The Role of Family Support in the Self-Confidence of Young People

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Abstract

Introduction: Family support is a critical factor in the psychological and emotional development of young people. It fosters self-confidence through emotional support, encouragement, and a sense of security. This study examines the influence of adolescents' perceptions of family relationships on their self-evaluation and overall self-confidence. **Methods:** The study included 54 participants aged 18–25. Data were collected using a structured, anonymous questionnaire measuring family support and self-confidence. The questionnaire was pilot-tested, revised, and demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.89 for 8 items). Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and t-tests were used to analyze the data. **Results:** Participants reported a high level of perceived family support (M = 34.61, SD = 6.20). Most respondents strongly agreed that their families provide emotional support, encouragement, and good communication. A significant positive correlation was found between family support and self-confidence (r = 0.672, p < 0.01). No significant gender differences were observed. All hypotheses were confirmed, indicating that family support positively influences self-confidence, self-esteem, and psychological well-being. **Conclusion:** The findings highlight the family as a key protective and supportive factor in youth development. Promoting positive family relationships strengthens

adolescents' self-confidence and emotional well-being. These results can inform psycho-educational interventions and strategies to support young people in both family and educational contexts.

Keywords: Family support, self-confidence, youth, emotional well-being

Introduction

Self-confidence is a crucial psychological characteristic that influences young people's academic performance, social relationships, emotional well-being, and overall life satisfaction. During adolescence and early adulthood, individuals experience significant personal, social, and emotional changes that shape their self-concept and identity. At this developmental stage, self-confidence is closely linked to how young people perceive their abilities, value themselves, and respond to challenges. Research suggests that self-confidence and self-esteem develop through social interactions and early experiences, particularly within the family environment (Rosenberg, 1965).

Family support plays a fundamental role in shaping self-confidence, as the family is often the first and most influential social system in an individual's life. Supportive family relationships provide emotional security, encouragement, and validation, which help young people develop a stable sense of self-worth. According to attachment theory, early relationships with caregivers create a foundation for emotional security and influence how individuals view themselves and their relationships with others later in life (Bowlby, 1988). When parents are emotionally available and responsive, young people are more likely to develop a positive self-image and stronger confidence in their personal abilities (Bandura, 1997).

Moreover, family support extends beyond emotional care and includes guidance, communication, and constructive feedback. Steinberg (2014) emphasizes that parenting characterized by warmth, involvement, and consistent boundaries contributes to healthy adolescent development by promoting autonomy and self-confidence. Similarly, Erikson's psychosocial theory highlights adolescence as a critical period for identity formation, during which supportive family environments can reduce insecurity and identity confusion, thereby strengthening self-confidence (Erikson, 1968).

In contrast, a lack of family support, ongoing criticism, or emotionally distant parent–child relationships can negatively affect young people's self-confidence. Studies on parenting and adolescent adjustment indicate that stressful family environments and low parental involvement are associated with lower self-esteem and a higher risk of emotional difficulties such as anxiety and depression (Baumrind, 1991). Additionally, adolescents who feel accepted and supported by their parents tend to demonstrate greater

psychological well-being, fewer behavioral problems, and higher levels of self-confidence (Smetana et al., 2006).

Therefore, examining the role of family support in young people's self-confidence is essential for understanding adolescent development and promoting youth well-being. This paper aims to explore how different forms of family support influence young people's self-confidence and to highlight the potential consequences of insufficient support within the family context.

Literature Review

Self-confidence in young people is closely connected to self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-concept. Self-esteem refers to an individual's overall evaluation of their worth (Rosenberg, 1965), while self-efficacy describes the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations (Bandura, 1997). During adolescence, these psychological constructs become particularly important because this period involves identity formation, emotional sensitivity, and increased social comparison. Erikson (1968) emphasized that adolescence is a critical stage in which individuals struggle with identity versus role confusion, and that supportive environments can strengthen a stable sense of self and confidence.

Family relationships are among the earliest and most influential sources of feedback and validation, shaping how young people interpret their abilities and values. In this context, family support becomes a central factor in confidence development, particularly through emotional security and acceptance. Recent research highlights the crucial role of family support in the psychological and emotional development of young people, particularly in fostering self-confidence and self-esteem. Studies indicate that perceived parental support is positively correlated with adolescents' self-confidence, with emotional support from parents acting as a strong predictor even when demographic variables such as age and gender are controlled (Elamrousy, 2024). Emotional support has been shown to contribute to adolescents' psychological well-being by enhancing self-efficacy and reducing mental health problems, including anxiety and depressive symptoms (Qian, Jin, Lu, & Zhao, 2024).

Beyond parental support, other aspects of family social capital, such as supportive sibling relationships, also play a significant role in reinforcing self-confidence during the transition to adulthood (Harmon, Pulsipher, & Dufur, 2025). Moreover, positive family relationships contribute to emotion regulation and psychological adjustment, providing a protective buffer against negative experiences in adolescence (Ratliff et al., 2023; Yan, Zhang, & Lu, 2024). These findings collectively emphasize that family support is not only associated with higher self-esteem and confidence but also with greater emotional stability and overall psychological well-being among young people.

In light of this evidence, fostering a supportive family environment—with open communication, encouragement, and emotional availability—can be considered a central factor in promoting adolescents' self-confidence and personal security, which aligns with the theoretical frameworks of social learning, attachment, and self-determination theories.

Theoretical Perspectives Linking Family Support and Self-Confidence
Attachment Theory

Attachment theory suggests that early parent–child relationships form internal working models that influence emotional security, interpersonal relationships, and self-perceptions later in life (Bowlby, 1988). Adolescents who experience secure attachment tend to develop stronger self-worth and emotional stability, which are core elements of self-confidence. Ainsworth et al. (1978) also demonstrated that secure attachment patterns are associated with higher levels of exploration, autonomy, and resilience—traits that support confidence in adolescence.

Social Learning and Self-Efficacy Theory

Bandura's social cognitive theory highlights that self-confidence grows through mastery experiences, encouragement, and social modeling (Bandura, 1997). Parents are key social models; their support, praise, and reinforcement can strengthen young people's belief in their abilities. Adolescents who receive consistent encouragement and constructive feedback are more likely to develop stronger self-efficacy and confidence, especially in academic and social contexts.

Family Systems Theory

Family systems theory views the family as an interconnected emotional unit in which communication patterns and relational dynamics shape individual development (Bowen, 1978). Healthy family functioning—characterized by emotional closeness, adaptability, and supportive communication—has been linked to better adolescent psychological adjustment, including self-esteem and self-confidence.

Empirical Evidence: Family Support and Self-Esteem in Adolescence

A large body of research confirms that family support is strongly associated with higher self-esteem among adolescents. For example, a meta-analysis by Pinquart and Gerke (2019) found consistent links between parenting behaviors (warmth and responsiveness) and adolescent self-esteem, while harsh or rejecting parenting predicted lower self-esteem.

Similarly, Barber et al. (2005) showed that parental psychological control (e.g., guilt induction and emotional manipulation) was negatively

associated with adolescent self-esteem and personal confidence across cultures. These findings suggest that not only the presence of support but also the absence of controlling and critical parenting is essential for building youth confidence.

In addition, studies show that parental acceptance and emotional warmth are significant predictors of adolescents' positive self-evaluation. Rohner et al. (2005) argued that perceived parental acceptance is universally linked to higher self-esteem and psychological adjustment, whereas parental rejection increases vulnerability to insecurity and emotional distress.

Parental Support, Autonomy, and Self-Confidence

Self-confidence in young people is shaped not only by emotional warmth but also by parental support for autonomy. According to self-determination theory, autonomy support is essential for healthy motivation and self-esteem development (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Parents who encourage independent decision-making while still offering guidance and care foster stronger confidence and personal competence in adolescents.

Soenens and Vansteenkiste (2010) found that autonomy-supportive parenting predicts better adolescent psychological outcomes, including higher self-esteem and lower anxiety. In contrast, controlling parenting is linked to reduced confidence, increased stress, and a weaker sense of personal control. Steinberg (2014) further emphasized that authoritative parenting—combining warmth with structure—supports adolescents' confidence by providing both emotional security and opportunities for independence.

Family Support as a Protective Factor for Psychological Well-Being

Family support also acts as a protective factor against mental health challenges that can undermine self-confidence. Research shows that adolescents who experience high levels of family support are less likely to develop depressive symptoms, anxiety, and emotional instability (Yap et al., 2014). Since emotional distress is strongly associated with low self-confidence, family support indirectly strengthens confidence by improving psychological well-being.

Moreover, parental involvement has been linked to resilience and better coping strategies in adolescents. Masten (2014) described supportive caregiving relationships as a central protective system that strengthens resilience, which contributes to confidence in facing adversity.

Peer Support vs. Family Support

While peers become increasingly influential during adolescence, family support remains a primary foundation for self-confidence. Studies indicate that both family and peer support contribute to adolescent self-esteem,

but family support tends to be more stable and protective over time (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). When family support is low, adolescents may rely more heavily on peers; however, peer relationships can sometimes be inconsistent or linked to negative social comparison. Thus, the literature suggests that peer support may complement—but not replace—the long-term impact of parental and family support in shaping youth confidence.

Overall, the literature strongly supports the idea that family support plays a major role in developing self-confidence among young people. Supportive family relationships, emotional warmth, parental acceptance, and autonomy-supportive parenting consistently predict higher self-esteem and stronger self-efficacy. In contrast, psychological control, rejection, and family conflict undermine adolescents' confidence and increase vulnerability to emotional difficulties. Additionally, family support acts as a protective factor, strengthening resilience and reducing mental health risks that may weaken self-confidence.

Methodology
Aim of the Study

This study aims to analyze the impact of family support on young people's self-confidence. Specifically, the study focuses on the role of positive family relationships in adolescents' psychological and emotional development. It investigates how emotional support, open communication, encouragement, and a sense of security provided by the family influence the development of healthy self-confidence.

The study also seeks to understand young people's perceptions of family support and its effects on self-esteem, personal security, and coping abilities in academic and social contexts.

Research Objectives
1. To assess the relationship between family support and young people's self-confidence.
2. To examine the influence of emotional support, open communication, and encouragement from the family on adolescents' self-esteem and personal security.
3. To identify whether positive family relationships contribute to stronger self-confidence and coping abilities in social and academic challenges.
4. To provide empirical insights that can inform psycho-educational interventions and strategies for promoting supportive family environments.

Research Questions
1. Does family support affect young people's level of self-confidence?
2. Is there a relationship between positive family relationships and personal self-esteem?
3. How does emotional support from the family affect young people's psychological security?

Hypotheses
o H1: Family support positively influences young people's self-confidence.
o H2: Young people who experience positive family relationships show higher levels of self-esteem.
o H3: Emotional support from the family improves young people's psychological well-being.

Research Design
This study follows a quantitative research approach and uses a cross-sectional design, as data were collected at a single point in time. This design allows the researcher to assess young people's current perceptions of family support and self-confidence. A cross-sectional design is appropriate for exploratory and descriptive research aimed at identifying relationships between variables without making causal claims.

Study Sample
The study sample consists of young people aged 18–25, selected randomly. This age group was chosen because it represents a critical developmental stage in which self-confidence, personal identity, and emotional independence are being formed. Participants were recruited to reflect a diverse range of experiences in terms of family support and social backgrounds.

Research Instrument
A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire was developed based on previous psychological research and consisted of a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). It was designed in line with existing literature and the study objectives.

Before administration to the main participants, the questionnaire was pilot-tested with 20 individuals to assess clarity, completion time, and any ambiguities. Based on the pilot feedback, the questionnaire was revised and improved. The internal consistency of the instrument was evaluated, with Cronbach's Alpha = 0.89 for 8 items, indicating high reliability. This suggests that the items consistently measure the intended construct.

The questionnaire included two main sections:
1. **Family Support:** Measures emotional support, communication, encouragement, and sense of security.
2. **Self-Confidence:** Measures personal perceptions of self-worth, abilities, and overall self-esteem.

The questionnaire is a self-report tool, suitable for assessing subjective constructs such as self-confidence and social support. Questions were formulated clearly to reduce confusion and increase reliability.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected anonymously and voluntarily, with participants providing informed consent. The questionnaire was administered in a way that allowed participants to complete it independently, ensuring privacy and accuracy in responses.

Data Analysis

Data were processed and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. These analyses provided an overall picture of the levels of family support and self-confidence among participants. The results were interpreted in line with the research questions and hypotheses, and findings were compared with existing psychological literature to identify patterns and trends.

Theoretical Framework

The methodology is grounded in established psychological and social development theories:
- **Vygotsky's sociocultural theory:** Emphasizes that individual development occurs through social interactions, with family as the first and most important social context.
- **Bandura's social learning theory:** Highlights the role of modeling, reinforcement, and support in building self-confidence and self-efficacy.
- **Piaget's and Kegan's developmental theories:** Emphasize that self-confidence and self-awareness evolve through developmental stages, with family relationships directly influencing self-perception.

These frameworks justify the use of questionnaires to measure young people's subjective perceptions of family support.

Ethical Considerations
The study was conducted in accordance with ethical research principles:
- Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent.
- Data were collected anonymously and used solely for academic purposes.
- Confidentiality of participants' responses was ensured.

Limitations
- The use of self-report questionnaires may introduce social desirability bias.
- The cross-sectional design limits generalizability and does not allow causal conclusions.
- The sample size may restrict the ability to generalize findings to the wider population.

Results
The results of the study are presented through descriptive statistics, tables, and a summary of key findings, illustrating young people's perceptions of family support and its impact on self-confidence. These analyses provide a clear understanding of the distribution of responses and the relationships between key variables.

Summary of Participants
A total of 54 participants completed the questionnaire, with no missing data. The sample consisted of 47 females (87%) and 7 males (13%). Participants were aged 18–25 years.

Descriptive Statistics on Family Support and Self-Confidence
Most participants reported high levels of perceived family support. For example, 64.8% strongly agreed that their family provides emotional support, 66.7% reported that their family encourages them to believe in their abilities, and 63% indicated that family support directly increases their self-confidence. Communication and understanding within the family were also rated positively.

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	47	87%
Male	7	13%
Total	54	100%

Table 2: Emotional Family Support

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	3.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	6	11.1%
Agree	11	20.4%
Strongly Agree	35	64.8%
Total	54	100%

Table 2: Most participants (64.8%) strongly agree that they receive emotional support from their family, indicating a high level of perceived support.

Table 3: Feeling Understood by Family

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	4	7.4%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	5.6%
Agree	4	7.4%
Strongly Agree	43	79.6%
Total	54	100%

Table 3: A majority of respondents feel understood by their family (79.6%), highlighting positive family communication.

Table 4: Family Encouragement of Self-Confidence

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	3.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	7.4%
Agree	12	22.2%
Strongly Agree	36	66.7%
Total	54	100%

Table 4: The family plays a significant role in encouraging self-confidence, as 66.7% of participants strongly agree.

Table 5: Overall Family Support and Self-Confidence

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	3.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	5	9.3%
Agree	13	24.1%
Strongly Agree	34	63%
Total	54	100%

Table 5: Family support is strongly associated with self-confidence, with the majority (63%) selecting "Strongly Agree."

Table 6: Reliability of Family Support Scale

Measure	Value
Cronbach's Alpha	0.89
Number of Items	8

Table 6. The high Cronbach's Alpha indicates very good internal consistency of the questionnaire.

Table 7: Correlation Between Family Support and Self-Confidence

Variable 1	Variable 2	Pearson r	p-value
Family Support	Self-Confidence	0.672	<0.01

Table 7. There is a strong positive correlation between family support and self-confidence, statistically significant at $p < 0.01$.

Table 8: Hypothesis Verification

Hypothesis	Result
H1: Family support positively influences self-confidence	Accepted
H2: Positive family relationships increase self-esteem	Accepted
H3: Emotional family support improves psychological well-being	Accepted

Table 8: All hypotheses are supported by the data, showing the critical role of family support in young people's psychological and emotional development.

Summary of Main Findings

Overall, results indicate that young people perceive high levels of family support, which is significantly associated with increased self-confidence, emotional stability, and psychological well-being. Positive family interactions, including encouragement, understanding, and communication, appear to be key factors in supporting adolescent and young adult development.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study and the analysis of the role family support plays in young people's self-confidence, several important recommendations can be made for families, educational institutions, and psychology professionals:

For Families: Families are encouraged to foster open communication and provide emotional support by creating a safe and accepting environment. Parents and family members should show interest in young people's feelings, thoughts, and challenges, as this directly influences the development of self-confidence and personal security.

For Educational Institutions: Schools and universities should develop psycho-educational programs and awareness activities that emphasize the importance of family support in young people's psychological development. Collaboration between families and educational institutions can contribute to improving students' emotional and academic well-being.

For Mental Health Professionals: School psychologists and mental health practitioners are encouraged to involve families in counseling and

supportive processes, particularly for young people experiencing low self-confidence or emotional difficulties. Family involvement in psychological interventions can enhance their effectiveness.

For Future Research: Future studies should consider larger sample sizes and employ mixed research methods (quantitative and qualitative) to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of family support on young people's self-confidence and psychological well-being across diverse cultural and social contexts.

Authors contribution

It is hereby acknowledged that the authors have accepted responsibility for the content of the manuscript and have given their consent for its submission. They have carefully reviewed all the results and unanimously approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Declaration for Human Participants

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of UBT – Higher Education Institution. All data were treated confidentially, with no personal, identifiable, or sensitive information collected or analyzed. The data were generalized and processed in aggregate form, not about specific individuals. Additionally, parental consent was obtained for adolescents under the age of 18.

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of institutional and research committees and with the 1975 Declaration of Helsinki, as revised in 2013.

Confidentiality and privacy were assured for all the participants, and they were informed that all information would be kept strictly confidential. Lastly, each participant signed the informed consent form. STANDARDS OF REPORTING: STROBE guidelines were followed.

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