

# Mediating Role Of General Self-Efficacy Between Parent-Child Relationship And Psychological Well-Being Among Adolescents

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## Abstract

Adolescence is a stage of transition where physical and psychological development occurs. This is a peak stage by which adolescents have to get rich parental support and care. The main aim of the study is to find out the degree of influence parent-child relationship has on self-efficacy and psychological well-being of adolescents. The mediating effect of self-efficacy on parent-child relationship and psychological well-being is also examined. Parent-adolescent scale constructed by Sajitha and Parameswari (2019), General self-efficacy scale (GSE) developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) and Psychological well-being scale developed by Ryff and Singer (1998) were used to collect relevant data from 756 adolescents of ages ranged from 13 to 18 years of adolescents. Results revealed that self-efficacy had a significant influence on parent-child relationship. Path analysis, performed using Structural Equation Modelling also confirmed this relationship and found that self-efficacy has a mediating effect between parent-child relationship and psychological well-being of adolescents.

**Key Words:** Adolescents, Parent-child Relationship, Self-efficacy, Psychological Well-being, SEM

## BACKGROUND

Research findings on family does not always gain attention, but studies on adolescence, particularly those involving parent-adolescent relationship, is an exception. Reviewing the scholarship of the previous 25 years at the turn of the millennium, Steinberg (2001) has even called for a new perspective on the family, “one that emphasizes the different viewpoints and stakes that parents and adolescents bring to their relationship with each other,” with special focus on the mental health of both groups.

### Adolescents’ Relationship with Parents

As emotions are extreme, the intimacy with their parents temporarily decreases for most of the adolescents and the intensiveness of the

conflicting behavior towards their parents reaches its peak by the onset of puberty (Laursen, Coy & Collins, 1998). Adolescents who have a warm and caring relationship with their parents can control the stress, and emotional and behavioral problems experienced by them. It acts as a powerful buffer for the adolescents who value this love and care received from their parents (Wagner, Cohen, & Brook, 1996).

Psychoanalytic theorists believed that separation from parents is inevitable for adolescents, and a requirement to develop individuality. According to Shengold (2018), Freud (1919) stated that earlier incestuous feelings are reactivated due to dramatic hormonal changes in adolescents and what they are exhibiting is the defense against these repressed

emotions and feelings of oedipal impulses. In order to come out of this, they distance themselves from their parents. This, in turn, creates an emotional separation that is necessary for further psychological development. According to Freud (1969), emotional turbulence for adolescents is viewed as a natural consequence and they will not be able to maintain an emotional balance.

Studies on adolescents' relationship with parents found that most of the adolescents maintain loving and warm relationship with their parents (Larson et. al., 1996). Even though conflicts are more frequent between them, it does not hinder close parent-adolescent relationship. Parents are significant people in adolescent lives and they continue to seek advice from them (Fuligni& Eccles, 1993; Offer, Ostrov& Howard, 1981). However, modernized living and associated developments have found to be diminishing this positive regard for parents (Van Wel, Linssen&Abma, 2000).

Kumar (2014) examined family relationship and emotional maturity of adolescent students and found a significant relationship between emotional maturity of adolescents and their family relationships. According to Suri, Suri, Senger, Kiran and Singh (2016), parent-child relationship has a direct effect on self-esteem of children, especially that of boys. The reason stated was that both the father and mother equally indulge in matters concerning their children. Robles and Gamble (2006) stated that adolescents' attachment with parents helps in reducing the risk for delinquency among adolescents, particularly the attachment with the mother. Ranson and Urichuk (2008) found that children with secure attachment in childhood develop more positive social-emotional competence, cognitive functioning, physical health and mental health, whereas children with insecure attachment are more at risk for negative outcomes in those domains.

Mental Health Survey (2015-16). Among adolescents in the age group of 13-17 years, the prevalence of mental morbidity is 7.3%, with an estimated 7.7 to 11.5 million requiring active intervention. As the estimated number of adult population with mental morbidity is 115 million, this means almost one in ten people suffering from a mental health issue is an adolescent (Gururaj et al, 2016). Such a huge proportion in the adolescent category demands special attention to children's psychological well-being to address the larger mental health crisis. National Mental Health Survey (2015-16) found anxiety disorders and mood disorders as the most frequent mental disorders among adolescents, with common mental disorders constituting (5.4%) of the disease burden, and neurotic and stress related disorders, about (4.2%). Depressive episode and recurrent depressive disorder was the most common problem (2.6%), closely followed by agoraphobia (2.3%). Children who suffer with these disorders will see their growth, development, education and social life being adversely affected. More importantly, it could lead to lifelong consequences if left unattended, necessitating early interventions and a healthy family environment (Shribman&Billingham, 2009).

A child with a better psychological well-being will be able to better cope with mental disorders, and they will also enjoy high self-confidence and thus self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the confidence and belief that individuals have over themselves when facing challenging phases. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is believed to have a significant role in dealing with goals, tasks and challenges in day-to-day life. Better psychological well-being and self-efficacy can be attained with good parenting. The quality of relationship children enjoy with their parents is significant to psychological health and thus self-efficacy. The review of the literature has also shown the importance of parent-child

relationship and its role in the social, cognitive, emotional, and even physical development in a child. Several factors like family configuration, financial and emotional stress, cultural effects, individual differences, parental personality, and differences between mothers and fathers affect the development and promotion of positive parent-child relationships (Cox, & Harter, 2003). These all are dynamic in nature and witnessing significant changes in the contemporary times.

## METHOD

### Research Design

A cross-sectional study was conducted using quantitative data collection method using quantitative data collection method. The constructs were measured using questionnaires, hypothesis were tested.

### Participants

Sample for this study was taken from Thrissur city. The researcher approached District Education Office and collected the list of schools and the total number of students in secondary and senior secondary classes with age ranging from 13-18 years. There were 14 schools in Thrissur city. The population of secondary and senior secondary school students in Thrissur city was 8726. Using sample determinations formula, keeping confidence level at 95% and margin of error at 3, the sample size obtained was 951, who were selected through lottery method. However, participations of only 910 respondents could be ensured. Researcher have also deleted 154 responses that are either incomplete or found to be skewed. 756 responses were considered for the

final analysis, which increased the margin of error to 3.41. Data were normally distributed.

## Instruments

### Parent-Child Relationship Scale

Parent-child relationship questionnaire was measured using 30 items developed by Sajitha and Parameswari (2019) and the item responses range from 1= Never to 5= Always.

### General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE)

General self-efficacy scale was measured using 10 items developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) and the item responses range from 1= Not at all true to 4= Exactly true.

### Psychological Well-Being Scale

Psychological well-being scale was measured with 18 items developed by Ryff and Singer (1998) and the item responses range from 1= Strongly disagree to 7= Strongly agree.

## Data Analysis

In this study the influence of parent-child relationship on self-efficacy and psychological well-being among adolescents was found using regression statistics and Structural Equation Modelling was done in order to get more insight into the data.

## RESULTS

**Hypothesis 1:** “The parent-child relationship will not have a significant influence on self-efficacy of adolescents”.

**Table 1** Influence of Parent-Child Relationship on Self-Efficacy

Independent Variable	Dependent variable	Unstandardized co-efficient		t-value p<0.05	Model summary p< 0.05
		B	S E		
Mother-child	Ge ner				

relationship	0.26	0.07	0.10	3.34*	F =30.33 R <sup>2</sup> =0.32
Attitude towards parents					
Parental acceptance	0.34	0.07	0.13	4.35*	
Feeling towards parents	0.19	0.07	0.08	2.79*	
Parental behavior	0.32	0.07	0.13	4.17*	
Punitive parenting	0.32	0.08	0.13	4.03*	
Parental involvement	0.35	0.07	0.14	4.53*	
Father-child relationship					
Attitude towards parents	0.31	0.08	0.12	3.83*	
Parental acceptance	0.17	0.08	0.06	2.15*	
Feeling towards parents	0.37	0.08	0.14	4.64*	
Parental behavior	0.30	0.07	0.12	3.94*	
Punitive parenting	0.30	0.08	0.11	3.63*	

Table 1 shows that all the six dimensions of mother-child relationship and five dimensions of father-child relationship have significant t values and F value (30.33) indicating that the model is fit. Thus the hypothesis stating that “The parent-child relationship will not have a significant influence on self-efficacy among adolescents” is not retained. Thus parent-child relationship has a significant influence on self-efficacy. 32% of variance in self-efficacy is predicted by parent-child relationship.

It shows that the adolescents’ belief in their own abilities to meet the challenges ahead in life depends on the factors like positive attitude towards parents, their perception of parental acceptance, positive feeling towards parents, parental behavior, punitive parenting and parental involvement. Self-efficacy is a particularly salient factor in adolescence as a result of the challenges and new experiences created by cognitive, physical, and social changes during this period (Schunk&Meece,

2006). A warm, affectionate relationship with parents is very essential for cognitive, physical and social well-being that lay the base for self-efficacy.

The study confirms the relationship found in several studies between family, particularly parenting factors, and child self-efficacy (Whitbeck, 1987; Schunk&Meece, 2006). It shows that acceptance and support from family is an imperative in a child’s life and with this support the child gains confidence. If a child gains in self confidence and trust that his parents will be there with him in facing all the challenges, will overcome all the obstacles without any fear. It is seen from the table that both the parents have an influence on the self-efficacy of adolescents.

**Hypothesis2:** “The parent-child relationship will not have a significant influence on psychological well-being of adolescents”.

**Table 2** Influence of Parent-Child Relationship on Psychological Well-Being.

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Unstandardize d	t-value p<0.05	Model summary
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		co-efficient				p< 0.05
		B	S E			
<b>Mother-child relationship</b>						
Attitude towards parents		0.10	0.02	0.13	3.72*	
Parental acceptance		0.06	0.02	0.07	2.15*	
Punitive parenting		0.06	0.02	0.07	2.13*	
Parental involvement	Positive Relation with others	0.06	0.02	0.07	2.39*	F =9.70 R <sup>2</sup> =0.13
<b>Father-child relationship</b>						
Feeling towards parents		0.08	0.02	0.10	3.05*	
Parental involvement		0.07	0.02	0.09	2.64*	
<b>Mother-child relationship</b>						
Feeling towards parents		0.05	0.02	0.07	1.99*	
Parental behavior		0.07	0.03	0.08	2.32*	
Father-child relationship	Self-acceptance					F =9.47 R <sup>2</sup> =0.13
Attitude towards parents		0.11	0.03	0.12	3.43*	
Feeling towards parents		0.11	0.03	0.12	3.61*	
Parental behavior		0.07	0.03	0.08	2.46*	
Punitive parenting		0.08	0.03	0.10	2.70*	
<b>Mother-child relationship</b>						
Parental behavior	Autonomy	0.05	0.02	0.07	2.26*	F =11.37 R <sup>2</sup> =0.15
Father-child relationship						
Attitude towards parents		0.10	0.02	0.14	4.04*	
Feeling towards parents		0.06	0.02	0.08	2.51*	
Parental behavior		0.05	0.02	0.08	2.32*	
Punitive parenting		0.10	0.02	0.13	3.71*	
<b>Mother-child relationship</b>						

Feeling towards parents		0.06	0.02	0.09	2.80*	
Punitive parenting		0.06	0.02	0.07	2.13*	
Parental involvement		0.07	0.02	0.09	2.63*	
Father-child relationship						F
Attitude towards parents	Personal Growth	0.13	0.02	0.16	4.56*	=12.06
Feeling towards parents		0.09	0.02	0.11	3.38*	R <sup>2</sup> =0.16
Punitive parenting		0.11	0.02	0.13	3.82*	
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Mother-child relationship						
Feeling towards parents		0.04	0.02	0.07	2.23*	
Parental behavior	Environ-mental	0.07	0.02	0.10	3.05*	F = 11.59
Father-child relationship	Mastery					R <sup>2</sup> =0.15
Attitude towards parents		0.11	0.02	0.16	4.58*	
Feeling towards parents		0.06	0.02	0.09	2.82*	
Punitive parenting		0.08	0.02	0.12	3.43*	
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Mother-child relationship						
Parental acceptance		0.07	0.02	0.09	2.84*	
Feeling towards parents		0.06	0.02	0.10	3.15*	
Parental behavior	Purpose in Life	0.05	0.02	0.07	2.24*	
Father-child relationship						
Attitude towards parents		0.10	0.02	0.14	4.04*	F=16.91
Parental acceptance		0.06	0.02	0.08	2.59*	R <sup>2</sup> =0.21
Feeling towards parents		0.07	0.02	0.10	3.12*	
Parental behavior		0.09	0.02	0.13	4.03*	
Punitive parenting		0.07	0.02	0.10	3.01*	
Parental involvement		0.05	0.02	0.07	2.18*	

Table 2 shows that attitude towards parents, parental acceptance, punitive parenting, and parental involvement in mother-child relationship and feeling towards parents and parental involvement in father-child relationship predicts 14% of the variance in positive relation dimension of psychological wellbeing. Attitude towards parents (mothers) is a major factor influencing the positive relations of adolescents with others. Next to this perception of parental involvement (both mother and father) has a significant effect on adolescents' skill in forming positive relation with others. When parents are affectionate in their regular interaction with their adolescents, they tend to understand the significance of relationship and form stable relationship in life.

Feeling towards parents and parental behavior dimensions in both mother and father-child relationship have significant influence on self-acceptance dimensions of psychological well-being. When parents admire their adolescents more and show a positive behavior towards them, adolescents tend to be more confident in all activities at home and school. As the confidence of the child increases, child tends to accept themselves. Attitude towards parenting and punitive parenting dimension of father-child relationship also influences the self-acceptance behavior of the adolescents. When adolescents perceive the punishment given by their fathers in a positive way, a way to change their behavior, they tend to consider their fathers as contributing for their future achievements and molding them. This acceptance of fathers' behavior help them to improve in positive direction and thereby develop self-acceptance. The above mentioned dimensions contribute to 13% variance in self-acceptance.

The dimensions of mother-child relationship like attitude towards parents, parental behavior and parental involvement; and the dimensions of father-child relationship like

attitude towards parents, feeling towards parents, parental behavior, and punitive parenting have significant influence on autonomy, a psychological well-being dimension. 16% of adolescents' autonomy is predicted by the above mentioned dimensions in parent-child relationship. Adolescents who perceive their parents as contributing and encouraging in all aspects keeping into account their strengths and the limitations, tend to be more determined and independent. Parents are the first role models for whose behavior they inculcate. The first persons that the adolescents try to model and inculcate the behaviors are their parents. If the parents serve as the better role models, the adolescents learn to become self-determined, and they learn to regulate their behavior from within. As far as autonomy is concerned, the role of father seems to be very important. This must be due to the oxytocin in fathers that motivates adolescents to be independent and explore (Komisar, 2017).

16% of the adolescents' personal growth is predicted by the dimensions feeling towards parents, punitive parenting, in both mother and father-child relationship; and mother's involvement and positive attitude towards father. Previous research has also shown that parenting combined with physical punishment and nurturance, give and take communication and maturity demands can be linked to long-term beneficial outcomes (Baumrind et al., 2010).

16% variance of the environmental mastery, a dimension of psychological well-being is predicted by the mother-child relationship dimensions namely, feeling towards parents and parental behavior; and in father-child relationship, attitude towards parents, feeling towards parents and punitive parenting. The adolescents' ability to choose or create a surrounding context using physical or mental actions and to be able to control events (Ryff, 1989) mainly depends upon their perception of feeling parents have for them, trustful

relationship with parents and the parents' behavior. By modeling their parents, they develop a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment.

A sense of direction is required to lead a meaningful life, and fathers have a significant role in helping adolescents' have a purpose in life. All the dimensions in father-child relationship, except for parental involvement, have a significant influence on purpose in life dimension of psychological well-being. Parental acceptance, positive feeling towards parents and affectionate behavior are the main mother-child relationship dimensions that contribute to a strong purpose in life among adolescents. The above mentioned factors help adolescents to decide what they want in life. 22% of the variance in the purpose in life is predicted by the mentioned dimensions in the mother-child relationship and the father-child relationship.

From the overall score, it is seen that even though both parents have an influence on the psychological well-being of their wards, fathers have a higher influence compared to mothers. This finding of the study is also confirmed by the

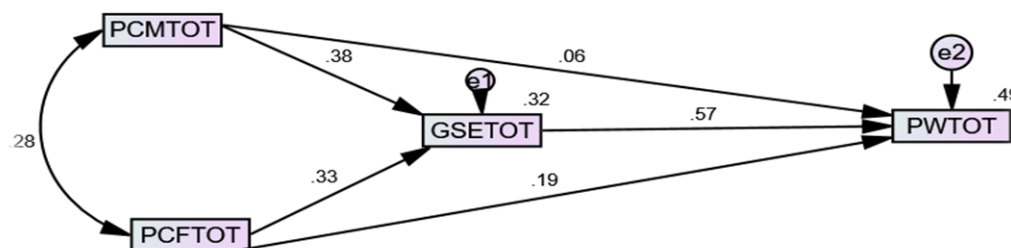
path analysis discussed later. This indicates that fathers help promote a child's independence, sense of self, and have a positive lens through which they can view the outside world. Thus the hypothesis stating that "The parent-child relationship will not have a significant influence on psychological well-being among adolescents" is not retained.

### Structural Equation Modelling (SEM): Model Fit Assessment.

Structural Equation Modelling assesses the suitability of the model based on collected samples. It is considered as the most useful method for assessing the causal relationship between variables, as well as for verifying the compatibility of the model. (Renganathan, Balachandran & Govindrajana, 2012).

In order to evaluate the model fit, emphasis was given to the chi-square/degrees of freedom ( $\chi^2/df$ ), CFI, GFI, AGFI, TLI, IFI, RMSEA and PGFI values. Using SEM, a complete path is analyzed i.e. whether self-efficacy mediated between parent-child relationship and psychological well-being.

**Figure 1** SEM- Path Analysis



As illustrated

in figure 1, there was no direct influence of mothers in the

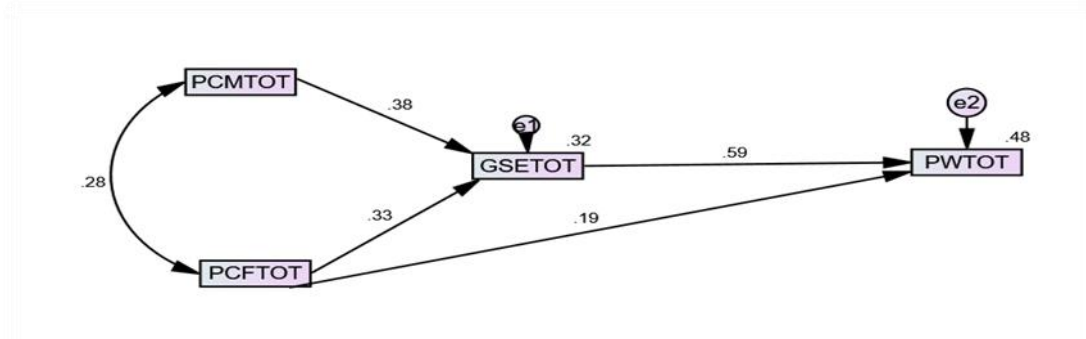
psychological well-being of adolescents. But they have an influence in building adolescents' self-

efficacy. On the other side, fathers have direct influence in building both self-efficacy and



psychological well-being among adolescents.  
Thus an acceptable fit has not been obtained.

**Figure 2** SEM- Path Analysis



However, as seen in figure 2, by removing the mothers' path to psychological well-being, the model is found to be fit. In this model, fathers have direct influence on both self-efficacy and psychological well-being of adolescents whereas

mothers have direct influence only on self-efficacy. The model fit indices in Table 3 confirms the mediating effect of self-efficacy between father-child relationship and psychological well-being.

**Table 3** Fit Indices

Fit indices	Results	Suggested values
p-value	0.04	p-value >0.05
Chi-square/degree of freedom ( $\chi^2/d.f.$ )	4.00	$\leq 5.00$ ( Hair et al., 1998)
Comparative fit index (CFI)	0.99	>0.90 (Hu and Bentler, 1999)
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	0.99	>0.90 ( Hair et al. 2006)
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)	0.97	> 0.90 (Daire et al., 2008)
Normated fit index ( NFI)	0.99	$\geq 0.90$ (Hu and Bentler, 1999)
Incremental fit index (IFI)	0.99	Approaches 1
Tucker Lewis index (TLI)	0.97	$\geq 0.90$ ( Hair et al., 1998)
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.06	< 0.08 ( Hair et al., 2006)

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Parsimony goodness-of-fit index (PGFI)	0.10	Within 0.5 (Mulaik et al., 1989)
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As detailed in Table 3, except for p-value, all other values are within the range for a fit model. While the p-value of 0.04 falls short of the accepted value for good fit, Schumaker and Lomax (1996) has shown that a sample size of more than 200 could affect the chi-square statistics. With all the other goodness of fit indices returning accepted values, the structural model is found to be a good absolute fit.

Studying the role of parents' involvement in adolescents' psychological well-being, Flouri and Buchanan (2003) have found that, although both paternal and maternal involvement contributed significantly and independently to offspring happiness, the involvement by fathers has a stronger effect. Videon (2005) also reported an independent impact of fathers on adolescents' psychological well-being, with changes in adolescents' satisfaction in father-child relationship significantly influencing variations in their psychological well-being.

Findings of Huppert, Abbott, Ploubidis, Richards and Kuh (2010) have also confirmed this, reporting a strong link between psychological well-being of adult women and the type of parenting received from father during their adolescence. This study has also found an association between high maternal care with low autonomy, indicating a complex relationship with mothers and their adolescents' psychological well-being. Chirkov et al. (2003) have noted that autonomy, when defined as individualism as Ryff (1989) uses, is negatively associated with well-being, citing evidence from cross-cultural studies. While autonomy refers to making choices freely, this is different from individualism, as persons can willingly choose to

depend on others or accept social norms, affecting psychological well-being.

### **Practical Implications**

Having known the significance of parent-child relationship, community programmes can be organized for parents and adolescents together for strengthening the parent-child relationship. Schools can provide training for the parents to equip them with skills to deal with their children. In addition parents could be trained to adopt reinforcement as a corrective measure, rather than using punishment.

### **Delimitations and Scope for Further Research**

The sample was collected only from Thrissur city and was limited to students studying in 8<sup>th</sup> to plus two classes. The school administration permitted a limited time to collect data, this could have impacted the sample in giving their responses. Also the test was administered in group and not individually. Future research can be conducted with adolescents from different regions across the country focusing on parent-child relationship. Interventions can be developed to enhance parent-child relationship. The results of the present study showed mothers to have significantly lesser influence of psychological well-being of adolescents, when compared to fathers. Further research can focus on identifying the mother-child relationship factors that contribute to the adolescents' psychological well-being.

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