

Self-Esteem Among Children Of Working And Non-Working Mothers: A Review And Conceptual Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Self-esteem is a fundamental psychological construct that significantly influences children's emotional, social, and behavioural development. In the context of rapidly changing family structures and evolving parental roles, maternal employment has emerged as an important factor shaping children's self-perception. The differing roles of working and non-working mothers create distinct developmental environments, raising important questions regarding their influence on children's self-esteem. While working mothers may foster independence and adaptability, non-working mothers may provide greater emotional availability and consistent supervision, both of which contribute differently to a child's sense of self-worth.

This paper presents a comprehensive review of existing literature on self-esteem among children of working and non-working mothers. It critically examines prior research to understand the nature of this relationship and to identify key factors influencing self-esteem, including parenting style, maternal involvement, socio-economic conditions, and the quality of parent-child interaction. The review highlights that the impact of maternal employment on self-esteem is complex and cannot be understood in isolation, as multiple interrelated factors contribute to children's psychological development.

The literature suggests that maternal employment status alone is not a decisive determinant of children's self-esteem. Rather, the quality of emotional support, parenting practices, and the broader socio-cultural environment play a more significant role. The paper also identifies gaps in existing research, particularly in terms of integrated and context-specific analyses, and emphasizes the need for a balanced and holistic understanding of child development

KEYWORDS: Self-esteem, Maternal Employment, Child Development, Parenting Style, Emotional Development.

INTRODUCTION

The psychological development of children is shaped by a complex interplay of individual, familial, and socio-cultural factors, among which self-esteem occupies a central position. Self-esteem refers to an individual's overall evaluation of their self-worth, encompassing feelings of competence, value, identity, and belongingness. It plays a crucial role in influencing children's emotional stability, social behaviour, academic engagement, and overall personality development. A healthy level of self-esteem enables children to approach challenges with confidence, resilience, and a positive outlook, whereas low self-esteem may lead to self-doubt, withdrawal, and reduced participation in social and academic contexts. The development of self-esteem is influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors such as self-awareness, cognitive appraisal, and past experiences shape how children perceive themselves and interpret their abilities. Positive reinforcement and supportive early experiences tend to strengthen self-esteem, while repeated criticism or negative feedback may weaken a child's sense of self-worth. At the same time, external factors-including family environment, parenting style, socio-economic conditions, cultural norms, and media exposure-play a significant role in shaping children's self-perception. A nurturing and supportive family environment fosters positive self-esteem, whereas adverse conditions and negative social

comparisons may undermine it. Within the family context, mothers, as primary caregivers, play a particularly influential role in the development of children's self-esteem. In recent decades, changing socio-economic conditions and evolving gender roles have led to a significant increase in maternal employment, making the distinction between working and non-working mothers an important area of inquiry. Working mothers often contribute to financial stability and may encourage independence and adaptability in children; however, their professional

responsibilities may limit the amount of time available for direct interaction. In contrast, non-working mothers may provide greater emotional availability, supervision, and consistent engagement, which can strengthen parent-child bonding and emotional security. The influence of maternal employment on children's self-esteem, however, is not uniform and cannot be understood in isolation. It is shaped by multiple interrelated factors such as the quality of parent-child interaction, parenting practices, emotional support, and the broader socio-cultural environment. Furthermore, children in contemporary society are increasingly exposed to challenges such as digital media influence, peer pressure, and shifting cultural expectations, all of which can significantly affect their self-perception and emotional well-being. In this context, it becomes essential to critically examine existing literature to understand how maternal employment relates to the development of self-esteem among children. This paper, therefore, aims to provide a comprehensive review of prior studies, analyse key influencing factors, and develop a deeper conceptual understanding of the relationship between maternal roles and children's self-esteem within a changing social environment.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To review existing literature on self-esteem among children
- To examine the influence of maternal employment on self-esteem
- To identify key factors affecting self-esteem in children
- To highlight research gaps

4. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Understanding Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a fundamental psychological construct that reflects an individual's overall evaluation of their self-worth. It encompasses beliefs about one's abilities, values, and sense of personal significance, as well as emotional states such as pride, satisfaction, or feelings of inadequacy. One of the most widely accepted definitions is provided by Morris Rosenberg, who conceptualized self-esteem as a global attitude toward the self, representing the degree to which individuals perceive themselves as worthy and competent. Self-esteem develops gradually through social interactions and personal experiences, particularly during childhood and adolescence. It is shaped by feedback received from significant others, including parents, teachers, and peers. Positive reinforcement, acceptance, and encouragement tend to foster healthy self-esteem, whereas criticism, neglect, or rejection may contribute to lower self-worth. Importantly, self-esteem is not a fixed trait but a dynamic construct that evolves over time in response to changing social and environmental contexts. In children, self-esteem plays a critical role in influencing motivation, behaviour, emotional regulation, and interpersonal relationships. High self-esteem is associated with confidence, resilience, and active participation in social and academic activities, while low self-esteem may lead to anxiety, withdrawal, and reduced engagement.

4.2 Theoretical Foundations

The development of self-esteem can be better understood through various psychological theories that explain how children internalize experiences and construct their self-perception.

Social Learning Theory: Proposed by Albert Bandura, Social Learning Theory emphasizes that children learn behaviours, attitudes, and self-perceptions through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. According to this perspective, children model their behaviour based on parental actions and responses. Supportive, encouraging, and responsive parenting can enhance a child's self-esteem, whereas negative or inconsistent reinforcement may undermine it.

Attachment Theory: John Bowlby introduced Attachment Theory, which highlights the importance of early emotional bonds between children and caregivers. Secure attachment, formed through consistent care, emotional responsiveness, and availability, contributes to the development of a positive self-image and higher self-esteem. In contrast, insecure attachment, resulting from neglect or inconsistent caregiving, may lead to feelings of insecurity and low self-worth.

Self-Concept Theory: Self-Concept Theory focuses on how individuals perceive and evaluate themselves across different domains. Scholars such as Carl Rogers emphasized that self-concept develops through experiences and social interactions,

particularly through the process of receiving unconditional positive regard. When children feel accepted and valued, they are more likely to develop a positive self-concept, which in turn strengthens their self-esteem. Conversely, conditional acceptance or excessive criticism may create discrepancies between the real self and the ideal self, leading to lower self-esteem.

4.3 Dimensions of Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a multidimensional construct that manifests across various domains of a child's life. Understanding these dimensions provides a more comprehensive view of how self-esteem operates and develops.

Emotional Dimension: The emotional dimension of self-esteem relates to how children feel about themselves, including their sense of self-worth, emotional stability, and ability to cope with stress and challenges. Children with strong emotional self-esteem tend to exhibit confidence, optimism, and resilience, whereas those with low emotional self-esteem may experience anxiety, insecurity, and emotional instability.

Social Dimension: The social dimension refers to children's perceptions of their ability to interact effectively with others and form meaningful relationships. It includes aspects such as peer acceptance, communication skills, and social confidence. Positive social experiences and supportive relationships contribute to higher social self-esteem, while rejection or social isolation may negatively impact it.

Academic Dimension: The academic dimension of self-esteem reflects children's perceptions of their competence and performance in educational settings. It influences motivation, learning behaviour, and academic achievement. Children who perceive themselves as capable learners are more likely to engage actively in academic tasks, whereas those with low academic self-esteem may avoid challenges and exhibit reduced academic interest.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

5.1 Studies Supporting Positive Impact of Working Mothers

A number of studies have reported a positive association between maternal employment and the development of self-esteem among children. These studies suggest that children of working mothers are often exposed to environments that promote independence, responsibility, and adaptability, which contribute to a stronger sense of self-worth. For instance, **Kaur and Sharma (2018)** found that children of working mothers demonstrated comparatively higher levels of self-esteem, particularly in contexts where they were encouraged to take initiative and engage in decision-making. Maternal employment is also associated with improved socio-economic conditions, which may provide children with better educational resources, social exposure, and opportunities for personal growth. Such environments can enhance a child's perception of competence and achievement, thereby strengthening self-esteem. Additionally, exposure to diverse social settings and structured routines may help children develop problem-solving abilities and self-reliance. Overall, these studies suggest that, when supported by positive parenting practices, maternal employment can contribute to the development of autonomy and competence, which are key components of healthy self-esteem.

5.2 Studies Supporting Non-Working Mothers Advantage

In contrast, several studies emphasize the advantages associated with non-working mothers, particularly in terms of emotional availability and consistent caregiving. Research by **Rani and Singh (2022)** indicates that children of non-working mothers tend to exhibit higher levels of emotional stability and self-esteem, largely due to increased parental involvement and continuous supervision. Non-working mothers are generally able to spend more time with their children, providing consistent emotional support, guidance, and reinforcement. This sustained interaction strengthens the parent-child bond and fosters a secure and nurturing environment, which is essential for the development of positive self-esteem. **Juyal and Sharma (2015)** also observed that children raised in such environments tend to demonstrate balanced emotional development and a stronger sense of self-worth. These findings highlight that the quality and consistency of maternal involvement can significantly influence children's self-esteem, sometimes outweighing the advantages associated with financial or social exposure.

5.3 Studies Showing No Significant Difference

A considerable body of literature suggests that maternal employment status alone does not have a significant impact on children's self-esteem. Studies such as **York (1994)** indicate that children's self-esteem is more strongly influenced by overall family satisfaction, emotional climate, and the quality of relationships within the household, rather than by whether the mother is employed. Similarly, several researchers have found no substantial differences in self-esteem levels between

children of working and non-working mothers, suggesting that the influence of maternal employment is mediated by other factors such as parenting style, emotional support, and socio-economic conditions. These findings reinforce the view that self-esteem is a multidimensional construct shaped by a combination of interacting variables rather than a single determinant. This perspective shifts the focus from employment status to the broader family environment, emphasizing that both working and non-working mothers can effectively support the development of healthy self-esteem when appropriate emotional and psychological support is provided.

5.4 Role of Parenting Style and Emotional Support

Across the literature, parenting style and emotional support consistently emerge as the most significant determinants of children's self-esteem. Studies by **Michael H. Kernis and colleagues (2000)** demonstrate that stable and high self-esteem is associated with supportive, responsive, and less critical parenting behaviours. Parental warmth, acceptance, encouragement, and open communication play a crucial role in fostering a positive self-image in children. Conversely, overly critical, neglectful, or inconsistent parenting practices may lead to fragile or low self-esteem. Research by **Kawash, Kerr, and Clewes (1985)** further emphasizes that perceived parental behaviour, particularly in terms of acceptance and autonomy support, significantly influences children's sense of self-worth. These findings suggest that parenting style acts as a key mediating factor, shaping how children interpret their experiences and develop their self-perception, regardless of maternal employment status.

5.5 Influence of Socio-Economic and Environmental Factors

In addition to parental roles, socio-economic and environmental factors play a crucial role in shaping children's self-esteem. Access to quality education, living conditions, and opportunities for social interaction can significantly influence a child's perception of competence and self-worth. Children raised in supportive and resource-rich environments are more likely to develop positive self-esteem compared to those facing economic hardship or social disadvantage. Furthermore, contemporary environmental influences such as digital media exposure, peer pressure, and social comparison have become increasingly relevant. These factors can shape children's self-perception by influencing their expectations, behaviour, and emotional responses. Studies such as **French, Story, and Perry (1995)** highlight that issues like body image dissatisfaction are associated with lower self-esteem, demonstrating the interconnected nature of physical, social, and psychological influences. Overall, the literature indicates that self-esteem is shaped by a complex interaction of family dynamics, socio-economic conditions, and environmental influences. Maternal employment, therefore, should be understood as one component within a broader developmental framework rather than as an isolated determinant.

6. FACTORS INFLUENCING SELF-ESTEEM

6.1 Parenting Style: Parenting style is one of the most significant determinants of children's self-esteem, as it directly influences how children perceive themselves and interpret their abilities. Authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and appropriate control, is consistently associated with higher levels of self-esteem. Such parents provide guidance while encouraging autonomy, which helps children develop confidence and a positive sense of self-worth. In contrast, authoritarian parenting, marked by strict control and limited emotional responsiveness, may suppress children's self-expression and lead to lower self-esteem. Similarly, neglectful or uninvolved parenting can result in feelings of rejection and inadequacy, negatively affecting a child's self-perception. Permissive parenting, although emotionally supportive, may sometimes lack structure, which can hinder the development of discipline and self-regulation. Overall, parenting style shapes the emotional climate of the family and plays a crucial role in determining whether children develop a secure and positive self-image.

6.2 Maternal Involvement: Maternal involvement refers to the extent to which mothers actively participate in their children's emotional, social, and academic lives. High levels of maternal involvement are associated with better emotional support, guidance, and reinforcement, all of which contribute to the development of healthy self-esteem. Children who receive consistent attention, encouragement, and feedback from their mothers are more likely to feel valued and capable. Active involvement in activities such as academic support, problem-solving, and emotional communication strengthens the parent-child relationship and enhances children's sense of security. However, it is not merely the quantity of involvement that matters, but also the quality. Meaningful engagement, characterized by understanding, empathy, and responsiveness, has a more significant impact on self-esteem than mere physical presence.

6.3 Quality of Mother-Child Interaction: The quality of interaction between mother and child plays a critical role in

shaping children's self-esteem. Positive interactions, including open communication, emotional warmth, and mutual respect, foster a supportive environment in which children feel accepted and valued. Constructive feedback and positive reinforcement help children build confidence in their abilities, while negative interactions such as criticism, neglect, or inconsistent responses may lead to self-doubt and insecurity. The nature of daily interactions influences how children internalize their experiences and develop their self-concept. A strong and secure relationship based on trust and communication enables children to express themselves freely, take initiative, and cope effectively with challenges, thereby strengthening their self-esteem.

6.4 Socio-Economic Status: Socio-economic status (SES) significantly influences children's self-esteem by shaping their access to resources, opportunities, and social environments. Children from higher socio-economic backgrounds often have access to better education, extracurricular activities, and supportive learning environments, which can enhance their sense of competence and achievement. In contrast, economic constraints may limit opportunities and expose children to stress, insecurity, and social disadvantage, which can negatively affect self-esteem. However, the relationship between SES and self-esteem is not purely deterministic. Supportive family environments, strong parental involvement, and positive social relationships can mitigate the adverse effects of lower socio-economic conditions. Thus, while socio-economic factors play an important role, their impact is often mediated by family dynamics and emotional support systems.

6.5 Digital Exposure and Peer Pressure: In contemporary society, digital media and peer influence have become significant factors affecting children's self-esteem. Exposure to social media, online content, and digital platforms can shape children's self-perception through constant comparison, unrealistic standards, and external validation. Peer pressure also plays a critical role, particularly during adolescence, when social acceptance becomes highly important. Positive peer relationships can enhance self-esteem by providing support and a sense of belonging, whereas negative experiences such as rejection, bullying, or comparison may lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-worth. Excessive digital exposure, especially without parental guidance, can contribute to a distorted self-image and emotional instability. Therefore, balanced digital engagement and supportive social environments are essential for maintaining healthy self-esteem.

7. MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT AND SELF-ESTEEM

7.1 Working Mothers: Opportunities and Challenges

Maternal employment in contemporary society has introduced significant changes in family dynamics, with both potential advantages and challenges for children's self-esteem. On the positive side, working mothers often contribute to improved financial stability, which can enhance access to educational resources, extracurricular opportunities, and a supportive living environment. Such conditions can foster a sense of competence and achievement in children, thereby strengthening their self-esteem.

Additionally, children of working mothers are often exposed to environments that promote independence, responsibility, and adaptability. Observing their mothers manage both professional and personal responsibilities may also serve as a model of competence and self-efficacy, which children may internalize in the development of their own self-worth.

However, maternal employment may also present certain challenges. Limited time for direct interaction and supervision can affect the consistency of emotional support and guidance provided to children. In some cases, reduced availability may lead to weaker parent-child bonding or feelings of neglect, particularly if not balanced with meaningful engagement. Therefore, the impact of maternal employment on self-esteem is not inherently positive or negative, but depends largely on the quality of parenting and the emotional environment within the family.

7.2 Non-Working Mothers: Strengths and Limitations

Non-working mothers, traditionally associated with primary caregiving roles, often provide greater emotional availability and consistent supervision. This continuous presence can foster a secure and nurturing environment, which is essential for the development of positive self-esteem. Regular interaction, guidance, and emotional support strengthen the parent-child bond and contribute to a stable sense of self-worth in children.

Children in such environments may benefit from increased attention to their emotional and developmental needs, as well as closer monitoring of their behaviour and activities. This can help in building emotional security, discipline, and a strong sense of belonging, all of which are important components of self-esteem.

However, there are also potential limitations. In some cases, limited exposure to diverse social environments and structured challenges may restrict opportunities for developing independence and self-reliance. Additionally, overprotective parenting or excessive control, if present, may hinder the development of autonomy, which is equally important for healthy self-esteem.

Thus, while non-working mothers provide strong emotional support, the overall impact on self-esteem depends on how effectively this support is balanced with opportunities for independence and growth.

7.3 Comparative Theoretical Insights

A comparative analysis of working and non-working mothers indicates that neither category can be universally associated with higher or lower levels of self-esteem in children. Instead, the relationship is complex and mediated by multiple factors, including parenting style, emotional support, socio-economic conditions, and the quality of parent–child interaction.

From a theoretical perspective, frameworks such as Social Learning Theory suggest that children benefit from observing competent role models, which may support the positive influence of working mothers. At the same time, Attachment Theory emphasizes the importance of emotional availability and secure bonding, which aligns with the strengths associated with non-working mothers.

These perspectives highlight that both working and non-working mothers can positively contribute to the development of self-esteem when effective parenting practices are present. The key determinant is not employment status itself, but the quality of the emotional environment and the nature of parent–child relationships.

Therefore, maternal employment should be understood as one of several interacting factors rather than as a singular determinant of children’s self-esteem. A balanced approach that integrates emotional support with opportunities for independence is essential for fostering healthy self-esteem.

A comparative overview of the influence of working and non-working mothers on children’s self-esteem is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Children of Working and Non-Working Mothers

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Working Mothers</i>	<i>Non-Working Mothers</i>
<i>Emotional Support</i>	May be limited (time constraints)	Higher due to availability
<i>Independence</i>	Higher (self-reliance)	Moderate
<i>Supervision</i>	Moderate	High
<i>Socio-economic Benefits</i>	Strong	Limited
<i>Parent–Child Interaction</i>	Quality-dependent	Quantity + quality
<i>Impact on Self-Esteem</i>	Mixed (depends on parenting)	Mixed (depends on support)

The comparison highlights that maternal employment alone is not a determining factor, as multiple contextual variables influence children’s self-esteem.

8. RESEARCH GAP

Despite a substantial body of literature examining the relationship between maternal employment and children’s psychological development, several important gaps remain.

Firstly, existing studies present contradictory findings regarding the impact of maternal employment on children’s self-esteem. While some research suggests positive outcomes associated with working mothers, others highlight the advantages of non-working mothers, and many report no significant difference. This lack of consensus indicates the need for a more integrated and systematic understanding of the relationship.

Secondly, there is a noticeable lack of context-specific research, particularly in rapidly urbanizing societies and diverse socio-cultural settings. Much of the existing literature does not adequately capture the influence of changing family structures, cultural expectations, and contemporary lifestyle factors on children’s self-esteem.

Thirdly, a significant proportion of studies examine self-esteem alongside other psychological constructs, without providing a focused and in-depth analysis of self-esteem as an independent variable. This limits clarity regarding its specific determinants and developmental outcomes.

Finally, there is a lack of integrative approaches that simultaneously consider multiple influencing factors such as parenting style, maternal involvement, socio-economic conditions, and environmental influences. Most studies tend to examine these variables in isolation, resulting in fragmented and incomplete insights.

These gaps highlight the need for a more holistic, integrated, and conceptually grounded approach to understanding the relationship between maternal employment and children's self-esteem.

9. DISCUSSION

The present review highlights the complex and multifaceted nature of the relationship between maternal employment and the development of self-esteem among children. A comparative analysis of existing studies reveals three broad patterns: studies indicating positive outcomes associated with working mothers, studies emphasizing the advantages of non-working mothers, and studies reporting no significant difference between the two groups.

The variation in findings suggests that maternal employment, in itself, is not a definitive determinant of children's self-esteem. Instead, its impact is mediated by several underlying factors, including parenting style, emotional support, quality of interaction, and socio-economic conditions. Studies supporting working mothers often emphasize the development of independence, responsibility, and exposure to diverse social environments, which may enhance children's sense of competence. Conversely, research favouring non-working mothers highlights the importance of emotional availability, consistent caregiving, and secure attachment in fostering a stable sense of self-worth.

From a conceptual perspective, these findings align with established psychological theories. Social learning perspectives suggest that children benefit from observing competent role models, which may explain the positive influence of working mothers. At the same time, attachment-based explanations underscore the importance of emotional bonding and responsiveness, which are often associated with non-working mothers. These theoretical insights reinforce the idea that both structural and relational factors contribute to the development of self-esteem.

A key insight emerging from the literature is the central role of parenting quality over employment status. Supportive, responsive, and communicative parenting practices consistently demonstrate a stronger influence on self-esteem than whether the mother is employed. This indicates that children's self-perception is shaped more by the emotional environment and the quality of relationships than by occupational roles.

Furthermore, the review highlights the importance of multiple interacting influences. Socio-economic status, peer relationships, educational opportunities, and digital exposure all contribute to shaping children's self-esteem. These factors do not operate independently but interact with family dynamics to produce varied developmental outcomes.

Overall, the discussion underscores that maternal employment should be understood within a broader ecological framework, where multiple factors collectively influence children's self-esteem. A reductionist approach focusing solely on employment status fails to capture the complexity of child development.

10. IMPLICATIONS

10.1 For Parents

Parents should prioritize the quality of their interaction with children by providing consistent emotional support, encouragement, and open communication. Both working and non-working mothers can effectively foster self-esteem by maintaining active involvement in their children's lives. Emphasis should be placed on creating a balanced environment that combines emotional warmth with opportunities for independence and self-expression. Regulating digital exposure and guiding children in managing peer pressure are also essential for maintaining healthy self-esteem.

10.2 For Educators

Educational institutions should play an active role in promoting self-esteem through supportive and inclusive learning environments. Teachers can contribute by encouraging participation, recognizing individual strengths, and minimizing fear of failure. Schools should integrate programs focused on emotional development, life skills, and self-awareness. Collaboration between parents and educators is also crucial to ensure consistency in the support system provided to children.

10.3 For Policymakers

Policymakers should develop initiatives that support balanced parenting, such as flexible work arrangements and parental leave policies. Awareness programs emphasizing the importance of emotional involvement in child development should be promoted. Educational policies should incorporate mental health and self-esteem development as key components of the curriculum. Additionally, community-based programs addressing challenges such as digital overexposure and peer pressure can contribute to healthier developmental outcomes.

11. CONCLUSION

The present review provides a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between maternal employment and the development of self-esteem among children. The analysis of existing literature indicates that maternal employment, by itself,

is not a decisive factor in determining children's self-esteem. Instead, the findings consistently suggest that the quality of parenting, emotional support, and the broader socio-cultural environment play a more significant role. Both working and non-working mothers offer distinct advantages that can contribute positively to children's self-esteem when supported by effective parenting practices. While working mothers may facilitate independence and adaptability, non-working mothers may provide greater emotional availability and consistent guidance. However, the overall impact depends on how these roles are enacted within the family context. The review emphasizes that self-esteem is a multidimensional construct shaped by the interaction of various factors, including parenting style, maternal involvement, socio-economic conditions, and environmental influences. Therefore, maternal employment should not be viewed in isolation but as one component within a broader developmental framework. In conclusion, fostering healthy self-esteem among children requires a balanced approach that integrates emotional support, positive parenting practices, and opportunities for growth and independence.

12. LIMITATIONS OF THE REVIEW

This review is subject to certain limitations. Firstly, it is based solely on secondary sources; therefore, its findings depend on the scope, quality, and availability of existing literature. Secondly, the review may not fully capture diverse socio-cultural contexts, as the included studies are limited in representation. Thirdly, variations in research design, methodology, and measurement approaches across studies may affect the comparability and generalizability of findings. Furthermore, the review focuses primarily on maternal roles and does not extensively examine the influence of other factors such as paternal involvement, school environment, and broader social structures. These limitations underscore the need for further empirical and context-specific research to validate and extend the insights presented in this paper.

13. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future research should aim to address the gaps identified in the existing literature by adopting more comprehensive and context-sensitive approaches. Longitudinal studies can provide deeper insights into the developmental trajectory of self-esteem and the long-term effects of maternal roles. Comparative studies across rural and urban settings can enhance understanding of socio-cultural variations in children's self-esteem. Additionally, future research should incorporate the role of fathers and other family members to provide a more holistic perspective on family dynamics. Given the increasing influence of technology, further studies should examine the impact of digital media, peer interactions, and contemporary lifestyle factors on children's self-esteem. Integrating multiple variables within a unified analytical framework can also improve the depth, clarity, and applicability of future research.

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