

Adolescents' Self-Esteem: Assessment of the Roles of Gender and Parenting Style in Damaturu, Yobe State

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Abstract

This study will assess the roles of Gender and Parenting Style in relation to Adolescents' Self-Esteem in Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria. A healthy level of self-esteem is essential for adolescents' mental health, academic achievement, and interpersonal relationships. However, various factors, including religiosity, gender, and parenting style, significantly influence self-esteem during this formative stage. The study was to identify the combined effects of gender and parenting style on adolescents' self-esteem. A multi stage sampling techniques was employed in this study with the use of structured questionnaire and SPSS for analysis. In which two hundred and eighty (299) respondents drawn from four (4) public and private senior secondary schools (SSS) Students in Damaturu, Yobe state. The schools are: Government Girls' Unity College Damaturu, Government Secondary School Damaturu, Legacy Schools Damaturu and New Foundation Schools Damaturu (70 respondents each). The study findings revealed that parenting style played significant role in adolescents' self-esteem the mean comparisons show that adolescents with authoritative parents showed higher self-esteem than adolescents with permissive parents or authoritative parents. Authoritative parenting is likely to be correlated with other factors unaccounted for such as being well informed about parenting which contributes to building higher self-esteem in children. There was no significant role of gender on self-esteem of adolescents. The study proffer these recommendations that Parents should adopt parenting styles that balance discipline with emotional support, fostering confidence and self-worth in adolescents, the Schools should integrate programs that would promote gender equality and self-esteem building into the curriculum, the Policymakers should develop community-based initiatives to educate parents and guardians on effective parenting techniques and their impact on adolescent development and among others.

Keywords: Adolescents' Self-Esteem, Gender, Parenting Style, Damaturu, Yobe State

Introduction:

Adolescence is a critical developmental phase characterized by rapid physical, emotional, and social changes. During this period, self-esteem one's sense of self-worth and confidence becomes a vital aspect of personal development. A healthy level of self-esteem is essential for adolescents' mental health, academic achievement, and interpersonal relationships. However, various factors, including religiosity, gender, and parenting style, significantly influence self-esteem during this formative stage.

The style parents adopt in training their children may influence their self-esteem by influencing their feelings of acceptance or rejection (Rohner, 2004). Baumrind (1991) observed that each of these parenting styles reflects different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices and behaviours, and a distinct balance of responsiveness and demandingness. Permissive parents are more responsive than they are demanding. They are nontraditional and lenient, allow considerable self-regulation and avoid confrontation. Maccoby and Martin (1983) opine that parenting style captures two important elements of parenting: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness. Parental responsiveness is referred to as parental warmth and supportiveness while parental demandingness is referred to as behavioural control. Categorizing parents according to whether they are high or low on parental demandingness and responsiveness creates a typology of four parenting styles: permissive (or indulgent), authoritarian, authoritative, and uninvolved (Maccoby and Martin, 1983). Authoritarian parents are highly demanding and directive, but less responsive. They are status-oriented and expect their orders to be obeyed without explanation. Authoritarian parents provide well-ordered and structured environment

with clearly stated rules. Authoritative parents are both demanding and responsive. They monitor and impart clear standards for their children's conduct. One key difference between authoritarian and authoritative parenting is in the dimension of emotional control (Barber, 1996). Both styles place high demand on their children and expect their children to behave appropriately and obey parental rules. Authoritarian parents, however, also expect their children to accept their judgment, values and goals without questioning. In contrast, authoritative parents are more open to give and take with their children and make greater use of explanations. Thus, while both parenting styles are equally high on behavioural control, authoritative parents tend to be low on emotional control, compared to authoritarian parents. Uninvolved parents are low in both responsiveness and demandingness (Paul, Chiedozie, Edwin and Ifeoma, 2021).

Self-esteem is one of the factors that is likely to affect the mental health of children (Olanrewaju and Oyadeyi, 2014). Self-esteem refers to the positive or negative evaluations of the self and how one feels about oneself (Smith & Mackie, 2007). Rosenberg (1965) identified two major types of self-esteem: High Self-Esteem and Low Self-Esteem. High Self-Esteem has to do with one's high or positive view about oneself. On the other hand, people with low self-esteem suffer from feelings of worthlessness, inferiority, and emotional instability, so leading to dissatisfaction with life (Smith and Mackie, 2007; Rosenberg, 1965). Mogonea and Mogonea (2014) observed that the level of self-esteem is shown in the adolescents' attitude and behaviour, both at home and at school. The adolescents with high level of self-esteem are capable of influencing positively the opinion and behaviour of others; they tackle new situations positively and confidently; they have a high level of tolerance towards frustration; they accept early responsibility, and succeed in

having good self-control the belief that the things they are undergoing are the result of their behaviour and actions (Lavoie, 2012). The link between self-esteem and parenting style has been documented in both local and western studies (e.g. Osenweugwuor, 2016; Weiten, Lloyd, Dunn, and Hammer, 2008; Baumrind, 1991).

Gender (male or female) of the adolescent is another variable of interest that seems to be a factor in self-esteem development. Studies show that there are obvious difference between boys and girls and that may lead to differences in parenting. Research suggested that both boys and girls face different issues in life. So, the parenting is modified according to those issues. For example, studies show that girls need more emotional support and boys need more independence from parents. There are different theoretical evidences that support gender differences in parenting. Presented a psychoanalytical view about the gender differences in parenting. According to this theory, mother and daughter are of same sex therefore the daughter's identification with mother is much stronger than sons. Therefore girls need more parental acceptance and boys need more parental autonomy granting (Leaper, 2002). Hold that the father demonstrated greater differential treatment between sons and daughters than the mothers. Thus, father promoted greater traditional gendered typed behaviour in sons and daughters, for example sons are encouraged to be independent in their behaviour and daughters to be more dependent (Eckes and Trautner, 2012).

Gender Schema theory holds that males and females act according to the appropriate learned cultural definition of gender. Parents expect that the sons would take up the role of main bread earner and daughters would perform role of caregiving (Bem, 1981). Therefore, mothers and fathers may encourage different behaviours in

their sons and daughters in accordance to their schema of gender. Gender role theory recommends that the traditional father's role is of primary bread earner and mother's role is primary caregiver and housekeeper (Eagly, 1987; Eagly and Wood, 1999). These fathers were acting as main disciplinarian and thus demonstrated authoritarian parenting style, (Blakemore, Berenbaum, Liben, 2009) whereas mother considered being more nurturing and demonstrated authoritative parenting style (Conrade and Robert, 2001). Fathers usually spent more time with boys than with girls as they believed that sons need father more as a role model than do the daughters while mothers and daughters share more powerful and deep relationship than the daughters and fathers. (Raley and Bianchi, 2006). However, due to increase in urbanization and encouragement given to women's rights and education this trend is changing. For example, Vyas and Bano (2016) focus is on how the child's characteristics especially gender determine the parenting style of the parents and found that fathers used authoritative parenting style for girls more than boys and authoritarian parenting style for boys more than girls. This shift in parenting styles of fathers for girls signifies that fathers are becoming more involved, responsive and caring towards the adolescent girls.

Parents play a key role in the development of self-esteem, it is not surprising that a disruption in the parental relationship would have an effect on that development. After divorce, a major change in parenting takes place simply as a result of the absence of the non-custodial parent. In explaining his psychosocial theory of human development, Erikson (1980) observed that adolescent boys without fathers in their lives lack the natural role-model they need as they engage in the processes of identity formation. Observed that adolescents

with parents who are absent frequently or for long periods of time display lower levels of self-esteem. Thus, adolescents often view this parental absence as a sort of rejection and in turn question their worth (Krider, 2002). Self-reports of self-esteem among the adolescence, however, run in a continuum of low and high self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965), and may be dependent on other factors beyond parental absence.

Many studies have linked gender to global self-esteem in adolescence and young adulthood (Erol and Orth, 2011). Findings on potential gender differences in rates of self-esteem development are to a larger degree mixed, with some studies reporting stable differences (Wagner and Ludtke, Jonkmann, and Trautwein, 2013) and others reporting decreasing differences from adolescence to young adulthood (Galambos, Barker, and Krahn 2006). According to Paul, Chiedozie, Edwin and Ifeoma (2021) the results indicated a statistically significant influence of parenting styles on self-esteem, $p < .05$; significant role of religiosity on self-esteem of adolescents, $p < .001$. The result also indicated a non-significant gender differences in self-esteem of adolescents, and non-significant interaction of parenting style, gender and religiosity on self-esteem of adolescents. Independent of the specific changes in gender differences, these differences in both adolescence and young adulthood have been considered to be rather small in size (Orth, 2012). Robust findings emerging from different literatures (e.g. Kling, Hyde, Showers and Buswel, 1999; Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Gosling, and Potter, 2002; Zeigler-Hill and Myers, 2012) indicate significant gender gap such that males tend to report higher levels of self-esteem than females do.

Adolescents in Damaturu face various socio-cultural pressures that influence their self-esteem.

These pressures include gender-based expectations, religious teachings, and parental attitudes. Despite the pivotal role self-esteem plays in adolescent development, there is limited research addressing how these factors specifically interact within the socio-cultural framework of Damaturu. Without understanding the impact of gender, and parenting style, interventions to improve adolescents' self-esteem may lack relevance and effectiveness. This gap in knowledge risks leaving many adolescents vulnerable to low self-esteem, which can manifest in poor academic performance, risky behavior, and mental health challenges.

Thus, this study addresses the need for a comprehensive understanding of these variables, providing insights to inform policies and programs aimed at fostering healthy adolescent development in Damaturu.

This study is significant for several reasons: **Theoretical Contribution:** It contributes to the growing body of literature on adolescent self-esteem by exploring the interplay between religiosity, gender, and parenting style in a culturally unique setting; **Practical Relevance:** Findings will aid parents, educators, and policymakers in developing targeted strategies to promote positive self-esteem among adolescents in Damaturu and **Community Impact:** Understanding these dynamics will empower communities to support adolescents' well-being and mitigate risks associated with low self-esteem, such as school dropout and substance abuse.

Research Objectives:

The objectives are as follows;

- i. To assess gender differences in adolescents' self-esteem.

- ii. To evaluate the influence of parenting styles on adolescents' self-esteem.
- iii. To identify the combined effects of gender and parenting style on adolescents' self-esteem.

Research Questions:

- i. Are there significant gender differences in adolescents' self-esteem?
- ii. How do different parenting styles influence adolescents' self-esteem?
- iii. What are the combined effects of gender and parenting style on adolescents' self-esteem?

Research Hypotheses:

- i. **H₀₁**: Gender does not significantly affect adolescents' self-esteem in Damaturu, Yobe state, Nigeria.
- ii. **H₀₂**: Parenting style does not significantly influence adolescents' self-esteem in Damaturu, Yobe state, Nigeria.
- iii. **H₀₃**: The combined effects of gender and parenting style do not significantly predict adolescents' self-esteem in Damaturu, Yobe state, Nigeria.

In Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria, cultural and religious practices uniquely shape these factors, necessitating a localized investigation into their impact on adolescents' self-esteem. This study seeks to assess the roles of gender, and parenting style in shaping the self-esteem of adolescents in this context. The study will focus on the roles of Gender and Parenting Style in relation to Adolescents' Self-Esteem in Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria. Gender and Parenting Style was used as dimension for managing conflict.

Methodology:

Background of the study Area

Damaturu was a relatively small settlement before Nigeria's independence in 1960. It gained prominence when Yobe State was carved out of Borno State on August 27, 1991, as part of Nigeria's federal restructuring under General Ibrahim Babangida's military government. The town was chosen as the state capital due to its central location and potential for growth. Since becoming the state capital, Damaturu has served as the administrative and political center of Yobe. It houses the state government, including the governor's office, legislative assembly, and various ministries. The state's political history has been shaped by a mix of military rule and democracy, with political parties such as the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC) playing significant roles.

Damaturu as the capital city of Yobe State in the North-Eastern Nigeria with total land area of 2,306sqkm² and a population of 88,014 as at (NPC Census, 2006). Located on the edge of the Sahel region. The town lies within a semi-arid climate zone, characterized by sparse vegetation and seasonal rainfall. Its location makes it a hub for agricultural activities like millet, sorghum, and livestock farming. The town also serves as a vital link between Maiduguri in Borno State and other parts of Nigeria through a network of roads. The geographic coordinates of Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria, are approximately: Latitude: 11.744° N and Longitude: 11.966° E. These coordinates place Damaturu in the northeastern part of Nigeria, within the semi-arid Sahel region. It is located on the fringes of the Sahel, a semi-arid region south of the Sahara Desert. The town lies approximately 131 kilometers west of Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State. Damaturu experiences a semi-arid climate (BSh), with a

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long dry season (October to May) and a brief rainy season (June to September). Temperatures are typically high throughout the year, with peaks during the dry Harmattan season. The landscape is predominantly flat, featuring sandy soils and sparse vegetation such as acacia trees and shrubs. The terrain supports agriculture and pastoralism. In recent years, Yobe State, including Damaturu, has faced challenges from the Boko Haram insurgency, which began in neighboring Borno State but spilled over into Yobe. This significantly impacted Damaturu's security and development, though efforts by the Nigerian military and local governance have improved the situation.

Damaturu has grown into a significant economic and political hub for northeastern Nigeria. Infrastructure development, such as roads, schools, and healthcare facilities, continues to advance. Despite security concerns, the city remains a strategic location for both commerce and governance in the region.

Damaturu is a melting pot of cultures and traditions, reflecting the sociological dynamics of northeastern Nigeria. Its social structure, shaped by historical migration, religion, and economic activities, plays a crucial role in the everyday lives of its inhabitants. The Ethnic Groups are: The Kanuri people are the dominant ethnic group in Damaturu. They have a long history as traders, farmers, and rulers, tracing back to the Kanem-Borno Empire. Other groups include the Fulani, known for their pastoral lifestyle, and minority groups such as the Hausa and Bolewa. Kanuri is widely spoken, alongside Hausa, which serves as a lingua franca for trade and inter-ethnic communication. Islam is the predominant religion in Damaturu, with the vast majority of the population being Sunni Muslims.

Sampling Techniques and Data Collection Procedure

A multi stage sampling techniques was employed in this study. In which two hundred and eighty (299) respondents drawn from four (4) public and private senior secondary schools (SSS) Students in Damaturu, Yobe state. The schools are: Government Girls' Unity College Damaturu, Government Secondary School Damaturu, Legacy Schools Damaturu and New Foundation Schools Damaturu (70 respondents each). The respondents comprises of (128 males and 152 females; 111 raised by authoritarian parents; 42 by permissive parents, and 131 by authoritative parents) (15 - 17 years, $M = 15.64$, $SD = 2.71$). Two instruments were used for data collection: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) and Parenting Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1989).

Firstly, the random selection of the two (2) public schools and two (2) private schools in Damaturu metropolis. Secondly, the grouping of the respondents according to their various classes; Senior Secondary (SS) class 1, Senior Secondary (SS) class II and Senior Secondary (SS) class III. The simple random sampling technique was used in separating boys and girls this occur only in the case of the private schools with co-education. The copies of the questionnaire were filled and returned immediately. Out of the 400 copies of the questionnaire distributed, only 330 were returned. However, 31 copies of the 330 copies were not properly filled. This left the researchers with only 299 copies of the questionnaire instruments for data analysis.

The design of the study is cross-sectional survey. This is based on the premise that survey design is a design employed when collecting data to make inference about a population of interest at one point in time (Olsen and George, 2004). Two independent variables (gender and parenting styles) with different levels each (Gender = males and females; Parenting style= permissive,

authoritarian and authoritative) was tested under one dependent variable (Self-esteem) in the study. The study intended to ascertain how males and females raised with different parenting styles. We therefore categorized the participants along the levels of the independent variables (thus, participants who load higher on permissive parenting came under permissive parenting category and so on; and used two way analysis of variance (2-Way ANOVA) making up 2x2x3 F-test as the statistical tools in the study.

The variations in number of respondents who were raised by authoritarian parents (109), permissive parents (40) and authoritative parents (131) were beyond our control given that the parenting care scales were distributed after the sample had been drawn. The strategy was for double-blind control; only gender mix was given prior consideration.

(a) Self-esteem Scale

Self-esteem Scale is a 10-item scale developed by Rosenberg (1965). It was developed for measuring ones view or regard about oneself. The instrument was based on four point Likert-type format ranging from (strongly agree) to (strongly disagree). Items 2,5,6,8 and 9 were reversely scored while items 1,3,4,7, and 10 were scored in direct order. Hence, a least possible score of 10 and a highest possible score of 40 could be obtained by any given respondent. The reliability of the instrument on self-esteem was determined by Omoluabi (1997) using test-retest reliability. He obtained an alpha coefficient of 0.78 on the

self-esteem scale (Paul, Chiedozie, Edwin and Ifeoma, 2021).

(b) Parental Authority Questionnaire

Parenting styles were measured using the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) developed by Buri (1991). The 30-item instrument consisted of three 10 item sub-scales developed to measure 3 parental disciplinary practices that are interrelated permissive, authoritarian and authoritative styles (Baumrind, 1991), from the point of view of the child of any age. The items in the three subscales are as follows: permissive (P: items 1, 6, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24 and 28), authoritarian (A: items 2, 3, 7, 9, 12, 16, 18, 25, 26 and 29), and authoritative (F: items 4, 5, 8, 11, 15, 20, 22, 23, 27, and 30). The response options were on 5-point Likert-format ranging from strongly disagree (scored 1) to strongly agreed (scored 5); all items were directly scored. Sub-scale scores range from 10 to 50. Greater appraised levels of the parental authority prototype yield higher scores. In validation studies (Buri, 1991), items were constructed based on Baumrind's descriptions of the parenting style prototypes and then subjected to multidisciplinary expert review. The PAQ appeared to have good internal consistency (range = .74 – .87) and test-retest reliability ranged from .77 to .92. According to him, alpha coefficient of .75 was for permissive, .85 for authoritarian and .82 for authoritative scale while good stability in test-retest reliability obtained were .81, .86, .78 for permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative scale respectively.

Results Presentation and analysis:

Table 1: A descriptive statistics table

| Independent Variables | | Mean | Standard Deviation | No. of respondents |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Factors | | | | |
| Gender | Males | 24.35 | 4.20 | 128 |
| | Females | 24.37 | 4.77 | 152 |
| Parental Style | Authoritarian | 23.67 | 3.89 | 111 |
| | Permissive | 22.76 | 3.99 | 42 |
| | Authoritative | 25.47 | 4.86 | 131 |

Source: Field survey, 2024.

Results of Means in Table 1 above show that participants who experienced authoritative parenting style obtained the highest total mean score on self-esteem ($M = 25.47$) when compared with participants who experience authoritarian parenting style ($M = 23.67$) and those who experienced permissive parenting style ($M = 22.76$). Table 1 further shows that female participants obtained a relatively equal total mean of 24.37 on self-esteem when compared to the total mean of males which is 24.35.

Table 2: ANOVA Table Parenting Styles and Gender on Self-Esteem of Adolescents

| Source | Type III Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | Level of significance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|----|-------------|------|-----------------------|
| Gender | 3.992 | 1 | 3.99 | .27 | .624 |
| Parenting Style | 215.49 | 2 | 107.76 | 6.63 | .002* |
| Parenting Style * Gender | 26.37 | 2 | 13.19 | .83 | .448 |
| Gender * Parenting Style | 81.59 | 2 | 40.79 | 2.55 | .085 |
| Error | 4401.11 | | 275 | | 16.30 |
| Total | 159397.00 | | 284 | | |

Source: Field survey, 2024.

Result Discussions

The result of ANOVA showed that parenting style played significant role in adolescents' self-esteem. This result is consistent with the Rohner's (2004) Parental-Acceptance-Rejection Theory (PARTheory) which posits that children's sense of self tend to be dependent on the quality of their relationship with their parents. The result is in congruence with a Nigerian-based study (Osenweugwuor, 2016) which found significant positive correlations between parenting style and self-esteem. It is possible that some unaccounted factors in this study, such as economic adversity in Nigeria, may have correlated with parenting to influence the differences in levels of adolescents' self-esteem. The result however, correlated with studies conducted outside Nigeria (Weiten et al., 2008; Baumrind, 1991). Mean comparisons show that adolescents with authoritative parents showed higher self-esteem than adolescents with permissive parents or authoritative parents. Authoritative parenting is likely to be correlated with other factors unaccounted for such as being well informed about parenting which contributes to building higher self-esteem in children.

There was no significant role of gender on self-esteem of adolescents. This result is not consistent with previous studies such as Kling et al., (1999); Bleidorn and Ruben (2015) found significant gender differences in self-esteem. It could be that locality (urban versus rural areas), which were unaccounted for, correlate with gender to influence self-esteem.

The result indicates non-significant interactions of parenting styles and gender on adolescents' self-esteem. This showed that the influence of any of the independent variables was not significantly associated with another. However, some factors unaccounted for such as age may provide the link between these variables on self-esteem. Maturity and experiences that come with age may act upon parenting to influence scores on self-esteem.

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Conclusion

The study highlights the multifaceted influences of gender, and parenting style on adolescent self-esteem in Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria. The result of the study showed that parenting style played significant roles in self-esteem of adolescents. The study implicated some unaccounted factors such as economic adversity, parents' education on parenting and age of participants that may be correlated with gender in the family and parent-child relationship to influence self-esteem of adolescents. The findings underscore the need for culturally relevant interventions to foster positive self-esteem in adolescents. By addressing these variables, stakeholders can create supportive environments that promote healthy development and empower adolescents to thrive in their personal and social lives.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made;

- The Parents should adopt parenting styles that balance discipline with emotional support, fostering confidence and self-worth in adolescents.
- The Schools should integrate programs that would promote gender equality and self-esteem building into the curriculum.
- The Policymakers should develop community-based initiatives to educate parents and guardians on effective parenting techniques and their impact on adolescent development.

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