

# Assessment of the Relation between Parent Locus of Control and Academic Self-efficacy

By

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## Abstract

*The goal of present study is investigating about the relation between parents' locus of control with academic self-efficacy of sixth grade students of Gonabad elementary schools. To gather data, two questionnaires were used: Campis, Lyman, and Prentis-Dunn's questionnaire of parent's locus of control, and Jinks and Morgan questionnaire of academic self-efficacy. Statistical populations were all sixth grade elementary students of Gonabad and their parents who were 817 persons. 260 persons were chosen botryoidally. The findings showed that among components related to the fathers' locus of control, the largest mean belongs to accountability and the smallest mean belongs to self-efficacy and believing in chance and fate. Among components related to the mothers' locus of control, life control was the highest, and self-efficacy was the lowest mean. Among fathers' locus of control, the component of "believing in chance and fate" had the highest correlation coefficient with students' emotional self-efficacy and it had the lowest correlation coefficient with the fathers' accountability and students' social self-efficacy. Among mothers' locus of control, believing in chance and fate had the highest correlation coefficient with students' emotional self-efficacy and mothers' accountability component had the lowest correlation coefficient with students' emotional self-efficacy' and academic self-efficacy. Among components of the fathers' locus of control, believing in chance and fate and controlling children's behavior could define students' self-efficacy. Mothers' believing in chance and fate can predict students' self-efficacy. The result also showed that there is a significant difference between the average of social self-efficacy of girls and boys.*

**Keywords:** Parents, Locus of Control, Students, Gonabad.

## 1. Introduction

Self-efficacy and its influencing factors had been in spotlight of many psychologists for many years. With initiating childhood, the parents create experiences for their children that affect differently on their self-efficacy. The home's atmosphere helps the children to interact with the environment and affects positively on their self-efficacy. The main locus that influences on self-efficacy is centered on family, but the influence is mutual. If parents create an environment that motivate child's curiosity and help them to acquire experience, they have helped to form the base of their children self-efficacy. Parents that arrange different opportunities for their children, compared to parents that create less opportunities for their children, foster more efficient children (Pajares & Schunk, 2009). Locus of control is a system of individuals' beliefs about the cause of their experience and the factors that affect on their failure or success. Locus of control affects significantly on individuals' behavior (Noferesti & Talebiyan Sharif, 2002).

Locus of control is one of personal traits that introduced by Rotter in social learning theory for the first time. He defines locus of control as a general expectation of individuals from the consequences of an event that is, whether within or outside of his or her control and understanding (Masoudniya, 2007). Locus of control is one of the factors that affects on student learning and their academic advancement. This factor is the same as one's belief about the effect of his or her behavior on his or life and education (Ghanbari and et al., 2013). According to Rotter, individuals are divided into two groups regarding their locus of control: extroverts and introverts. Extroverts assume that their success and failure depend on external factors while introverts assume that their failure or success depend on themselves. The former have external locus of control and the later have external locus of control (Seif, 2012). In social cognition

theory of Bandura, self-efficacy is an important and key concept (Tahmasebi and Anari, 2012). Sherer defines self-efficacy as trust of one with oneself for doing the assignments successfully (Hammond, 2005). Bandura defines self-efficacy as reception and judgment of individuals about their skills and capabilities that are needed in special situations (Pajares, 1996). One of aspects of self-efficacy is academic self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy includes belief in having capacities for reaching the goals in special academic ground (Dorman, 2001).

Academic self-efficacy is defined as the individual's judgment about their capabilities for doing different academic task for the organization. Comparing with individuals with low self-efficacy, Individuals with high self-efficacy are more confident about doing their academic tasks. Students with higher academic self-efficacy have also better academic performance and adjustment (Foladvand and et al., 2009). Basically, self-efficacy is related to this question that "can I do this task successfully in this situation?" our cognitive interpretation of our situation and our failures affects on our next self-efficacy beliefs (Lavasani, Ejei and Afshari, 2009). Unfortunately, we are witness of many students that have not any incapability, but their self efficacies are not at the desired level and they don't show any interest in improving and knowledge acquirement (Heydari & Koshan, 2002). Bandura argues that factors such as previous experiences, others' encouragement, alternative experiences, anxiety and attitude affect on self-efficacy. Jamaali, Noroozi, and Tahmasebi (2013) suggests that families' support, creating motivation, stress and courses, advise are factors that affect on self-efficacy. Torres and Solberg (2001) study on English students and the result showed that family support and control relate strongly with student self-efficacy. Pajares and Schunk (2009) suggest that, perception of capabilities, social comparison, attribution, time of access and perception of importance are factors that affect on self-efficacy and locus of control is a part of attribution theory. Attribution refers to factors that individuals refer to them to justify different events in life. Among these factors, family support and control and also attribution are factors that affect on self-efficacy (Biyabangard, 1991).

Review of parents' history showed that the children's behavior affected by parents. The findings suggest that parents with external locus of control believe that the problems of their children are out of their control. In contrast, parents with internal locus of control believe that the problems of their children are directly related to their interaction. Findings show that parents with external locus of control probably have children with more behavioral problems. Researches show that there is a relation between the parents' locus of control and the children's behavior. For example, parents with external locus of control, try to control their children externally and vice versa (Mouton & Tuma, 2010). Parents with internal locus believe that they have control over their children while the parents with external locus of control believe that the formation of their children's behavior and their growth depend on factors that are not related to them and they have a little control over their children (Loyd & Hastings, 2009).

A lot of factors involve in students' confidence and their beliefs in their capabilities, including their parents' attitude toward their success and advancement. Attitude is a part of locus of control and shows the individuals' view points toward events and happenings. If parents have internal locus of control and believe that their children will progress in their academic career with more attempt, they will transfer their thoughts to their children and affect somehow on their academic success. In the scope of our research, we didn't find any research about the relation of the parents' locus of control with students' academic self-efficacy. Therefore, the aim of the present project with the title of parents' locus of control and its relation to the children's academic self-efficacy is to answer this question: What is the relation between students' academic self-efficacy and the parents' locus of control?

As parents' locus of control have important roles in academic performances of students, and regarding the introduced history, we didn't find any project related to parents' locus of control and its relation to students' academic self-efficacy. Therefore, a research on this ground is necessary. Considering academic performance in educational systems is one of the most important problems. Academic performance as an important academic issue is intimately related to the improvement of the schools' quality (McDonald,

2001). Academic performance is a base for judgment about students acquired desirability during a special period and this issue is placed at the head of academic development programs all over the world (Lindman & Duek, 2001). To predict students' academic status, defining the criteria and proper variables are areas that in which psychology and educational sciences researchers are active. There is much research related to prediction of academic performance (Jensen, 1998). Academic performance is influenced by social, psychological and biological dimensions (Boekartes, 1995). Self-efficacy is confidence in one's behavior for doing a task successfully and expects the consequences (Bandura and Chuck). Ebrahimi Bakht (2007) on his study showed that self-efficacy can change the students' academic performance desirably. As mentioned, pay attention to parents control and students' self-efficacy are variables that can provide grounds for improvement of student academic performance. These variables are very important and they are addressed in this paper.

## 2. The method

To analyze the project data, descriptive statistic is used, including frequency table, central indices and charts. Regarding inferential statistics, Pierson's correlation, Regression and independent T test is used. Statistical populations of this project are all primary students in the sixth grade of Gonbad and their parents. They were 817 persons. 260 students were chosen indeterminately according to the Morgan and Kerjci's Table, but their parents were chosen determinately.

To assess academic self-efficacy, Jerri Jink and Backi Morgan's academic self-efficacy questionnaire is used (2002). This questionnaire is based on Bandura's social-cognitive theory (1999). The questionnaire contains 24 items that assesses 3 sub components of social self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy and emotional self-efficacy. Karimzadeh and Mohseni (2006) used this questionnaire in their research and confirmed its face and content validity. They report its alpha coefficient as 0.76. BaniAsadi and Pour Shafei also confirmed its content validity and for its reliability defined Chronbach's alpha equal to 0.76. Ismaili (2013) on his treatise "Comparison of Academic Self-efficacy, Adjustment and Life Quality in Normal and Orphan Girl Students of Junior High School of Mashhad" confirmed the validity and the reliability of this tool.

To assess the parents' locus of control, the questionnaire of the analogy of parents' locus of control, Campis, Lyman, and Prentis-Dunnis used. This questionnaire adjusted with 5 range Likert's scale and the answer were ranged from completely disagree to completely agree. Its validity and reliability are confirmed by Hagekull, Bohlin, and Hammarberg (2001). Cronbach's alpha for self-efficacy, fathers' locus of control and mothers' locus of control, respectively are 0/90, 0/92, and 0/95. Therefore, tools have proper validity and reliability.

## 3. Findings

From the 260 questionnaires which were distributed, 130 questionnaires were answered by the boys and the rest by the girls. The average index of self-efficacy component is shown in the Table 1. Among the components, the highest average of social self-efficacy is 4/25 and the lowest average of emotional self-efficacy is 3/87. Standard deviation of academic self-efficacy is 0/46 that represent the lowest dispersion and standard deviation of emotional self-efficacy is 0/69 which represent the highest dispersion.

**Table 1 .Descriptive indices of Self-efficacy components**

Components	N	Mean	SD
academic self-efficacy	260	4/23	0/46
social self-efficacy	260	4/25	0/60
emotional self-efficacy	260	3/87	0/69

**First Question: What is the parents’ locus of control?**

To investigate about this question, descriptive statistics of the average of index and standard deviation are used. Locus of control of the students’ mothers and fathers are assessed separately.

**Table 2. The means and standard deviations of the Parents’ Locus of Control**

Locus of control’s components	Parental Control of Child’s Behavior		Parental Belief in Fate/Chance		Child Control of Parents’ Life		Parental Responsibility		Parental Efficacy	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Mean	3/11	3/03	3/20	2/97	3/35	3/09	3/33	3/35	3/03	2/97
SD	1/03	0/97	0/78	0/67	0/79	0/64	0/61	0/50	0/75	0/64

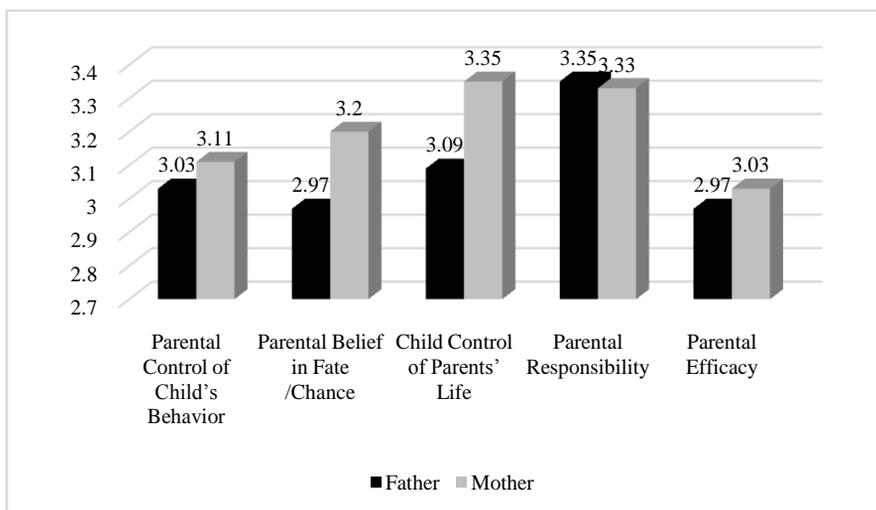
**Fathers’ locus of control**

According to the findings, it was clear that, among locus of control components that belong to the fathers, the highest average belongs to fathers’ Responsibility (3/35) and the lowest average belongs to the two components of self-efficacy and belief in chance and fate (2/97). Therefore, the most locus of control of students’ fathers in the sample of this project is related to accountability.

**Mothers’ locus of control**

The results of assessing this question showed that among components of the mothers’ locus of control, the highest average belongs to life control (3/35) and the lowest average belongs to self-efficacy (3/03). Therefore, the most locus of control in mothers of sample students is related to students’ control.

According to the Table 2, it is clear that, the average of control in mothers is higher than the fathers. Only the accountability component is higher in fathers (3/35) compared to mothers (3/23). Therefore, locus of control in the students’ mother is proportionally higher than the father’s locus of control. The below chart shows mothers and fathers’ average locus of control.



**Figure 1. The mean of the Parents’ Locus of control**

Second question: do the fathers locus of control relate significantly and positively to the children’s self-efficacy?

According to the obtained results, it is clear that there is a significant relationship between the fathers’ locus of control and students’ self-efficacy and because correlation coefficients are positive, then these

relations are direct. Therefore the assumptions of the research are accepted and the zero assumption is rejected. Among components related to the fathers' locus of control, the highest correlation coefficient (0/41) belongs to the correlation of "belief in chance and fate" and "students' emotional self-efficacy" and the lowest correlation coefficient belongs to the correlation of "fathers accountability" and students' social self-efficacy" (0/19).

**Table 3. The correlation coefficient between fathers' locus of control and students' self-efficacy**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Parental Efficacy	1								
2.Parental Responsibility	0/48**	1							
3.Child Control of Parents' Life	0/54**	0/57**	1						
4.Parental Belief in Fate	0/67**	0/46**	0/72**	1					
5.Parental Control of Child's Behavior	0/68**	0/51**	0/57**	0/67**	1				
6.Academic Self-efficacy	0/28**	0/22**	0/28**	0/31**	0/26**	1			
7.Social Self-efficacy	0/33**	0/19**	0/22**	0/29**	0/35**	0/83**	1		
8.Emotional Self-efficacy	0/33**	0/21**	0/33**	0/41**	0/33**	0/82**	0/78**	1	
9.Student Self-efficacy	0/34**	0/22**	0/30**	0/37**	0/34**	0/93**	0/93**	0/94**	1

The third question: do the mothers locus of control positively and significantly relate to children's academic self-efficacy?

According to the obtained result, there is a significant relationship between the mothers' locus of control and the students' self-efficacy. As these correlation coefficients are positive, then the relations are direct.

**Table 4. The correlation coefficient between mothers' locus of control and students' self-efficacy**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Parental Efficacy	1								
2.Parental Responsibility	0/75**	1							
3.Child Control of Parents' Life	0/78**	0/57**	1						
4.Parental Belief in Fate	0/77**	0/56**	0/82**	1					
5.Parental Control of Child's Behavior	0/82**	0/56**	0/87**	0/81**	1				
6.Academic Self-efficacy	0/27**	0/24**	0/29**	0/35**	0/30**	1			
7.Social Self-efficacy	0/31**	0/24**	0/37**	0/45**	0/36**	0/83**	1		
8.Emotional Self-efficacy	0/38**	0/29**	0/38**	0/47**	0/35**	0/82**	0/78**	1	
9.Student Self-efficacy	0/35**	0/28**	0/38**	0/46**	0/36**	0/93**	0/93**	0/94**	1

Therefore, the research assumptions are accepted and the zero assumption is rejected. Among the components related to the mothers' locus of control, the highest correlation coefficient belongs to the component of "belief in chance and fate" and "the students' emotional self-efficacy" (0/47). The lowest correlation coefficient belongs to the correlation of "mothers' accountability" and "students' academic self-efficacy and emotional self-efficacy" (0/24).

The fourth question: do the locus of control of each parent predict children's academic self-efficacy? According to the obtained regression results about the fathers' locus of control, in a first step the component of "fathers' belief in chance ad fate" and in the second step the component of "children behavior control" entered the regression model. Therefore, among components of the fathers' locus of control, two components could define students' self-efficacy: belief in chance and fate and controlling children's behavior. In a first step, the value of a component of "belief in chance and fate was 0/37 and in the second step the value was 0/25.The Beta value in the second step was 0/17.

**Table 5. Regression coefficients for the prediction of Students self-efficacy through their Fathers' believe**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3/07	0/14		21/23	0/000
	Fathers' believe	0/30	0/04	0/37	6/37	0/000
	(Constant)	3/06	0/14		21/31	0/000
	Fathers' believe	0/20	0/06	0/25	3/21	0/001
	Parental Control of Child's Behavior	0/09	0/04	0/17	2/24	0/025

a. Dependent Variable: Students self-efficacy

However, other variables could not enter the equation and were deleted. The two components of belief in chance and fate and controlling children's behavior by fathers affect on self-efficacy. The result shows that controlling the children's behavior by fathers and their belief in chance and fate define 14 percent of self-efficacy variance.

**Table 6. Regression coefficients for the prediction of Students self-efficacy through their Mothers' believe**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2/93	0/13		22/80	.000
	Mothers' believe	0/32	0/04	0/46	8/34	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Students self-efficacy

According to the obtained regression result about the mothers' locus of control and the obtained significance level, the mothers' belief in chance and fate can predict the students' self-efficacy. The result of regression showed that the mothers' belief in chance and fate can predict self-efficacy of students more than other dimensions can and enter regression model. However, other components had a weak correlation and were deleted. Therefore, the only variable that effect on self-efficacy of student is the mothers' belief in chance and fate.

#### **The fifth question: is academic self-efficacy of boys different from that of girls?**

To test this question, the independent T-test is used and the result show that there is no significant differences between the average of social self-efficacy of girls and boys (sig=0/32). Therefore the assumption is rejected and the zero assumption is accepted. However, social self-efficacy of girl with an average of 4/01 insignificantly, is more than social self-efficacy of boys (3/93).

**Table 7. Independent t-test results to evaluate the self-efficacy differences between students by their gender**

Variable		M	SD	T	df	Sig	F	Sig
Students self-efficacy	Girl	4/01	0/55	1/075	258	0/28	0/95	0/32
	Boy	3/93	0/55					

## **4. Discussion and conclusion**

Families are the first centers of cumulative life and education entities. Civilizations emerged from the heart of families as the primary core of education. Amir Moshtaghi (2002) suggests that families can

instill positive and constructive or negative and destructive traits in children. All children moods and behaviors in adulthood, whether they are social or antisocial, are rooted in their previous experiences in the family. As family is the best natural place for birth and child growth, is counted a biological unit. Family is a medium for gathering different genders with different ages. So it is known as a civilization unit that links ancient traditions to modern social values. Although family is the smallest social unit, it is the foundation of larger societies and assumed as an environment that the child will bear in it and the foundation of his or her character will be built and his good or bad fortune to be rooted there. Dadsetan (2000) in his study showed that while children reach puberty experience 3 social bases: family, peers and the larger institutions such as schools. Children have a role in all these three bases. Each role is defined socially by people that children interact with them. The foundation of self esteem, courage and healthy self-efficacy will be built during passing 3 phases: social- psychological, identification with healthy parents or their successors. AkbrZadeh (2004) suggests that family, schools, living location. Social-religious entities and mass media affect on forming self-esteem, self-expression and self-efficacy of adolescences. So, family as the first entity that shapes the first foundation of the adolescences' character has significant importance.

Generally, many factors involve in defining the relation of parents with their children, including cultural factors, parents' characters, gender, child's age, parents' age, parent's education, parent's expectation and their behavior. Self-efficacy is defined as individuals' belief about the extent of their abilities in controlling their performances and the events in the environments. In defining family function, it is shown that families affect on children self-efficacy beliefs (Ebrahimi Bakht, 2007). Parent's locus of control consists of the following sub- components:

Parent's effectiveness (self-efficacy): this concept refers to the extent of the parent's effectiveness of their children. This issue often is measured by the degree the parents feel pertinence that respectively includes two sub scales of child satisfaction and child effectiveness and the scores refers to the parents' self-confidence (Hassall, Rose and McDonald. 2005).

Parents' accountability: high ranks in this scale are created by the parents who are not accountable against their children's behavior.

Parents' life control by children: children control their parents' life.

Parents' belief in chance and fate: people who get high score in this scale believe that their children's behaviors is affected by chance and fate (Campis and et al., 1986).

Mothers with internal locus of control, probably were able to perceive their children's positive aspects, while the mothers with external locus of control that were not able to control their children's behavior, probably evaluate their children's behavior less positively (Loyd, and Hastings, 2009).

Controlling children's behavior by parents: parents who are not capable of controlling their children's behavior, create higher ranks in sub scale of parent' locus of control (Campis and et al., 1986).

The result of the present project is compatible with the results of Loyd, and Hastings, (2009), and Barghi and Alipour, (2009). In the present study, belief in chance and fate and a source that is not controllable have significant importance. Reviewing the parents' history showed that the children's behavior affected by their parents. The findings show that parents with external locus of control believe that their child's problems are out of their control. In contrast, parents with internal locus of control believe that their child's behavior directly related to their interaction. The findings also show that parents with external locus of control have children with more behavioral problems. People with an internal locus of control believe their ability to harness life events, in contrast, people with an external locus of control believe that life events are consequences of external factors such as accident or chance (Barghi&Alipour, 2009).

In sum, in this project all goals were reviewed and the relation between the parents' locus of control and the students' self-efficacy in the sixth grade primary school students of Gonabad were defined positive

and significant for both parents. Types of parents' locus of control also were defined. Mothers' locus of control was belief my chance and fate and the fathers' locus of control was accountability. Students' self-efficacy of parent's locus of control was defined and it was clear that for mothers and fathers' belief in fate and chance is very important. This result affirms the pervious results and shows that external locus of control effect on self-efficacy.

## 5. Suggestions:

- 1- As self-efficacy and parent's locus of control are important, proper methods of locus of control should be taught to in-service teachers and consultants to increase the awareness of parents of students.
- 2- Schools consultants should pay special attention to the students' academic self-efficacy and teach the students the methods of self-efficacy.
- 3- Education authorities can include programs related to teaching and improvement of self-efficacy as a part of courses' drills to increase the students' ability in studying.
- 4- It is suggested that students research continually about self-efficacy and the factors that affect on it to assess strength and weak points of teachers and students and provide the ground for improvement of education.

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