on the self-esteem of adolescents.

Hypothesis

The dimensions of the home environment will predict self-esteem among adolescents.

Participants

The participant pool for this study included 150 adolescents from various educational institutions in Kerala. In terms of gender, 60 (40.0%) boys and 90 (60.0%) girls participated. The class composition included 68 high school students (45.3%) and 82 higher secondary students (54.7%). The types of schools included 52 from private schools (34.7%), 48 from aided schools (32.0%), and 50 from government schools (33.3%). The types of family structures included 97 nuclear families (64.7%) and 53 joint families (35.3%).

Instruments

Self-Esteem Scale: Self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1965), a popular global self-esteem scale. The scale has 10 items that capture both positive and negative attitudes towards the self. The negatively phrased items were reversed before analysis, and the total score indicates higher self-esteem. The RSES has been found to have satisfactory reliability and validity in various cultures, including Indian samples. The current study found the scale to have acceptable internal consistency.

Home Environment Inventory: The home environment was measured using the Home Environment Inventory (HEI) developed by Mishra (1989). The inventory comprises 100 items designed to assess ten dimensions of the psychosocial home environment. Scores for each dimension were computed separately, with higher scores reflecting greater presence of the respective home environment characteristic. The HEI has been extensively used in Indian research and has demonstrated adequate psychometric properties. In the current study, the instrument exhibited satisfactory reliability across its dimensions.

Procedure for data collection and data analysis

Data from the Home Environment Inventory (Mishra) and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were collected via simple random sampling from consenting adolescents across Kerala educational institutions, with privacy assured. Responses were checked for completeness, cleaned, and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques like Normality checks and Multiple linear regression.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Preliminary testing of assumptions showed that the assumption of normality was met; hence, parametric linear regression analysis was suitable for the study. The Enter method was used to simultaneously regress all 10 dimensions of the Home Environment Inventory (HEI) (A-Control, B-Protectiveness, C-Punishment, D-Conformity, E-Social Isolation, F-Reward, G-Deprivation of privileges, H-Nurturance, I-Rejection, and J-Permissiveness) to predict Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale scores among 150 Kerala adolescents.

The regression equation is a significant predictor of self-esteem from the dimensions of the home environment, with excellent fit (R = .864, R^2 = .746, Adjusted R^2 = .727, and Standard Error of the Estimate = .778). The value of R = .864 shows that there is a 86.4% shared variance between the predictors (all 10 HEI dimensions: A-Control through J-Permissiveness) and self-esteem, which is a very good measure of overall prediction. R^2 = .746 shows that the model explains 74.6% of the variance in self-esteem, which is a very good measure for

The ANOVA results confirm the overall significance of the regression model predicting self-esteem (SE) from home environment dimensions. The model explains significant variance ($F_{(10, 139)}$ = 40.778, p < .001), with regression SS = 246.626 (74.6% of total SS = 330.693) versus residual SS = 84.067. This strong omnibus test justifies examining individual predictors in the coefficients table. Highly significant results (p = .000) indicate that collectively, the 10 HEI dimensions substantially predict adolescent self-esteem beyond chance in this Kerala sample.

The table 1 presents Regression Coefficients shows how the Home Environment Dimensions Predicting Self-Esteem

Table 1:Regression Coefficients: Home Environment Dimensions Predicting Self-Esteem

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	18.915	3.339		5.664	.000
	A-Control	-.552	.050	-.975	-11.128	.000
	B-Protectiveness	-.123	.062	-.294	-2.000	.047
	C-Punishment	-.236	.058	-.557	-4.062	.000
	D-Conformity,	.163	.055	.398	2.983	.003
	E-Social Isolation	.563	.075	1.434	7.546	.000
	F-Reward	-.055	.041	-.125	-1.367	.174
	G-Deprivation of privileges	-.337	.065	-.778	-5.214	.000
	H-Nurturance	.470	.105	.604	4.475	.000
	I-Rejection	.585	.125	.458	4.673	.000
	J-Permissiveness	-.305	.087	-.676	-3.519	.001

Multiple regression analysis showed that various dimensions of parenting were significant predictors of self-esteem in adolescents. Among the predictors, parental control was found to be the strongest negative predictor of self-esteem. Overmonitoring, strict rules, and overcontrolling parenting seem to affect the autonomy and competence of adolescents, thereby affecting their self-esteem. This is in line with the views of Baumrind (1966, 1991), who proposed that authoritarian parenting, characterized by high control and low autonomy support, is harmful to the psychosocial development of children. Overly directive parenting practices have been found to be negatively related to self-esteem and psychological adjustment in adolescents in India (Misra & Giri, 2008; Rao, 2010). In collectivist cultures, parental involvement is valued, but high control can be considered intrusive, especially during adolescence when the need for autonomy increases.

Punishment and loss of privileges were also significant predictors of lower self-esteem, suggesting that fear-based and conditional styles of punishment could undermine adolescents' feelings of self-worth. These results are consistent with Gershoff's (2002) meta-analytic findings that showed the negative psychological effects of harsh forms of punishment. In the Indian context, such approaches could convey a message of conditional acceptance, causing adolescents to entertain negative self-appraisals. Conversely, permissiveness was found to be a negative predictor, suggesting that unstructured or disorganized parenting could result in adolescents being deprived of the necessary boundaries for developing self-regulation and

feelings of psychological security. This finding is consistent with Baumrind's (1991) claim that permissive parenting is linked to poor developmental outcomes and challenges the view that complete autonomy is necessary without the need for proper guidance.

Protectiveness had a small but significant negative relationship with self-esteem, implying that overprotectiveness can hamper adolescents' chances of mastering autonomous coping strategies and self-efficacy. This result is in line with previous research by Thomasgard et al. (1995) and subsequent research showing that overprotectiveness can encourage dependency and low self-confidence, especially in adolescence when mastery experiences are essential for self-esteem enhancement.

On the other hand, nurturance was found to be the strongest positive predictor of self-esteem, emphasizing the pivotal importance of parental warmth, emotional support, and acceptance in promoting positive self-appraisals. This result is greatly validated by attachment theory (Bowlby, 1988) and cross-cultural findings showing that parental warmth is associated with high self-esteem across all life spans (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012). In the Indian cultural setting, nurturance can be conceived as an emotional protective factor that shields adolescents from academic and social pressures.

Conformity was also found to have a positive link with self-esteem, which represents the adaptive function of conformity to family norms in collectivist cultural contexts. Contrary to individualist cultural contexts in which conformity can be considered a negative phenomenon, family conformity in Indian society can increase adolescents' feelings of belongingness, identity integration, and social acceptance. This result is consistent with the conceptualization of the interdependent self proposed by Markus and Kitayama (1991) and is supported by Indian studies that have underscored the psychological significance of familial interconnectness (Sethi & Allen, 2005; Tripathi & Sinha, 2014).

Notably, some of the results went against the expected norms. Rejection and isolation were identified as positive predictors of self-esteem, which requires careful consideration. It is possible that the perceived emotional distance or lack of social interaction in the organized family settings may promote early autonomy and self-reliance among adolescents. In a competitive academic setting like Kerala, social isolation may limit interactions with negative social comparisons, which may indirectly contribute to self-esteem. These hypotheses are highly speculative and should be viewed in the context of the study's cultural and contextual limitations. Notably, these results do not contradict the existing literature on the negative impact of rejection and isolation on self-esteem but propose that the psychological consequences of these experiences may differ across cultures and family settings.

In general, the results emphasize the importance of a dynamic balance between emotional support and regulatory processes in the home environment in influencing adolescents' self-esteem. Parenting styles that are characterized by warmth, structure, and autonomy support are most likely to be beneficial for the development of healthy self-esteem in adolescents. Overcontrolling, harsh, and unpredictable parenting styles, on the other hand, could be detrimental to the psychological well-being of adolescents.

The aim of the study was to investigate whether the dimensions of the home environment are predictors of self-esteem in adolescents. The results of the multiple regression analysis achieved the aim of the study by indicating that the dimensions of the home environment were significant predictors of self-esteem. As indicated in the hypothesis, the findings supported the hypothesis that the dimensions of the home environment are significant predictors of self-esteem in adolescents. Hence, the hypothesis that the dimensions of the home environment predict self-esteem in adolescents was accepted.

CONCLUSION

The research work focused on the predictive value of parenting dimensions on the self-esteem of adolescents through multiple regression analysis. The findings showed that parental control was the most negative predictor, followed by social isolation, deprivation of privileges, permissiveness, punishment, and protectiveness. Nurturance was identified as the most positive predictor, followed by conformity and rejection. These findings clearly show that parenting has both facilitative and inhibiting effects on the self-esteem of adolescents.

The findings of the study clearly show that the self-esteem of adolescents is influenced by the balance between parental warmth and control. Overregulation and lack of consistency in discipline result in low self-esteem, while nurturance leads to high self-esteem.

Conflict of Interests: The author declared no conflict of interests.

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