

Interrelationships of Quality of Parental Relationship, Self-Esteem, and Relational Skills among 4Ps Teenage Beneficiaries in Iligan City, Philippines

ABSTRACT

Understanding how family dynamics and self-esteem impact the social development of teenagers from low-income backgrounds is crucial for designing effective youth development programs. This study investigates the relationship between parental relationships, self-esteem, and relational skills among senior high school students who are beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) in Mindanao, Philippines. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational design and simple random sampling, the study surveyed 171 students using standardized questionnaires. Data analysis included mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation, and linear regression. Participants reported high parental relationship quality, self-esteem, and relational skills components such as bi-directional communication, disclosure and interpersonal closeness, and emotional experience and expression. However, assertion and conflict resolution skills were rated moderately. Parental relationships significantly correlated with self-esteem, particularly with mothers ($p < 0.05$). Both factors significantly influenced relational skills ($p < 0.05$). These findings suggest that while the 4Ps program may positively impact family relationships and self-esteem, additional support might be beneficial for developing stronger assertion and conflict resolution skills among beneficiaries, potentially leading to improved overall social development.

Keywords: Parental Relationships, Relational Skills, Self-Esteem, Iligan City, Philippines

1. INTRODUCTION

The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) is a human development measure of the national government of the Philippines that provides conditional cash grants to the poorest of the poor, to improve the health, nutrition, and the education of children, who are mostly in the teenage years. Despite the program's role of lifting these beneficiaries from poverty, 4Ps teenagers are still vulnerable, marginalized, and excluded from mainstream society due to various factors such as social stigma and discrimination, family and social challenges, exposure to violence, and lack of access to education and healthcare [1]. These teenagers often face multiple challenges that can negatively impact their development, including their relational skills.

The teenage years are critical in the growing up process. It is a time of dramatic change where teenagers discover a sense of self-worth and expanded cognitive abilities. As they mature, relationships with parents change and take on an added dimension and relational skills are called upon to form and maintain relationships [2].

Relational skills are the ability, feeling, skills, trust, tools, knowledge, knowing and understanding to create, communicate, evolve, grow, and maintain a relationship [3]. These skills are the key to building a positive relationship and sorting out any communication difficulties with any teenager. Therefore, these skills should be developed and taught in homes religiously.

The quality of parental relationship, which is manifested using positive parenting styles and practice, is a huge factor in raising teenagers with discipline and good moral values [4]. Parents should diligently attend to the needs of their children, giving them the best of care. In fact, effects of parental rejection are observed during teenage years. Both parents are equally influential and even one rejecting parent is a risk factor for teenage maladjustment [5].

Understanding the aspects of parental relationship is vital because parents' welfare has implications not only for the parents themselves but also for child development, fertility, and the overall health of a society [6]. Children **in the teenage stage** is regarded as the hope of the future; hence, caring and rearing them in a good or positive way will be of great help to them in facing things they may encounter ahead [6].

The quality of parental relationship is strongly linked with the teenagers' level of self-esteem [7]. This is partly because of genetic inheritance and partly through the degree of love, concern, acceptance, and interest that parents show their children [8]. Therefore, one way of improving the quality of parental relationship is through increasing the self-esteem of the teenagers. In addition, the quality of parental relationship can have a significant impact on the relational skills of teenagers [9]. Parents serve as role models for their children, and teenagers often model the behavior they see in their parents' relationship. **If parents have healthy, positive relational skills characterized by communication, respect, and empathy, their teenagers are more likely to develop similar skills and behaviors in their own relationships [7, 9].**

Despite the mentioned studies linking the relational skills to quality of parental relationship and self-esteem [7, 9], there has been no comprehensive research outlining the combined effects of these two variables on relational skills. In addition, no study examined the interplay of these variables among the 4Ps teenager beneficiaries in the Philippines who belong to the most vulnerable group. Research on 4Ps beneficiaries is also an understudied topic. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to assess their relational skills and influencing factors to overcome challenges and develop the skills necessary for healthy relationships and future success. Given this, the researcher is interested in determining how their relational skills are intertwined with the quality of parental relationship and self-esteem. The findings of the study will be beneficial to the development of social work intervention programs that would improve the relational skills of the teenagers using the psychological indicators including the quality of parental relationship and self-esteem, targeted towards the teenager beneficiaries of 4Ps.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This was based on the assumption that the relational skills of the children can be affected by the level of attachment of children to parents and their subjective sense of overall personal worth. This assumption is supported by the following theories: attachment theory, Rosenberg's theory of self-esteem and Sullivan's personality theory.

Attachment theory, formulated by Bowlby [10], is a foundational theory in this research on parental relationships because it emphasizes the importance of these relationships for a child's development. The theory suggests that a strong and nurturing bond with caregivers shapes a child's social, emotional, and cognitive development and creates a mental model that they carry into future relationships. Responsive and consistent parenting is key in building this secure attachment, which provides a sense of security and lays the foundation for a child's future mental health.

Meanwhile, the theory of Rosenberg [11] proposed that self-esteem developed more during the doubt of adolescence. Rosenberg claims that during this developmental stage, self-esteem is built on an evaluation of the self in comparison with others. This means an adolescent compares his or herself to peers they see around them to assess their value while thinking about how others might see them. One of the common beliefs is that people need to feel good about their selves and seek to boost and maintain their positive self-view. **Self-esteem is a good opinion of oneself where 'good feelings' are preferred over 'bad'.** High self-esteem feels good, whereas low self-esteem does not. Self-esteem is often viewed as the most significant indicator of mental well-being and good adjustment. High self-esteem is also related to positive life skills and low self-esteem is connected to aggression, poor academic achievement, depression, and eating disorder. When parents provide a positive and supportive relationship with their children, it can have a positive impact on their self-esteem. A healthy and positive parental relationship characterized by emotional support, encouragement, and positive reinforcement can promote positive self-esteem, while a negative and critical relationship can lead to negative self-beliefs and low self-esteem.

This study is also based on the theory of personality developed by Sullivan [12], which is based on the belief that people's interactions with other people as manifested in their relational skills, especially significant others, determine their sense of security, sense of self, and the dynamisms that motivate their behavior. For Sullivan, personality is the product of a long series of stages in which the individual gradually develops "good feeling" toward others and a sense of a good me toward himself or herself. The individual also learns how to ward off anxiety and correct distorted perceptions of other people, learns to verify his or her ideas through consensual validation, and above all seeks to achieve effective interpersonal relationships on a mature level.

Sullivan's theory of personality, also known as interpersonal theory, emphasizes the importance of social and interpersonal relationships in shaping one's personality [12]. According to Sullivan, an individual's self-concept is primarily formed through interactions with others, and the quality of these interactions can significantly impact the development of the individual's personality.

Sullivan believed that the purpose of all behavior is to get needs met, and that individuals strive for interpersonal security and a sense of belonging in their relationships. This perspective can be applied to relational skills by emphasizing the importance of effectively communicating one's needs and desires in order to foster healthy and fulfilling relationships. Sullivan also emphasized the importance of emotional expression in relationships, as he believed that repressed emotions can lead to interpersonal conflict and inhibit personal growth. Effective emotional expression can help individuals communicate their needs and feelings in a healthy and constructive way, leading to stronger and more fulfilling relationships.

Additionally, Sullivan identified the concept of **"confluence"** or the tendency for individuals to merge their sense of self with those around them in order to achieve a sense of belonging. While this can be a useful strategy for building close relationships, it can also lead to codependency and other unhealthy dynamics if not managed effectively.

Figure 1 shows the schema used in the study. As shown in the figure, the independent variables are the quality of parental relationship and self-esteem while the dependent variable is the relational skills. According to Garthe et al. [13], parent-child relationship is a term that refers to the close, intimate relationship between a parent and their offspring. A

healthy parent-child relationship can be defined as relationship where parents provide for their child's physical, emotional, and developmental needs [13]. An unhealthy parent-child relationship can be defined as an abusive or neglectful environment where children are not given proper care and attention from their parents. A parent-child relationship is a type of interpersonal relationship where an adult has authority over a child. This relationship is often seen as one of the most important and influential relationships in a person's life. A parent-child relationship is foundational for other types of relationships that a person can have, such as sibling and friend relationships.

The quality of parental relationship will be measured using two indicators, namely, relationship with mother and relationship with father. In one study, relationship of students to mothers and father's best describes the quality of child-parental relationships [14]. This is fortified when several enablers of healthy parent-child relationship are present. The quality of the parental relationship with both the mother and father can have a significant impact on a child's emotional, social, and cognitive development. By cultivating positive communication, effective conflict resolution, emotional support, and collaborative parenting, parents can create a home environment that supports healthy development and positive relationships.

Another independent variable in the study is self-esteem. In the study, self-esteem is a unidimensional variable. Orth and Robins [15] stated that self-esteem refers to a general evaluation of an individual's value or worth, which can be expressed either positively or negatively. It is a constituent of the Self-concept, which encompasses an individual's thoughts and emotions that relate to themselves as an object. Along with self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-identification are also crucial components of the Self-concept. Self-esteem, in its entirety, is a stable characteristic of adolescents and is challenging to modify through experimental research methods.

Meanwhile, the dependent variable, relational skills will be measured using five indicators, namely, assertion of needs, bidirectional communication, conflict disclosure and interpersonal closeness, and emotional experience and expression [16].

Assertion of needs refers to the ability to express one's thoughts, feelings, and desires openly and honestly in a relationship without being overly aggressive or passive. This skill involves communicating personal boundaries, preferences, and requirements in a clear and respectful manner. Effective assertion of needs is essential for maintaining mutual understanding and respect between individuals. It ensures that both parties in a relationship are aware of each other's expectations and can work together to meet them, thereby fostering a healthy and balanced dynamic.

Bidirectional communication is the exchange of information, ideas, and feelings between two individuals in a manner that is open, honest, and reciprocal. It involves both speaking and listening attentively, as well as validating and responding to each other's messages. This form of communication promotes understanding, empathy, and collaboration in a relationship. It allows both parties to express their viewpoints, share their experiences, and negotiate mutually acceptable solutions to any issues or conflicts that may arise, thereby strengthening the connection and trust between them.

Conflict refers to the disagreements, differences, or tensions that occur between individuals in a relationship due to varying needs, opinions, or expectations. While conflict is a natural and inevitable aspect of any relationship, the way it is managed and resolved is crucial for the health and longevity of the relationship. Effective conflict resolution involves addressing the underlying issues, understanding each other's perspectives, and working together to find mutually beneficial solutions. It requires communication skills, empathy, compromise, and a

willingness to negotiate and adapt. When managed constructively, conflict can lead to growth, understanding, and increased intimacy in a relationship.

Disclosure and interpersonal closeness refer to the sharing of personal information, thoughts, feelings, and experiences with another individual in a relationship. This process of self-disclosure helps to build trust, intimacy, and connection between individuals by allowing them to get to know each other on a deeper and more meaningful level. It involves being open, vulnerable, and authentic in sharing one's innermost thoughts and emotions, as well as being receptive and empathetic in listening to and understanding the other person's disclosures. Interpersonal closeness is essential for creating a supportive and nurturing environment in which both parties feel valued, understood, and cared for.

Emotional experience and expression refer to the awareness, recognition, and communication of one's own emotions as well as the ability to empathetically respond to and validate the emotions of others in a relationship. This involves being in tune with one's feelings, identifying and articulating them effectively, and expressing them in a constructive and respectful manner. It also involves being attentive and responsive to the emotional cues and expressions of the other person, demonstrating empathy, compassion, and support. Emotional experience and expression are fundamental to building emotional intelligence, fostering understanding, and strengthening emotional bonds in a relationship.

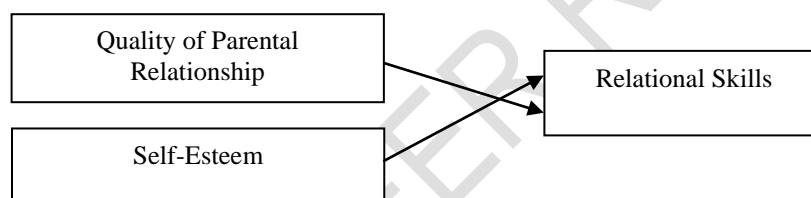


Figure 1. Schematic Presentation of the Study

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study sought to determine the significant influence of quality of parental relationship and self-esteem on the relational skills [bidirectional communication, conflict, disclosure and interpersonal closeness, and emotional experience and expression] among 4Ps teenage beneficiaries in Iligan City, Lanao del Norte.

4. METHODS

The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the relationship between parental relationship, self-esteem, and relational skills. A total of 171 senior high school beneficiaries of the 4Ps program in Iligan City, Philippines were selected using a simple random sampling technique. Yamane's formula was used to calculate the sample size of 171. Data was gathered using a survey questionnaire adapted from previous studies: quality of parental relationship from Parent Adult-Child Relationship Questionnaire (PACQ) of Peisah et al. [17], self-esteem from Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale [18], and relational skills from Functional Idiographic Assessment Template-Questionnaire (FIAT-Q) of Darrow et al. [19]. Each part used a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaires were reviewed by a committee and underwent pilot testing before being administered to the participants. Results of the pilot testing revealed high reliability for all parts of the questionnaire, as evidenced by

Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.700: relationship with mother ($\alpha = .944$), relationship with father ($\alpha = .871$), self-esteem ($\alpha = .914$), assertion of needs ($\alpha = .840$), bidirectional communication ($\alpha = .805$), conflict ($\alpha = .817$), disclosure and interpersonal closeness ($\alpha = .872$), and emotional experience and expression ($\alpha = .886$). After securing ethical clearance and permission from the school and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) satellite office, the data gathering was conducted. The participants were informed that the information gathered will be solely used for the study. The data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression using the 'Enter' method.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Means, and Standard Deviation

Variable	Mean	SD
1. Quality of Parental Relationship	3.85	1.00
2. Self-Esteem	3.83	0.78
3. Relational Skills	3.47	0.82

The range of scale response is 1 to 5 where 5 is the highest and 1 is the lowest. The participants rated the quality of their parental relationships as high and demonstrated a high level of self-esteem. The participants also exhibited a high level of relational skills. The values of standard deviations in the three constructs indicated heterogeneity in the responses. This means that the responses of respondents are spread out over a wider range around the mean.

Table 2. Relationship between Quality of Parental Relationship and Self-Esteem

Variable	Quality of Parental Relationship (mean, SD, r-value)	
	Mother (Mean=3.96,0.91)	Father (Mean=3.73,1.08)
Self-Esteem	0.379**	0.222**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 2 further shows the relationships between the variables of the study. Data reveal that they are significantly correlated with the relationship with the mother as having a higher correlation with self-esteem ($r=.379$, $p=.000$) than that of the father.

The finding is supported by Krauss et al. [20] who examined the influence of parental relationships on children's self-esteem. They found that the quality of the mother-child relationship, characterized by warmth, support, and emotional availability, significantly predicts children's self-esteem levels. The nurturing and supportive role typically associated with mothers often fosters a sense of security and positive self-regard in children. In addition, the work of Paulus et al. [21], suggested that maternal responsiveness and sensitivity to children's emotional needs play a critical role in shaping children's self-perceptions and confidence levels. Moreover, studies by Aneesh et al. [22] highlighted the significance of the mother-child bond in buffering against adverse experiences and promoting resilience in children. The emotional closeness and attachment established through the mother-child relationship provide a foundation for healthy self-esteem and psychological well-being across the lifespan.

Erickson et al. [23] emphasized the profound impact of maternal relationships on individuals' development and emotional well-being. Mothers play a pivotal role in shaping their children's

self-esteem, emotional resilience, and overall psychological growth through nurturing and supportive interactions. These relationships, characterized by empathy, understanding, and active engagement, foster a sense of security and belonging crucial for healthy emotional development. This underscores the significance of maternal bonds in establishing a foundation for positive family dynamics and highlights the importance of nurturing supportive relationships within the family unit [24]. On the other hand, Parkes et al. [25] emphasized the significant role of paternal relationships in children's socio-emotional development and well-being. Additionally, Keizer et al. [26] highlighted the positive impact of father-child relationships on adolescents' self-esteem and resilience.

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of the Influence of Quality of Parental Relationship and Self-Esteem on Relational Skills

Variables	Beta	T-Value	Sig.
Quality of Parental Relationship (Mother)	.033	.964	.336
Quality of Parental Relationship (Father)	.075	2.75	.007
Self-Esteem	.354	9.79	.000
Dependent Variable	Relational Skills		
Constant	1.70		
R ²	0.473		
F-Value	50.06		
Sig.	0.000		

Relational skills = 1.70 + 0.033 quality of parental relationship (mother) + 0.075 quality of parental relationship (father) + 0.354 self-esteem

Findings reveal that the whole regression equation above is significant (F = 50.06, p = .000). Participants who experienced higher quality of parental relationship and self-esteem also tend to have higher relational skills.

Furthermore, 47.3% of the variability in their relational skills is explained by a combination of parental relationship and self-esteem (R² = .473). The remaining 52.7 percent may be attributed to other factors not covered in this study such as emotional competence, which encompasses the ability to recognize, understand, and manage both one's own emotions and those of others. Individuals with higher emotional competence often exhibit greater empathy, communication skills, and conflict resolution abilities, contributing to more positive and satisfying relationships [27]. Personality traits also play a significant role, as differences in traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience influence how individuals interact with others and navigate social situations [28].

Additionally, attachment style, shaped by early experiences with caregivers, impacts individuals' expectations and behaviors in close relationships. Secure attachment fosters trust, intimacy, and effective communication, while insecure attachment styles may lead to difficulties in forming and maintaining healthy relationships [29]. Social support networks, including family, friends, and community connections, provide opportunities for emotional expression, validation, and practical assistance, enhancing individuals' ability to navigate interpersonal challenges and maintain resilience [30]. Furthermore, cultural and societal norms shape attitudes and behaviors in relationships, with cultural differences in communication styles, gender roles, and relationship dynamics influencing how individuals express themselves, resolve conflicts, and establish intimacy with others [31]. The adjusted R² provides an adjusted measure of R-squared that takes into account the number of predictors in the model.

In relation to the specific predictor variables, data reveal that self-esteem comes out as having the highest influence on relational skills, indicating that for every unit increase in their self-esteem, there is a corresponding .354 increase in their relational skills ($B=.354$, $t = 9.79$, $p = .000$).

The observed influence of self-esteem on relational skills aligns with existing research emphasizing the foundational role of positive self-regard in shaping interpersonal competence [8]. This suggests that individuals with higher self-esteem may be more adept at navigating social interactions, confidently expressing themselves, and fostering meaningful connections with others. These findings support the notion that a positive self-esteem acts as a crucial precursor to developing effective relational skills, facilitating the building and maintaining of healthy interpersonal relationships [32].

Furthermore, the quality of father-child relationship was found to influence the relational skills of the participants such that for every unit increase in the quality of father-child relationship, there is a corresponding .075 increase in their relational skills ($B=.075$, $t = 2.75$, $p = .007$). In contrast, the quality of the mother-child relationship did not significantly influence the participants' relational skills ($B = .033$, $t = .964$, $p = .336$).

It is interesting to note the substantial impact of the quality of father-child relationships on the relational skills of individuals, as opposed to the limited influence observed in the context of mother-child relationships. This distinction may be due to the unique role fathers play in fostering a sense of security and autonomy in their children. Fathers often engage in more challenging and exploratory activities with their children, providing them with opportunities to develop problem-solving skills and independence [33]. This active involvement may contribute significantly to the enhancement of relational skills, as autonomy and problem-solving abilities are integral components of effective interpersonal interactions [34].

Moreover, the difference in influence may be linked to the quality of emotional communication within father-child relationships. Research suggests that fathers tend to emphasize independence and encourage risk-taking in their children, fostering emotionally-regulated resilience, which are crucial elements in the development of effective relational skills [35]. In contrast, the mother-child relationship, while undoubtedly important for emotional development, may not provide the same emphasis on autonomy and risk-taking, leading to a less pronounced impact on relational skills in the present research. These findings highlighted the need for an in-depth understanding of parental roles and their distinct contributions to the socio-emotional development of children.

6. CONCLUSION

The bond of relationships that the students have with their parents, as well as their self-esteem, serve as foundational elements in the way they relate with others. This study confirms the attachment theory of Bowlby [10] asserting that secure attachments contribute to healthy development and a strong sense of self-worth fosters positive social interactions. The students also demonstrated high self-esteem, aligning with Rosenberg's [11] theory. As the study shows, high self-esteem likely fueled the students' confidence, resilience, and ability to navigate challenges effectively. Furthermore, their strong relational skills mirrored Sullivan's [12] emphasis on interpersonal relationships shaping personality. The participants' proficiency in bidirectional communication, emotional expression, and fostering closeness suggests a well-developed capacity for meaningful social connections.

This study recommends several actions to strengthen family bonds and self-esteem among beneficiaries of a social program. Government agencies can offer workshops on communication and conflict resolution to parents and support schools in integrating similar skills into the curriculum. Parents themselves are encouraged to maintain open communication with their children. Social workers can provide personalized guidance and advocate for family support services. Finally, future research should explore the long-term impact of these efforts and consider additional influences on adolescent development.

Consent

As per international standards or university standards, Participants' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

Ethical Approval:

As per international standards or university standards written ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

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