

# The Role of Parents' Marital Relationship Quality in Adolescents' Self-Esteem with the Mediating Role of Attachment Style: A Structural Modeling Approach

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## Article Info

## ABSTRACT

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**Objective:** This study aimed to examine whether parents' marital relationship quality predicts adolescents' self-esteem directly and indirectly through the mediating role of attachment style using a structural equation modeling approach.

**Methods and Materials:** The study employed an applied, descriptive-correlational design using path analysis. The statistical population consisted of adolescents aged 14–18 years and their parents residing in Sepidan County in 2025. A multistage cluster sampling method was used to select the sample from upper secondary schools, resulting in the participation of 187 adolescents and 183 parents. Data were collected using standardized instruments, including the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale for marital relationship quality, and the Hazan and Shaver Attachment Styles Scale. After obtaining informed consent, questionnaires were administered in person. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS (version 23) for preliminary analyses and AMOS (version 23) for testing the structural model and evaluating model fit indices.

**Findings:** Structural equation modeling revealed that parents' marital relationship quality had a significant direct effect on adolescents' self-esteem ( $\beta = 0.451$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Attachment style also showed a significant direct effect on adolescents' self-esteem ( $\beta = 0.387$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In addition, marital relationship quality significantly predicted adolescents' attachment style ( $\beta = 0.381$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Mediation analysis indicated that attachment style partially mediated the relationship between marital relationship quality and adolescents' self-esteem, as the direct path remained significant after inclusion of the mediator, while its magnitude decreased. Overall model fit indices demonstrated an acceptable fit between the proposed model and the empirical data.

**Conclusion:** The findings indicate that parents' marital relationship quality plays a crucial role in adolescents' self-esteem both directly and indirectly by shaping adolescents' attachment styles.

**Keywords:** adolescents' self-esteem, marital relationship quality, attachment style, structural equation modeling

## 1. Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterized by profound biological, cognitive, emotional, and social changes, during which individuals consolidate their sense of self and personal value. One of the most central psychological constructs emerging and stabilizing during this stage is self-esteem, which reflects an individual's overall evaluation of self-worth and personal competence. Extensive evidence indicates that adolescent self-esteem is closely linked to mental health, emotional regulation, social adjustment, and long-term well-being, functioning both as a protective factor against psychological problems and as a vulnerability marker when disrupted (Harris & Orth, 2020; Muris & Otgaar, 2023). Given its developmental significance, identifying familial and relational determinants of adolescent self-esteem has become a key focus in contemporary developmental and family psychology.

Within the family system, parents play a fundamental role in shaping adolescents' psychological adjustment through both direct and indirect mechanisms. Family systems theory emphasizes that adolescents do not develop in isolation but within interconnected relational subsystems, among which the marital relationship constitutes a central structural and emotional context. The quality of the marital relationship influences the emotional climate of the family, parenting practices, and patterns of interaction that adolescents observe and internalize over time (Keizer et al., 2019; Lucier-Greer et al., 2020). High-quality marital relationships are generally characterized by mutual support, effective communication, emotional warmth, and constructive conflict resolution, whereas low-quality relationships are often marked by hostility, withdrawal, chronic conflict, and emotional disengagement. These marital dynamics can significantly shape adolescents' perceptions of relational security and personal worth.

A growing body of empirical research demonstrates that parents' marital relationship quality is associated with a wide range of adolescent psychological outcomes, including emotional well-being, anxiety, depressive symptoms, and behavioral adjustment (Lucas-Thompson, 2020; Yan et al., 2024). When adolescents are exposed to persistent marital conflict or relational instability, they may experience heightened emotional distress, feelings of insecurity, and reduced self-esteem. Conversely, supportive and harmonious marital relationships provide adolescents with a stable emotional environment that fosters positive self-

appraisals and adaptive coping. Longitudinal and cross-sectional studies consistently show that adolescents who perceive their parents' relationship as warm and cooperative report higher levels of self-esteem and psychological resilience (Keizer et al., 2019; Saadati & Parsakia, 2023).

Despite the robust association between marital relationship quality and adolescent adjustment, the mechanisms through which marital dynamics influence adolescents' self-esteem are complex and multifaceted. One key theoretical framework for understanding these mechanisms is attachment theory, which posits that early interactions with caregivers form internal working models that guide individuals' expectations about relationships and the self across the lifespan. Attachment styles, typically categorized as secure, avoidant, and anxious-ambivalent, reflect enduring patterns of emotional regulation, relational trust, and self-evaluation (Dong, 2024; Sagone et al., 2023). Secure attachment is associated with positive self-concepts and emotional stability, whereas insecure attachment styles are linked to self-doubt, emotional dysregulation, and vulnerability to psychological problems.

Although attachment styles are initially formed in early childhood, adolescence represents a period of reorganization and consolidation of attachment representations, during which ongoing family interactions continue to shape adolescents' relational schemas. Parents' marital relationship quality can indirectly influence adolescents' attachment styles by affecting parenting behaviors, emotional availability, and the overall sense of relational safety within the family system (Maya et al., 2024; Miljkovich et al., 2025). High marital quality is often associated with greater parental warmth and responsiveness, which support the development of secure attachment. In contrast, chronic marital discord may undermine parental sensitivity and increase emotional inconsistency, contributing to insecure attachment patterns.

Empirical studies increasingly support the mediating role of attachment in the association between family relational variables and adolescent psychological outcomes. For example, research indicates that adolescents exposed to marital conflict are more likely to develop insecure attachment styles, which in turn predict lower self-esteem and poorer psychosocial adjustment (Maya et al., 2024; Pandey & Gupta, 2025). Similarly, secure attachment has been shown to buffer the negative effects of family stressors, such as bullying, trauma, and parental burnout, on adolescents' self-esteem and mental health (Miljkovich et al., 2025; Zhou et al., 2025). These findings suggest that

attachment style functions as a critical psychological pathway linking family relational quality to adolescents' self-evaluative processes.

In addition to attachment, the broader parent-child relational context plays an important role in adolescents' self-esteem development. High-quality parent-child relationships, characterized by emotional support, autonomy support, and open communication, are consistently associated with positive self-esteem and psychological adjustment in adolescents (Aslami & Parvandeh, 2020; Yan et al., 2024). Marital relationship quality can influence this dyadic relationship indirectly by shaping parents' emotional resources and interaction styles. When marital relationships are strained, parents may experience increased stress and reduced emotional availability, which can negatively affect parent-child interactions and adolescents' perceptions of being valued and supported (Nana & Mamat, 2023; Yousefi et al., 2021).

Cultural and contextual factors further underscore the importance of examining marital relationship quality and attachment processes in diverse populations. Studies conducted across different cultural settings suggest that while the fundamental mechanisms linking family relationships to adolescent self-esteem are universal, their expression may vary depending on social norms, family structures, and cultural expectations regarding parenting and marital roles (Feng & Cui, 2024; Galvan et al., 2022). In collectivist and family-oriented cultures, marital harmony and parental unity may hold particularly strong symbolic value for adolescents' sense of security and self-worth, highlighting the need for context-sensitive research.

Recent advances in developmental and family psychology also emphasize the dynamic and reciprocal nature of family relationships. Adolescents are not merely passive recipients of family influences but actively interpret and respond to marital and parental dynamics. Discrepancies between parents' and adolescents' perceptions of relationship quality and parental behaviors have been shown to predict adolescents' psychological adjustment, including self-esteem and emotional well-being (Colton & Godleski, 2025; Zheng et al., 2025). These findings suggest that adolescents' subjective interpretations of marital relationship quality and relational security may be as influential as objective relational characteristics.

Methodologically, structural equation modeling has emerged as a powerful analytic approach for examining complex relational pathways among family variables, attachment processes, and adolescent outcomes. This

approach allows for simultaneous testing of direct and indirect effects, providing a nuanced understanding of mediational mechanisms underlying adolescent self-esteem development (Miermont, 2025; Tafà et al., 2025). By integrating marital relationship quality, attachment style, and adolescent self-esteem within a single structural model, researchers can more precisely identify the pathways through which family dynamics shape adolescent psychological functioning.

Despite the growing literature, several gaps remain. Many studies have examined marital relationship quality, attachment, and adolescent self-esteem in isolation rather than within an integrated structural framework. Moreover, empirical research in non-Western contexts remains limited, and few studies have simultaneously assessed parents' marital relationship quality and adolescents' attachment styles as joint predictors of adolescent self-esteem. Additionally, recent evidence highlights the need to consider contemporary family stressors, such as parental burnout, psychological control, and shifting parenting norms, which may interact with marital quality and attachment processes in shaping adolescents' self-evaluations (Zheng & Chen, 2025; Zhou et al., 2025).

Building on family systems theory, attachment theory, and empirical findings from developmental psychology, the present study seeks to address these gaps by examining a comprehensive model in which parents' marital relationship quality predicts adolescents' self-esteem both directly and indirectly through attachment style. By employing a structural equation modeling approach, this study aims to contribute to a more integrated understanding of how marital dynamics and attachment processes jointly influence adolescents' psychological development, with implications for family-based interventions and preventive mental health programs.

The aim of the present study was to examine the role of parents' marital relationship quality in predicting adolescents' self-esteem through the mediating role of attachment style using a structural equation modeling approach.

## 2. Methods and Materials

### 2.1. Study Design and Participants

The present study was applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-correlational in terms of method, employing a path analysis approach. The statistical population consisted of all adolescents aged 14–18 years and their parents

residing in Sepidan County in 2025, which, based on available statistics, was estimated at approximately 3,500 individuals. The research sample was selected using a multistage cluster sampling method. Accordingly, three girls' high schools and three boys' high schools were randomly selected from upper secondary schools in Sepidan County. Then, from each school, one class from the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades was randomly selected, and all students in those classes, along with their parents, were included in the study. In total, 373 individuals (adolescents and their parents) participated as the final sample.

Inclusion criteria comprised adolescents being within the age range of 14–18 years, enrollment in upper secondary schools, living with both parents, and willingness to participate in the study. Exclusion criteria included failure to complete the questionnaires, withdrawal at any stage of the research, and the presence of severe psychological problems as reported by families.

Data were collected using the standardized Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the Busby Marital Relationship Quality questionnaire, and the Hazan and Shaver Attachment Styles scale. After explaining the objectives of the study and assuring participants of the confidentiality of their information, informed consent was obtained, and the questionnaires were administered in person to adolescents and their parents.

## 2.2. Measures

**Self-Esteem Questionnaire:** The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) is a valid and widely used instrument for assessing individuals' self-esteem and self-concept. It was developed by Morris Rosenberg in 1965 and consists of 10 items. The scale is designed to evaluate positive and negative attitudes toward the self and an individual's overall sense of self-worth, and it is completed as a self-report measure. The items comprise two subscales: personal competence and self-satisfaction, which assess individuals' perceived ability to cope with challenges and their level of self-acceptance and satisfaction, respectively. Scoring is based on a four-point Likert scale, with negatively worded items reverse-scored. Total scores range from 10 to 40, with higher scores indicating higher levels of self-esteem. International studies and domestic research conducted in Iran have demonstrated the scale's high validity and reliability; in the present study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.84.

**Marital Relationship Quality Questionnaire:** The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS), developed by Busby and

colleagues, is a valid instrument for assessing the quality of marital relationships and consists of 14 items across three subscales: consensus, satisfaction, and cohesion. The questionnaire is scored on a six-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating higher marital relationship quality. By providing a comprehensive picture of couples' agreement, satisfaction, and intimacy, this instrument allows for detailed analysis of marital relationships. In the present study, it was used to examine the effect of marital relationship quality on adolescents' self-esteem with the mediating role of attachment style and the parent-child relationship. The reliability of the questionnaire in the current study was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92, and its validity has been supported through convergent validity studies and correlations with similar validated instruments.

**Attachment Styles Scale:** The Hazan and Shaver Attachment Styles Scale is a valid instrument for assessing attachment patterns in interpersonal relationships. The shortened 15-item version was adapted for use in Iran by Doost Mohammadi in 2010. This scale assesses three attachment styles—secure, avoidant, and anxious-ambivalent—and is scored on a five-point Likert scale. Higher scores indicate greater intensity of each attachment style. Owing to its strong psychometric properties and cultural adaptation to the Iranian context, this instrument facilitates analysis of the mediating role of attachment style between marital relationship quality and adolescents' self-esteem. In the present study, the reliability of the scale was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85, and its validity was supported by previous studies and factor analytic findings.

## 2.3. Data Analysis

For data analysis, descriptive indices and tests of data normality were first calculated using SPSS software (version 23). Subsequently, to examine direct and indirect relationships among variables and to test the mediating role of attachment style and the parent-child relationship in the association between marital relationship quality and adolescents' self-esteem, structural equation modeling was conducted using AMOS software (version 23). Model fit was evaluated using commonly accepted fit indices.

## 3. Findings and Results

The research sample consisted of 187 adolescents aged 14 to 18 years who were selected from six upper secondary

schools in Sepidan County. Of these participants, 96 (51.3%) were boys and 91 (48.7%) were girls, indicating a relatively balanced gender distribution. The highest age frequency was 15 years (27.8%), and the lowest was 17 years (15.5%). In terms of grade level, the largest proportion was in the tenth grade (45.5%), while the smallest proportion was in the twelfth grade (17.1%). In the parents' section, 183 individuals participated, including 102 mothers (55.7%) and 81 fathers (44.3%). The largest parental age group was 41–

45 years (34.9%). Regarding educational level, the highest frequency was among parents with a high school diploma (48.6%), and in terms of employment status, the majority of parents were employed (59.6%). In addition, most parents were in the middle stages of marital life, namely 16 to 25 years of marriage (84.7%). This demographic distribution provides a suitable representation of adolescents and parents in Sepidan County and enables analysis of the relationships among the study variables.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) of the Study Variables*

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Adolescents' Self-Esteem	28.74	5.62
Marital Relationship Quality	49.38	8.91
Attachment Style	52.16	9.47

As shown in Table 1, the mean score of adolescents' self-esteem was 28.74 ( $SD = 5.62$ ), indicating a moderate level of self-esteem among the participants. The mean score for parents' marital relationship quality was 49.38 ( $SD = 8.91$ ), suggesting a generally moderate to relatively high perceived quality of the marital relationship. In addition, the mean

score for attachment style was 52.16 ( $SD = 9.47$ ), reflecting noticeable variability in adolescents' attachment patterns. The magnitude of the standard deviations across variables indicates sufficient dispersion of scores, supporting the appropriateness of subsequent correlational and structural equation modeling analyses.

**Table 2**

*Correlation Matrix of the Study Variables*

Variable	Self-Esteem	Marital Relationship Quality	Attachment Style
Self-Esteem	0.822		
Marital Relationship Quality	0.698	0.888	
Attachment Style	0.597	0.835	0.852

The results indicate that self-esteem is positively correlated with marital relationship quality (0.698) and attachment style (0.597). In addition, marital relationship

quality shows a strong correlation with attachment style (0.835).

**Table 3**

*Regression Coefficients in the Structural Model of the Effects of Independent Variables on the Dependent Variable*

Hypotheses	Standardized Estimate ( $\beta$ )	Unstandardized Estimate	Standard Error (S.E.)	Critical Ratio (C.R.)	p-value
Marital relationship quality → Adolescents' self-esteem	0.451	0.422	0.083	5.084	< .001
Attachment style → Adolescents' self-esteem	0.387	0.351	0.091	3.857	< .001
Marital relationship quality → Attachment style	0.381	0.364	0.079		

The results of Table 3 show that parents' marital relationship quality and adolescents' attachment style are significantly associated with adolescents' self-esteem.

Specifically, marital relationship quality predicts adolescents' self-esteem with a standardized coefficient of  $\beta = 0.451$  (unstandardized estimate = 0.422, S.E. = 0.083, C.R.

= 5.084,  $p < .001$ ), and attachment style also has a significant effect with  $\beta = 0.387$  (unstandardized estimate = 0.351, S.E. = 0.091, C.R. = 3.857,  $p < .001$ ). Moreover, parents' marital relationship quality has a substantial effect on adolescents' attachment style ( $\beta = 0.381$ , unstandardized estimate =

0.364, S.E. = 0.079, C.R. = 4.608,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that improvements in marital relationship quality can foster more positive attachment styles in adolescents and, consequently, enhance their self-esteem.

**Table 4***Correlation Coefficients of Direct and Mediated Paths in the Structural Model*

Hypotheses	Full Mediation Model	Direct Model
Marital relationship quality → Adolescents' self-esteem	0.451	0.459
Attachment style → Adolescents' self-esteem	0.387	—
Marital relationship quality → Attachment style	0.381	—
Parent-child relationship → Adolescents' self-esteem	0.449	—

Based on Table 4, to examine the mediating role of attachment style, the relevant paths in the full mediation model and the direct model were compared. In the direct model, the path coefficient from marital relationship quality to adolescents' self-esteem was 0.459, whereas in the full mediation model this coefficient decreased to 0.451. In addition, the paths from marital relationship quality to attachment style (0.381) and from attachment style to self-esteem (0.387) were significant in the full mediation model. The slight reduction in the direct path coefficient after adding attachment style as a mediator indicates that attachment style plays a partial mediating role, as the direct effect remains significant. Therefore, attachment style has a significant mediating role in the relationship between marital relationship quality and adolescents' self-esteem.

#### 4. Discussion

The present study examined a structural model in which parents' marital relationship quality predicted adolescents' self-esteem directly and indirectly through attachment style. The findings provide robust empirical support for the proposed model and offer important theoretical and practical insights into the mechanisms through which family relational dynamics shape adolescents' psychological development. Overall, the results indicated that higher marital relationship quality among parents was significantly associated with higher levels of adolescents' self-esteem, and that attachment style played a significant partial mediating role in this relationship.

First, the significant direct effect of parents' marital relationship quality on adolescents' self-esteem is consistent with a substantial body of previous research emphasizing the central role of the marital subsystem in adolescent adjustment. From a family systems perspective, the marital

relationship constitutes the emotional core of the family, setting the tone for daily interactions, emotional security, and relational norms. When adolescents grow up in families characterized by marital warmth, cooperation, and constructive conflict resolution, they are more likely to internalize a sense of stability and personal worth. The present findings align closely with longitudinal and meta-analytic evidence showing that positive family relationships are strongly linked to adolescents' self-esteem and social functioning (Harris & Orth, 2020; Keizer et al., 2019). Similarly, prior studies have demonstrated that parental relationship quality predicts a wide range of adolescent outcomes, including psychological capital, emotional regulation, and depressive symptoms, underscoring its broad developmental significance (Lucier-Greer et al., 2020; Saadati & Parsakia, 2023).

The results further corroborate research suggesting that adolescents are particularly sensitive to the emotional climate created by interparental relationships. Exposure to chronic marital conflict or emotional disengagement may undermine adolescents' perceptions of family security and lead to negative self-appraisals, whereas supportive marital interactions promote a sense of belonging and self-worth. These findings are consistent with studies showing that interparental conflict is associated with increased adolescent anxiety and emotional dysregulation, both of which are closely tied to self-esteem processes (Colton & Godleski, 2025; Lucas-Thompson, 2020). Thus, the direct pathway identified in the present study reinforces the view that marital relationship quality functions as a key contextual determinant of adolescents' self-esteem.

Beyond the direct association, a central contribution of this study lies in demonstrating the mediating role of attachment style. The results indicated that parents' marital

relationship quality significantly predicted adolescents' attachment styles, which in turn were significantly associated with adolescents' self-esteem. This finding provides strong empirical support for attachment theory, which posits that relational experiences within the family shape internal working models of the self and others. High-quality marital relationships are likely to foster parental emotional availability, consistency, and responsiveness, which support the development of secure attachment patterns. In contrast, marital discord may compromise parental sensitivity and increase emotional unpredictability, contributing to insecure attachment styles characterized by anxiety or avoidance (Dong, 2024; Maya et al., 2024).

The significant association between attachment style and adolescents' self-esteem observed in this study is consistent with a growing body of literature linking secure attachment to positive self-concepts and psychological well-being. Adolescents with secure attachment tend to view themselves as worthy of care and capable of managing interpersonal challenges, which directly supports higher self-esteem. Conversely, insecure attachment styles are associated with self-doubt, heightened sensitivity to rejection, and maladaptive emotion regulation strategies, all of which undermine self-esteem (Muris & Otgaar, 2023; Sagone et al., 2023). The present findings echo recent empirical studies showing that attachment moderates or mediates the effects of various stressors, such as bullying, trauma, and family conflict, on adolescents' self-esteem (Miljkovich et al., 2025; Pandey & Gupta, 2025).

Importantly, the mediation analysis indicated that attachment style played a partial, rather than full, mediating role. Although the inclusion of attachment style reduced the strength of the direct path between marital relationship quality and adolescents' self-esteem, the direct effect remained significant. This pattern suggests that marital relationship quality influences adolescents' self-esteem through multiple pathways. Attachment processes represent one crucial mechanism, but other factors—such as parental warmth, parenting practices, and parent-child communication—may also transmit the effects of marital dynamics to adolescents' self-evaluations. This interpretation is consistent with studies highlighting the role of parent-child relationship quality and parental psychological resources as additional mediators linking marital relationships to adolescent adjustment (Aslami & Parvandeh, 2020; Yan et al., 2024).

The findings also resonate with recent research emphasizing the interconnectedness of marital quality,

parental functioning, and adolescent outcomes. For example, parental stress and burnout have been shown to negatively affect marital relationship quality, which in turn impacts parenting behaviors and adolescents' emotional well-being (Nana & Mamat, 2023; Zhou et al., 2025). Similarly, discrepancies between parents' and adolescents' perceptions of relational quality and parental control have been found to predict adolescents' psychological adjustment, highlighting the importance of adolescents' subjective interpretations of family dynamics (Zheng & Chen, 2025; Zheng et al., 2025). The present study contributes to this line of research by demonstrating that adolescents' attachment representations serve as a psychological lens through which marital relationship quality is translated into self-esteem outcomes.

Cultural considerations further enhance the relevance of these findings. In family-oriented cultural contexts, marital harmony and parental unity may carry particular symbolic importance for adolescents' sense of security and self-worth. Prior cross-cultural studies suggest that while the basic mechanisms linking family relationships to adolescent self-esteem are universal, their strength and expression may vary across cultural settings (Feng & Cui, 2024; Galvan et al., 2022). The present findings are consistent with this perspective, suggesting that interventions aimed at improving marital relationship quality and attachment security may be especially effective in contexts where family cohesion and interdependence are highly valued.

Methodologically, the use of structural equation modeling allowed for simultaneous examination of direct and indirect pathways, providing a nuanced understanding of the relational processes underlying adolescents' self-esteem. This approach aligns with recent methodological advances in developmental psychology that emphasize integrated models of family functioning rather than isolated bivariate associations (Miermont, 2025; Tafà et al., 2025). By empirically validating a theoretically grounded structural model, the present study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of adolescent self-esteem development within the family system.

## 5. Conclusion

In sum, the findings underscore the pivotal role of parents' marital relationship quality in shaping adolescents' self-esteem and highlight attachment style as a key psychological mechanism in this process. These results not only extend existing theoretical frameworks but also provide empirical support for family-based approaches to promoting

adolescent mental health. Interventions that target marital relationship quality and foster secure attachment may yield significant benefits for adolescents' self-esteem and broader psychological well-being (Saadati & Parsakia, 2023; Yan et al., 2024).

## 6. Limitations & Suggestions

Despite its contributions, the present study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences regarding the relationships among marital relationship quality, attachment style, and adolescents' self-esteem. Second, reliance on self-report measures may have introduced response biases, including social desirability and shared method variance. Third, the sample was drawn from a single geographical and cultural context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other populations or cultural settings. Finally, although attachment style was examined as a mediator, other potentially important mediators—such as parenting practices, parental mental health, and peer relationships—were not included in the model.

Future studies should employ longitudinal designs to clarify the causal and developmental pathways linking marital relationship quality, attachment processes, and adolescents' self-esteem over time. Expanding research to diverse cultural and socioeconomic contexts would enhance the generalizability of findings and allow for cross-cultural comparisons. Additionally, incorporating multiple informants and observational measures could reduce reliance on self-report data and provide a more comprehensive assessment of family dynamics. Future research may also explore additional mediators and moderators, such as parenting styles, emotion regulation, and peer support, to develop more elaborate and explanatory models of adolescent self-esteem development.

From a practical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of family-centered interventions that address marital relationship quality as a pathway to improving adolescents' self-esteem. Counseling and educational programs aimed at enhancing couples' communication, conflict resolution skills, and emotional intimacy may have downstream benefits for adolescents' psychological well-being. Practitioners working with adolescents should also consider assessing attachment-related patterns and family relational contexts as part of comprehensive mental health evaluations. Preventive programs that promote secure attachment and supportive family environments can play a

crucial role in fostering healthy self-esteem and resilience during adolescence.

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## Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

## Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

## Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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## Authors' Contributions

F.M. conceived the study idea, developed the conceptual framework, and supervised the overall research process. N.S. contributed to the research design, selection of measurement instruments, and coordination of data collection. M.K. performed the statistical analyses using structural equation modeling, interpreted the results, and contributed to the methodological rigor of the study. M.Z. participated in the literature review, drafting of the manuscript, and critical revision of the theoretical and discussion sections. All authors collaborated in writing the final manuscript, approved the submitted version, and take responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the work.

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