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**Dr. Djamel Fattam<sup>1</sup>  
Dr. Zohra Boumehras<sup>2</sup>**

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## **Parental Treatment Styles (Acceptance/Rejection) as Perceived by Children and Their Relationship to Self-Efficacy Among a Sample of University Students: A Field Study at Laghouat University**

**Dr. Djamel Fattam<sup>1</sup>**

**Dr. Zohra Boumehras<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Psychological Health Laboratory, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Amar Thelidji, Laghouat, Algeria. [d.fattam@lagh-univ.dz](mailto:d.fattam@lagh-univ.dz)

<sup>2</sup>University of Ghardaia, Algeria. [boumehras.zohra@univ-ghardaia.dz](mailto:boumehras.zohra@univ-ghardaia.dz)

### **Abstract:**

This study aimed to explore the relationship between parental treatment styles (acceptance/rejection) as perceived by children and self-efficacy among a sample of university students. The research was conducted on a sample of 35 male and female first-year students from the arts and sciences faculties. The researcher utilized the descriptive-analytical method to achieve the study's goals and used a questionnaire for data collection. The study concluded with the following results: First, there is a significant positive relationship between parental treatment styles as perceived by the children and self-efficacy among the sample members. Second, there are gender differences in parental treatment styles among the sample members. Third, there are gender differences in self-efficacy among the sample members. Fourth, there are no differences in self-efficacy among the sample members attributed to their field of study. Finally, there are no differences in parental treatment styles attributed to their field of study.

**Keywords:** Descriptive-analytical method, Gender differences, Parental treatment style, Self-efficacy, University students.

### **1. Introduction**

Individuals grow up in a social environment surrounded by care and upbringing from childhood through adulthood. The family, as the most important socialization

institution, plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's personality and guiding their behavior. As the smallest social unit, the family is responsible for maintaining a value system defined by social norms that dictate desired behaviors. Through upbringing, the family raises children, directs them, and controls their actions so they become well-adjusted individuals.

This significant role of parents in shaping their children's personalities is evident through parental treatment. Al-Ghazali emphasizes the importance of this treatment by stating: "The child is a trust placed by God in the care of his parents, who are obligated to raise him with proper conduct."

Parental treatment encompasses various types and methods. Proper upbringing is often represented by what contemporary educators call the democratic style of child-rearing. Other methods, such as neglect or harsh treatment, are identified as overprotection or authoritarian styles. Psychological studies indicate that there are two primary styles that define parents' attitudes toward their children: acceptance and rejection, which vary in degrees within parent-child relationships.

Rohner (2004) posits that acceptance is essential for personality development and can have significant effects on children's behavior, growth, functional performance, self-esteem, and outlook on life. Conversely, a child's perception of rejection causes feelings of insecurity, dependency, worthlessness, and an inability to cope. This negative outlook extends to the world around them, making them view it as an unsafe place.

Thus, acceptance and rejection are among the most critical forms of parental treatment during the socialization process. Children's perception of this treatment can significantly influence their self-efficacy in various life situations, especially in educational settings. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's control over their personal activities and their expectations and thoughts about appropriate behavior, enabling them to choose actions based on societal norms.

Bandura (1997) views self-efficacy as a personal belief in one's ability to develop desired behaviors. How self-efficacy influences behavior involves individuals choosing activities they feel successful in performing and putting considerable effort into those activities. High-performing students tend to be good students and achieve more successes. The concept of self-efficacy is crucial in studies on educational structures, academic achievement, success and failure causes, goal setting, social comparisons, memory, and problem-solving.

These psychological activities are associated with adolescence, a critical stage deserving of attention. Adolescence is marked by self-awareness, where individuals become highly concerned with themselves and others' opinions, viewing the world, especially themselves, with seriousness.

Adolescents acquire and learn behavior and social norms through family socialization and their environment and school interactions. The university significantly shapes an individual's personality and psychological development, playing a crucial role in cultural transmission and continuity. It also directly influences students' behavior through peer interactions, shaping their attitudes toward various social norms.

Therefore, the researchers see the necessity of studying the relationship between parental treatment styles (acceptance/rejection) and self-efficacy among a sample of university students. Based on this, several research questions are posed:

- Is there a relationship between parental treatment styles (acceptance/rejection) and self-efficacy among the sample members?
- Are there gender differences in parental treatment styles among the sample members?
- Are there gender differences in self-efficacy among the sample members?
- Are there differences in self-efficacy among the sample members attributed to their field of study?
- Are there differences in parental treatment styles attributed to their field of study?

### **Hypotheses :**

- There is a significant relationship between parental treatment styles (acceptance/rejection) and self-efficacy among the sample members.
- There are gender differences in parental treatment styles among the sample members.
- There are gender differences in self-efficacy among the sample members.
- There are differences in self-efficacy among the sample members attributed to their field of study.
- There are differences in parental treatment styles attributed to their field of study.

### **Study Objectives :**

1. To explore the relationship between parental treatment styles (acceptance/rejection) and self-efficacy among the sample members.
2. To examine gender differences in parental treatment styles among the sample members.
3. To investigate gender differences in self-efficacy among the sample members.
4. To identify differences in self-efficacy among the sample members based on their field of study.
5. To determine differences in parental treatment styles based on the field of study.

### **Significance of the Study:**

The importance of this study, both theoretically and practically, stems from the significance of the studied variables and the sample. Parental treatment styles and self-efficacy highlight the role of upbringing and parental socialization and their impact on self-efficacy. Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's personalities by

training them to respond correctly using various treatment styles. Children, especially in their formative years, may not be capable of judging behavior, and some experiences can have lasting effects on their personalities in adulthood through the generalization of learned responses.

Denham and colleagues (1996) stated that "the sense of pain or feelings of sadness and anger in childhood have adverse effects on adolescence."

Thus, the idea for this study emerged, highlighting its importance in several points:

1. Shedding light on some parental treatment styles affecting adolescents' personalities.
2. Investigating self-efficacy using scientific methods through responses from a sample of second-year high school students to a self-efficacy scale and a parental treatment styles scale.
3. Paving the way for future studies to identify factors that assist in forming and shaping individuals' personalities.
4. Focusing on an age group pivotal to society's progress and welfare.

### **Operational Definitions of Study Variables**

- **Parental Treatment Styles:** Various methods and attitudes practiced by parents toward their children during the socialization process, allowing children to perceive and express them. It is the overall score obtained by the respondent after applying the parental treatment scale.
- **Parental Acceptance Style:** The style in which parents treat their child, making them feel loved and wanted, such as caring for the child's affairs, praising them, listening to them, discussing their issues, respecting their viewpoints, helping them express themselves, encouraging them when they do well, alleviating their pain, and being present when needed. It is the overall score obtained by the respondent after applying the parental acceptance items.
- **Parental Rejection Style:** The style in which parents treat their child, making them feel disliked and unwanted, such as constantly attacking the child verbally or physically, treating them harshly when they make mistakes, hitting them for trivial reasons, directing hurtful words at them, deliberately hurting their feelings in front of others, ignoring them when they need help, and avoiding their company. It is the overall score obtained by the respondent after applying the parental rejection items.
- **Self-Efficacy:** Beliefs individuals hold about their ability to control events that affect their lives and their readiness to apply their cognitive, behavioral, and social skills to deal with difficulties, face events, and control them. It is the overall score obtained by the respondent after applying the self-efficacy scale.

### **Previous Studies**

#### **1.Lansford et al. (2014):**

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- **Objective:** To investigate racial differences in the relationship between physical discipline and subsequent external behavior in adolescents.
- **Key Findings:** The study found that racial differences play a role in the impact of physical discipline on adolescents' external behavior, where social and cultural support may enhance self-efficacy.

**2.Farhat, A. (2011):**

- **Objective:** To examine the relationship between parental treatment styles (acceptance/rejection) as perceived by children and assertive behavior among secondary school students, and to determine if there are gender differences in assertive behavior.
- **Key Findings:** There is a relationship between parental treatment styles and assertive behavior, with a positive correlation between acceptance style and assertive behavior and a negative correlation between rejection style and assertive behavior.

**3.Bouzidi, A. (2010):**

- **Objective:** To investigate the relationship between parental treatment styles and school adjustment among third-grade secondary students.
- **Key Findings:** There is a positive correlation between parental acceptance style and school adjustment, and a negative correlation between parental rejection style and school adjustment.

**4.Badar, F. M. (2008):**

- **Objective:** To examine the relationship between parental treatment styles, self-concept, and aggressive behavior among primary school students in Jeddah.
- **Key Findings:** There is a positive correlation between children's perception of parental rejection and aggressive behavior, and a negative correlation between self-concept and aggressive behavior.

**5.Abdullah Sahloul Mohammad (2005):**

- **Objective:** To investigate the relationship between self-efficacy, academic achievement motivation, and their impact on academic performance among secondary school students in Sana'a.
- **Key Findings:** There is a statistically significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and academic achievement motivation.

**6.Pajares, F. (2002):**

- **Objective:** To study the influence of gender on perceived self-efficacy in self-regulated learning.

- **Key Findings:** The study found that girls often suffer from lower levels of self-efficacy in certain fields such as mathematics and science compared to boys.

#### 7. Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1993):

- **Objective:** To present an integrative model of parenting style as a contextual influence.
- **Key Findings:** The study confirmed that parental treatment depends more on family and social context rather than the field of study.

#### 8. Baumrind, D. (1991):

- **Objective:** To explore the impact of parenting styles on adolescents' competence and substance use.
- **Key Findings:** The study showed that parenting styles are influenced by factors such as family values, religion, and cultural traditions, making the field of study less impactful on these styles.

### Study Methodology

Based on the study's objectives of exploring the relationship between parental treatment styles and self-efficacy, the researcher employed the descriptive-analytical method suitable for the study's aims and nature.

**Study Population and Sample:** The study focused on a randomly selected sample of high school students from both humanities and science streams, with a total sample size of 35 students, including both genders. The table below shows the sample characteristics by gender.

**Table 01:** The sample characteristics by gender

Specialization	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
1st Year Science	12	08	20	57.14 %
1st Year Humanities	08	07	15	42.86%
Total	20	15	35	100 %

**Source:** Prepared by the researcher

**Study Instruments:** To collect data for this study, the researcher used two tools to measure both parental treatment styles and self-efficacy.

#### 1. List of Parental Treatment Styles as Perceived by Children:

- ✓ **Description:** This list was designed by Schaefer (1965) and translated into Arabic by Salah Al-Din Muhammad Abu Nahia and Rashad Abdul Aziz Musa (1987). It consists of 18 sub-scales, each containing between 7 and 16 items, with a total of

192 items. These sub-scales include: Acceptance, Child-Centeredness, Domination, Rejection, Restriction, Coercion, Positive Integration, Aggressive Control, Inconsistency, Extreme Leniency, Constant Anxiety Induction, Distance and Negativity, Intrusion, Guilt-Based Control, Leniency and Acceptance of Individuality, Relationship Withdrawal, and Extreme Independence.

- ✓ **In this study**, the researcher focused on two dimensions: Acceptance (16 items) and Rejection (14 items). Responses were given on a binary scale ("Yes" = 2 points, "No" = 1 point). Higher scores indicated parental treatment styles leaning towards "Acceptance," while lower scores indicated styles of "Rejection."

### **Validity and Reliability of the Parental Treatment Styles Scale**

#### **A.Validity of the Parental Treatment Styles Scale:**

**1. Discriminant Validity (Extreme Group Comparison):** Discriminant validity was calculated by arranging the scores from lowest to highest and then taking 33% of the scores from the highest distribution and 33% from the lowest distribution. Differences between the high and low groups were then calculated.

**Table 02:** Discriminant validity values

Comparison Groups	N	M	T	P	Significance
Low Group	12	37.57	26.07	0.00	Significant at 0.01
High Group	12	25.71			

**Source:** Prepared by the researcher

The table shows that the calculated t value (26.07) and the p-value (0.00) are less than 0.05 and 0.01 at a statistical significance level of 0.01 with 12 degrees of freedom. Therefore, there are differences between the high and low groups, and the scale distinguishes between its extremes, thus it is valid.

#### **B.Reliability**

##### **1. Calculating Cronbach's Alpha Value:**

**Table 03 :** Cronbach's Alpha Value

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.84	30

**Source:** Prepared by the researcher based on Spss results

From the table, it is evident that the scale enjoys reliable and trustworthy stability.



**Self-Efficacy Scale:** The self-efficacy scale was designed by Scherer, Maddux, and Mercandante (1982) to assess the general level of individuals' beliefs about their abilities and competence. The general assumption of this scale is that individual expectations are the primary determinants of behavioral change. Moreover, individual differences in past experiences lead to differences in general levels of self-efficacy expectations. The self-efficacy scale consists of 30 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale: "Completely Applies" (5 points), "Somewhat Applies" (4 points), "I Don't Know" (3 points), "Does Not Apply" (2 points), and "Does Not Apply At All" (1 point).

**Table 04:** Means, Standard Deviations, and "t" Results

Comparison Groups	N	M	T	P	Significance
Low Group	12	102.26	09.84	0.00	Significant at 0.01
High Group	12	72.57			

**Source:** Prepared by the researcher based on Spss results

The table shows that the calculated t value (9.84) and the p-value (0.00) are less than 0.05 and 0.01 at a statistical significance level of 0.01 with 12 degrees of freedom. Therefore, there are differences between the high and low groups, and the scale distinguishes between its extremes, thus it is valid.

## B- Reliability:

### 1. Calculating Cronbach's Alpha Value:

**Table 03:** Cronbach's Alpha Value

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.86	30

**Source:** Prepared by the researcher based on Spss results

From the table, it is evident that the scale enjoys reliable and trustworthy stability.

## Study Results:

- **Hypothesis 1:** There is a significant relationship between parental treatment styles (Acceptance/Rejection) and self-efficacy among the sample individuals.

Measured Variables	N	M	R	P	Significance
Parental Treatment Styles	35	48.32	0.51	0.00	Significant at 0.01
Self-Efficacy		107.98			

- **Interpretation:** The results show a significant correlation between parental treatment styles and self-efficacy ( $r = 0.51$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This supports the hypothesis (H1), indicating that family upbringing, especially parental treatment, is a crucial factor affecting various aspects of personality and mental health, including self-efficacy.

**Hypothesis 2:** There are gender differences in parental treatment styles among the sample individuals.

Gender	N	M	T	P	Significance
males	20	28.70	05.82	0.00	Significant at 0.01
females	15	39.71			

- **Interpretation:** The results demonstrate significant gender differences in parental treatment styles ( $t = 5.82$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), supporting the alternative hypothesis (H1) and rejecting the null hypothesis (H0).

This means that these differences are not due to chance, but are real differences between genders. This is consistent with many studies that indicate that parenting styles may vary based on the gender of the child, as there may be differences in expectations and treatment between boys and girls. The acceptance of the alternative hypothesis H1 and rejection of the null hypothesis H0 confirms the existence of these differences, highlighting the role of gender in shaping parenting styles.

This result is consistent with previous studies. For instance, Maccoby and Martin (1983) indicated that parents might treat boys and girls differently based on cultural expectations and social traditions, leading to distinct parenting styles for each gender.

Additionally, Leaper's study (2002) found that parents tend to encourage boys to be more independent and self-reliant compared to girls, affecting parental treatment styles and reinforcing gender differences. Lansford et al. (2014) also showed that girls often receive more emotional support from parents compared to boys, contributing to different upbringing styles.

**Hypothesis 3:** There are gender differences in self-efficacy among the sample individuals.

Gender	N	M	T	P	Significance
males	20	101.70	07.38	0.00	Significant at 0.01
females	15	127.71			

This table indicates that the t-test value for the differences is (7.38), and the p-value is (0.00), which is less than the statistical significance level (0.01) and (0.05). Thus, there are significant differences between genders in self-efficacy among the sample individuals, leading to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis H1 and rejection of the null hypothesis H0.

This result is logical as significant statistical differences between genders in self-efficacy among the sample individuals align with previous findings indicating that self-efficacy is influenced by social and cultural factors related to gender. This finding supports the hypothesis that gender plays a significant role in shaping individuals' self-efficacy.

This is also evident in our current reality, where many studies and practical observations show that girls often experience lower levels of self-efficacy in certain areas like mathematics and science compared to boys. These differences are not due to actual abilities but rather the result of social expectations and traditional roles imposed by society on both genders.

Previous studies strongly support this result. For instance, Pajares (2002) found that girls often experience lower levels of self-efficacy in certain areas like mathematics and science compared to boys. Additionally, Bandura (1997) indicated that social support and encouragement could enhance self-efficacy, suggesting that gender may affect the amount and quality of support received by individuals. These studies confirm that gender differences in self-efficacy are influenced by social and cultural factors.

**Hypothesis 4:** There are differences in self-efficacy among the sample individuals attributed to the field of study.

Field of Study	N	M	T	P	Significance
1st Year Science	12	122.65	03.74	0.70	Not Significant
1st Year Humanities	08	125.41			

This table indicates that the t-test value for the differences is (3.74), and the p-value is (0.70), which is greater than the statistical significance level (0.01) and (0.05). Thus, there are no significant differences in self-efficacy among the sample individuals

attributed to the field of study, leading to the rejection of the alternative hypothesis H1 and acceptance of the null hypothesis H0.

This result is logical as it suggests that the field of study (humanities/sciences) does not create significant statistical differences in self-efficacy among the sample individuals. This supports the hypothesis that the impact of the field of study on self-efficacy is limited, and self-efficacy is influenced by other potentially more important factors.

This is evident in our current reality where many students, regardless of their field of study, achieve comparable levels of self-efficacy, indicating that the field of study does not play a major role in shaping self-efficacy. Self-efficacy may be more closely related to personal characteristics, family environment, and social support.

Previous studies strongly support this result. For example, Schunk (1991) found that self-efficacy is more dependent on the educational context and personal experiences rather than the field of study. Additionally, Eccles (1994) indicated that social and environmental factors play a larger role in shaping self-efficacy compared to the field of study. These studies confirm that self-efficacy is influenced by a variety of factors beyond just the field of study.

**Hypothesis 5:** There are differences in parental treatment styles as perceived by children among the sample individuals attributed to the field of study.

Field of Study	N	M	T	P	Significance
1st Year Science	12	47.62	11.71	0.86	Not Significant
1st Year Humanities	08	50.23			

This table indicates that the t-test value for the differences is (11.74), and the p-value is (0.86), which is greater than the statistical significance level (0.01) and (0.05). Thus, there are no significant differences in parental treatment styles as perceived by children among the sample individuals attributed to the field of study, leading to the rejection of the alternative hypothesis H1 and acceptance of the null hypothesis H0.

This result is very realistic today where it is often observed that parents follow the same treatment styles with their children regardless of their field of study, indicating that the field of study does not play a major role in shaping parental treatment styles. Instead, treatment styles may be more influenced by family values, cultural norms, and religion.

Previous studies strongly support this result. For instance, Baumrind (1991) showed that parental treatment styles are influenced by factors such as family values, religion, and cultural traditions, making the field of study less influential on these styles. Additionally, Darling & Steinberg (1993) emphasized that parental treatment depends more on the family and social context rather than the field of study. These studies confirm that the field of study is not a significant factor in parental treatment styles.

## **Conclusion**

By analyzing the results derived from the hypotheses, significant conclusions can be reached about the relationship between parental treatment styles and self-efficacy, and the impact of gender and field of study on this relationship. The results indicate a statistically significant correlation between parental treatment styles and self-efficacy, meaning that the way parents treat their children plays a major role in shaping their self-efficacy. Additionally, it was found that there are differences between genders in parental treatment styles and self-efficacy, where parents tend to treat boys and girls differently, affecting their self-efficacy development. Conversely, there were no statistically significant differences in parental treatment styles and self-efficacy between genders attributed to the field of study, indicating that the field of study does not significantly affect this relationship.

## **Suggestions and Recommendations :**

### **1. Enhance Family Awareness :**

- Families should enhance awareness about the importance of parental treatment styles and their significant impact on developing their children's personality and mental health.
- Workshops and training courses can be offered to parents to teach them how to provide a supportive and stimulating family environment.

### **2. Encourage Psychological and Social Support :**

- Provide psychological and social support services to children to enhance their self-efficacy regardless of their field of study.
- Offer awareness programs in schools to boost self-confidence and self-reliance among students of both genders.

### **3. Continuous Research:**

- Conduct more studies to investigate other factors that may affect self-efficacy and parental treatment styles, such as cultural and social environments.
- Develop new research methodologies focusing on a deeper understanding of the factors influencing family and psychological relationships.

### **4. Incorporate Research Findings into Educational Policies:**

- Incorporate these study findings into curriculum and educational policy development to enhance students' self-efficacy and provide a supportive educational environment.
- Create training programs for teachers on how to provide psychological and social support to students.

These suggestions aim to improve the interaction between parents and their children and enhance individuals' self-efficacy by supporting an integrated family and educational environment. If there are more topics or questions you would like to discuss, feel free to ask for further assistance.

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