

## Adolescents' Perception of Paternal Acceptance-Rejection and Its Association to Their Self-Esteem

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**Abstract:** As the adolescents grow and develop, many factors in their life affect them as perceived paternal treatment styles. Father's acceptance has an essential role in helping their adolescents to upgrade their confidence and in turn their self-esteem. Pediatric nurses, in particular, are in a key position to promote the healthy development of an adolescent's self-esteem, because of the opportunity to support adolescents, as well as to influence parents especially, fathers in how they parent. This study aimed at examining the association between paternal treatment styles and self-esteem among public secondary school adolescent in Port-Said Governorate. Descriptive analytical design was used. The study was conducted in eight public secondary schools in Port-Said Governorate. A convenient sample of 442 adolescent were included in this study. Data was collected by: 1) Adolescents' Demographic Data, 2) The Self-Esteem Inventory and 3) Paternal Treatment Styles Scale. Results revealed that, paternal acceptance was positively correlated with adolescents' self-esteem. In addition, positive and significant correlation was found between paternal rejection and negative self-esteem while, positive self-esteem was negatively correlated with paternal rejection. The study concluded that, there was a statistically significant relation between perceived paternal styles and adolescents' self-esteem. The study recommended that, health education program need to be carried out in schools to teach fathers about positive paternal styles, further studies are required to assess other factors and other paternal styles that affect the adolescents' self-esteem.

**Key words:** Adolescents • Paternal acceptance • Paternal rejection • Paternal styles • Pediatric Nursing • Self-esteem

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### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is one of the most critical developmental stages where teens make the transition from childhood to adulthood, lasting from 13 to 20 years. This period is described as "a phase of life that begins in biology and ends in society". As the adolescents grow rapidly and develop physically, cognitively, socially and psychologically, many factors in their life can affect the formation and development of their self-esteem. Studies have shown that one of the most important of these factors is their parents' styles [1-3].

Parenting style refers to "the practice adopted by parents during the socialization stage of their children and how the children are controlled". It has an essential role

in the adolescent's identity development, due to its effects on their capabilities in their life [4, 5]. However, parent-child interaction has two parental sets: "parental warmth/acceptance and rejection". According to "Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory (PART), these two parental sets are defined in terms of "the child's perception of parental behavior". It is proposed that any person has a basic need for a positive response as affection, support and warmth from the most important people to them as parents, peers and teachers which is vital for the adolescent's growth [6].

Many studies emphasized that the perceived paternal acceptance-rejection has a vital role in the personality development. When a father accepts or rejects the child, it significantly affects personality formation and

development of the child and this in turn will affect the personality formation and self-esteem in adolescents. Therefore, rejection in childhood leads to psychological maladjustment in adolescents and adult's life, while acceptance enhances positive feelings in the child, which is the future adult and thus promoting normal social development [7-10].

Pediatric nurse is concerned with adolescents' health, their normal growth and development and their gaining full potential as adults. Also, pediatric nursing activities, particularly educational program for parents about how to deal with teens would promote the paternal understanding of adolescent development. As well as, pediatric nurse needs to recognize different parenting styles and provide support to parents by discussing the effects of different parenting models and teaching parenting skills, for helping parents deal with the adolescents' psychological stresses and selecting an appropriate parenting style for them to enhance their self-esteem [8, 11].

In the light of the importance of the paternal role in influencing adolescents' self-esteem and forming their personality, the present study was undertaken to examine the adolescents' perception of paternal acceptance - rejection and its relation to their self-esteem.

**Aim of the Study:** This study aimed at examining the association between paternal treatment styles and self-esteem among public secondary school adolescent in Port-Said Governorate.

**Research Question:** The present study sought to shed light on the following question:

Are there associations between paternal treatment styles and adolescents' self-esteem in Port-Said public secondary school, Port -Said Governorate?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Research Design:** Descriptive analytical design was used in this study.

**Subjects:** A convenient sample of 442 adolescent were included in this study (242 boys and 200 girls), aged from 15-18 years (Mean=16.4, SD=0.95). Adolescents involved were from intact families, along with their mothers and fathers and lived with them at home from both sexes who were free from any disease or deformity.

**Setting:** Subjects were selected from eight public secondary schools in Port-Said Governorate, Egypt.

**Tools for Data Collection:** After extensive review of the related literature the researchers developed the following tool to collect data pertinent to the study.

**Adolescents' Demographic Data:** It includes: student's age, sex, family size, parents' education level and their occupation, number of siblings and adolescent's order.

**Self-Esteem Inventory:** This scale was developed by Cooper Smith [12] to collect data about adolescent's self-esteem and it was translated into Arabic by Abdel Hafeiz [13]. It consisted of four domains, namely: General, Social, Academic and Family self-esteem. The tool includes Lying scale, which is measured by eight statements. The maximum score of the lying scale is 12 to accept checked answer of each participant. This scale was scored using a Likert scale with a two choices; "apply" took (2 scores) or "not apply" took (1 score) for each of the 58 statements. The scores were reversed for negative items, for each subscale, the scores of the items were summed up and the total of the items, giving a mean score for the subscales. These scores were converted into a percent score. The self-esteem of the adolescents will consider positive if the score is equal or exceed the mean  $\pm$  standard deviation, otherwise it will consider negative. The total score of the inventory is 50 to 100. The reliability is 0.86 [14].

**Schaffer Parental Treatment Inventory:** This tool includes 18 subscales and is used to measure global adolescents' perception of paternal treatment styles for all subjects of the current study. It was developed by Schaffer [15] and translated by Abou Nahia and Moussa [16] and modified by Ahmed [17]. The researchers used two parental treatment styles for a father; "acceptance" and "rejection". Acceptance style scale consists of 16 items, while the other scale consists of 14 items. The tool is scored using a rating scale with three choices; "Yes", "sometimes" and "No" for each of the 30 statements. The three responses of No, sometimes, yes were scored 0, 1, 2 respectively, the scores were reversed for negative items. For each subscales (acceptance & rejection) the scores of the items were summed up and the total was divided by numbers of items, giving a mean score. These scores were converted into a percentage score, the

percentage of paternal treatment styles of each subject was considered acceptance if the adolescent's score was equal to or exceed the mean±standard deviation, otherwise it was considered rejection. The validity and reliability of the parental treatment inventory are 0.93 and 0.86 respectively [17].

**Procedure:** Subjects were chosen from the three academic years of the eight public secondary schools in Port-Said Governorate, Egypt using convenience sampling. The headmasters were informed about the study. The researchers introduced themselves to the students through the headmasters. Then, the purpose of the study and how to complete the scales was explained to the adolescents. Participants were informed about their right to participate in the study, or withdraw at any time and that all their informations are very confidential. Also, the adolescents were informed that there are no possible harms or risks associated with the research. The participants were requested to fill in confidential scales that took approximately 20-30 minutes to be completed. The researchers collect data of the study from February till the end of May 2017.

**Statistical Analysis:** The data collected were organized, coded, tabulated, computerized and analyzed by using SPSS statistical program version 16. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were used.

## RESULTS

Regarding demographic characteristics, results reveals that, the mean score of the adolescent's age was 16.4±0.95 years, 54.8% were males, 36.9 of them were first child while 43.4% had a family of five members. As for the father's education, 68.3% had secondary school education and 64.7% were employees. the mean score of paternal acceptance was 20.33±8.24, while paternal rejection was 11.32±6.31 with a total mean scores of paternal treatment styles as perceived by the adolescents was 31.65±7.34 (Table 1). Results showed that, the mean score of negative self-esteem was higher than the mean score of positive adolescent's self-esteem (47.61±4.62 & 31.82±3.29 respectively) with a total mean score of overall adolescents' self-esteem 79.43±4.12 (Table 2).

Table 3 revealed a statistically significant positive correlation was found between paternal acceptance style as perceived by adolescents and total negative and

Table 1: Total mean scores of paternal treatment styles as perceived by adolescents (n=442)

	Paternal treatment styles	
	Acceptance	Rejection
Mean ± SD	20.33 ± 8.24	11.32 ± 6.31
Total	31.65 ± 7.34	

Table 2: Total mean scores of adolescents' self-esteem (n=442).

	Self-esteem	
	Positive	Negative
Mean ± SD	31.82 ± 3.29	47.61 ± 4.62
Total	79.43 ± 4.12	

Table 3: The Correlations between paternal styles and self-esteem among adolescents (n=442).

	Treatment styles			
	Acceptance		Rejection	
Paternal	R	P	R	P
Total negative self-esteem	0.33	0.000*	0.37	0.000*
Total positive self-esteem	0.48	0.000*	-0.37	0.000*

\*Correlation is significant at 0.05

Table 4: The Correlations between paternal styles and self-esteem subscales among adolescents (n=442)

Self-esteem subscales	Paternal styles			
	Rejection		Acceptance	
	R	P	R	P
Social	0.086	0.071	0.103	0.031*
Family	0.209	0.000*	-0.116	0.015*
Academic	-0.046	0.337	0.158	0.001*
General	-0.102	0.031*	0.208	0.000*

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05

positive adolescent's self-esteem (P=0.000 & P=0.000). Furthermore, a statistically significant positive correlation was found between total paternal rejection and total adolescents' negative self-esteem (P=0.000), while a statistically significant negative correlation was found between adolescent's positive self-esteem and paternal rejection (P=0.000). Table 4 showed a statistically significant positive correlations were found between adolescent's social self-esteem and both rejection and acceptance paternal styles (P=0.071 & P=0.031). A statistically significant positive correlation were found between adolescent's family self-esteem and rejection paternal style (P=0.000) while a statistically significant negative correlation was found between adolescent's

family self-esteem and acceptance paternal styles ( $P=0.015$ ). While a statistically significant negative correlation was found between adolescent's general self-esteem and rejection paternal styles ( $P=0.031$ ). A statistically significance positive correlations were found between academic and general adolescent's self-esteem and acceptance paternal styles ( $P=0.001$ ,  $P=0.000$  respectively). No statistically significant relationship was found between adolescent self-esteem, their sex and demographic characteristics of their fathers.

## DISCUSSION

Paternal treatment styles, as acceptance and rejection are indexes that predict child health. Therefore, it is important to take into account that what happened during the childhood will influence teens' behaviors later. So, how fathers feel about adolescent boys and girls and how they treat them are important factors in promoting their self-esteem [18, 19]. Many researches concluded that, adolescents who were accepted by their parents, especially fathers, had positive self-esteem, better than those who perceived rejection, which associated with negative effects such as mistrust, aggression and negative self-esteem. Self-esteem was conversely associated with paternal treatment styles characterized by low acceptance which goes with the current study findings [20, 21]. These research findings may be referred to paternal rejection that lead to lower adolescents' aspiration, which in turn leads to lower their self-concept and ultimately self-esteem.

Result of the present study confirmed that there was a statistically significant negative correlation between paternal acceptance and adolescent's negative self-esteem. This finding could be related to the adolescent's feeling of being accepted by their fathers and other factors affecting adolescents' self-esteem such as peer interaction and group identity which are very important in this stage as they help adolescents to increase their self-esteem. On the same line, Gota [22] and MacDonald *et al.* [23] who did a study on child rearing behaviors and adolescent self-esteem, indicated that there was a positive association between paternal acceptance and adolescent self-esteem, as well as the study of Driscoll [24] and Fernandez-Garcia *et al.* [25]. Such findings were supported by Potter *et al.* [1] who pointed out that adolescents seek a "group identity" because they need esteem and acceptance. So, being unlike their peers in this period of development is

considered a problem for them to be accepted, which consequently affect their self-esteem regardless their relationship with their parents.

The current study findings revealed that, all types of self-esteem were positively correlated with paternal acceptance. Self-worth of teens is concerned with their effectiveness at school, within the family and in social situations. These results were paralleled with Sona [26] who found that, paternal treatment styles have a significant effect on the development of self-esteem. The highest level of a child's well-being which includes psychological adjustment and positive self-esteem was associated with high levels of "paternal warmth". This is explained by the fact that paternal acceptance helps children to build up the "intrinsic motivation" in their academic activities and vocational goals and also help them in their academic achievement which will increase as their self-esteem increase. So, adolescents with low academic achievement are due to family interruptions and negative self-esteem because of lack of love, support and warmth of their parents. Therefore, they have a bad feeling regarding their self as inferiority, temper, missing interest in school and future, lack of confidence, low self-respect [18, 27- 29].

Family especially parents play a vital role in the development of adolescents thought, feeling and behavior. The parenting style practice by parents decide the success or failure of adolescent Hong *et al.* [30]. The current study findings showed that, family self-esteem was negatively correlated with paternal acceptance and positively correlated with paternal rejection. This is referring to the fact that paternal styles may not be the only factor that determines the adolescents' self-esteem. Achievement motivation, significant figures as teachers and peers are also contributing to their self-esteem. Sometimes, rejected children find acceptance through identification with their friends [8]. This is supported by Garcia and Santiago [19] who indicated that teens' parents is not the only source of their confidence, the other people surrounding them as peers and teachers might also contributed to the level of their self-esteem.

Overall, the results indicate that parenting styles affect the well-being in adolescents. Authoritative and permissive parenting styles were found to associate with high self-esteem [31]. This is because the parents who are high in the responsiveness dimension are always giving love and support to their children. This allows teens to be more confident in their self and in turn develop a high

level of self-esteem. Conversely, authoritarian parenting style was negatively correlated to self-esteem due to low level of responsiveness dimension Hong *et al.* [30].

### CONCLUSION

The study findings concluded that, there were positive and significant correlations among paternal acceptance-rejection and adolescents' self-esteem. Paternal acceptance was positively correlated with self-esteem. Furthermore, positive and significant correlation was found between paternal rejection and negative self-esteem while positive self-esteem was negatively correlated with paternal rejection. In short, perceived paternal warmth which includes acceptance plays a vital role in adolescents' psychological adjustment.

**Recommendations:** Based on the study findings the researchers recommends the following:

- Health educational program to fathers about the various paternal styles and the most effective and positive parenting skills.
- Further assessment of the adolescents to evaluate factors affecting their self-esteem and psychological adjustment.
- Replicate the study on maternal treatment styles and its relation to adolescents' self-esteem.

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