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**Perceived Acceptance of Maternal Trust and Self-Oriented Perfectionism among High School Students**

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Momina Khushnood<sup>1\*</sup>, Rimsha Irshad<sup>2</sup>**Abstract**

Maternal trust plays a central role in shaping various aspects of a individuals' life whereas self-oriented perfectionism creates valuable insights and provides a better understanding of human behavior, motivation, and well-being. The current study aims to identify the correlation between perceived acceptance of maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism in high school students. It also intends to measure differences of gender and public & private school affiliation in terms of perceived acceptance of maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism among high school students. This study is comprised of a sample of 300 high school students (Male=150 and Female=150) from various educational institutions in Bahawalpur, Pakistan. In this quantitative, cross-sectional research design, data is collected by using a convenient sampling technique. Data was collected by using a set of questionnaires that included informed consent, a demographic sheet, The Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment ([IPP] Gullone & Robinson, 2005) and the Child Adolescent Perfectionism Scale (Hewitt & Flett, 1991). The results of this study conclude a significant correlation between of maternal trust with self-oriented perfectionism. It is also found that the level of self-oriented perfectionism is higher among high school girls as compared to high school boys. The implications of these findings are reflective, as addressing the issue of self-oriented perfectionism in high school students can lead to improved well-being and better academic achievement.

**Keywords:** Adolescents, High School, Maternal Trust, Self-Oriented Perfectionism, Students

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**Introduction**

Parents' trust and communication interactively influence learning not only in adolescence but all age groups. The results of a study conducted by Ford et al. (2023) suggest that greater positive perceptions of parent-child relationships greater will be the favorable outcomes in later life. It's quite often that youngsters and their parents differently observe their relationship

(Korelitz & Garber, 2016). This study focuses on the perfectionism of adolescents regarding acceptance of mothers' trust in their relationship, from the perspective of adolescence. Adolescence is a significant period of developmental underlined by complexity of environmental challenges and extreme variability of emotions as related to other periods of development (Arnett, 1999; Larson et al., 2002; Reitsema et al., 2022).

The theoretical background emphasizing maternal trust in adolescents' is rooted in various psychological and developmental theories that emphasize the importance of attachment, and early relationships in shaping trust-related behaviors and beliefs. Attachment theory proposed by John Bowlby in 1969 emphasizes the significance of early caregiver-child relationships in the development of trust. According to this theory, a secure attachment bond formed between a child and their primary caregiver (often the

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mother) provides a sense of security and serves as a foundation for the child's trust in others and their understanding of relationships later in life. Trust vs. Mistrust (Erikson's Psychosocial Development) of Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory (1950) suggests that the first stage of psychosocial development (from birth to around 18 months) centers on the development of trust versus mistrust. A child's sense of trust is built through consistent care, responsiveness, and reliability of their caregivers, particularly the mother. Different parenting styles, such as authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful, can influence a child's perception of trust. An authoritative parenting style, characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and appropriate guidance, tends to foster greater trust in the child-mother relationship compared to other parenting styles (Darling, 1999). Significance of perfectionism rooting in Trait Theory is also consistent with the Kwarcinska et al. (2022), who suggested considering perfectionism as a complex personality trait instead of interpreter of psychopathology. It affects many areas of life importantly parenthood, academics, intimate relationships, sports, hobbies, professional activity (Flett et al., 2003; Piotrowski, 2020; Stoeber et al., 2017). There are many studies conducted to investigate perfectionism in comparisons of age and gender of people. Some results shows that level of perfectionism is higher in early ages especially early years of education, this may be due to higher demands of parents regarding perfectionism in individuals (Douilliez & Henot, 2013; Lozano-Fernández, 2012; Vicent et al., 2019). However, there is evidence of non-significant differences of age in relation to perfectionism but this construct of personality have stability throughout life (Maia et al., 2011; McGrath et al., 2012; Sherry et al., 2013). Notably, Martinez-Gonzalez et al. (2023) suggested that parents, teachers, counselors and psychologists should carefully observe and deal with perfectionism of adolescents,

particularly self-oriented perfectionism. According to them self-oriented perfectionism is one of the internalized mechanisms. Literature also suggests an inverse relationship between quality of parent-adolescent relationship and internalized problems (Pinquart, 2017; Yap et al., 2014). Relevant is the study of Nelemans et al. (2023) in which they discovered factors that affect adolescents especially by internalizing aspects of parent-adolescent relationship.

It is also believed that when mothers make parenting mistakes, influence is greater than when her caregivers make mistakes (Babcock Fenerci & Allen, 2018). Tayo and Nursanti (2023) also emphasized important role of mothers in family welfare including fulfillment of physical, material, mental, spiritual, and social needs. Perhaps, mothers have more opportunities to shape the child's personality and abilities (Gade, 2012), by teaching and giving special attention (Devi, 2015). Further, it was concluded that role of mother is important for son's perfectionism and role of father is vital to the perfectionism of daughters (Sabrina et al., 2023).

Current study is designed to investigate the correlation between perceived acceptance of maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism among high school students. Results of current study can better educate students, parents, and teachers by providing guidance to improve high school student's academic performance, motivation, self-esteem, and personality. It also aims to describe any differences of gender and public or private school students in terms of perceived acceptance of maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

1. It is hypothesized that there is significant correlation between acceptance of perceived maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism among high school students.
2. It is hypothesized that there are significant gender differences in terms of acceptance of perceived maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism among high school students.

3. It is hypothesized that there are significant gender differences of self-oriented perfectionism among private and public high school students.

### Method

#### Participants

The participants of the study were adolescence enrolled as high school

students. The sample was collected from different high schools in Bahawalpur, Pakistan. The total number of participants was ( $N=300$ ). The data were collected from both male and female high school students.

**Table 1**

*Table of Sample Characteristics (N=300)*

Characteristics of Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
Gender		
Female	150	50.0
Male	149	49.7
Affiliation		
Public	182	60.7
Private	115	38.3

### Research Design

The research was Quantitative, and a Cross-Sectional research design was applied.

### Sampling

A convenient sampling technique was used to collect data. High school students from different high schools in Bahawalpur, Pakistan were serving as participants.

### Measures

#### Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) Revised Version

Acceptance of mother's trust is measured by using 10 item subscale "mother trust" of self-report measure IPPA which was originally created in 1987 by Armsden & Greenberg and amended in 2005 by Gullone & Robinson. This tool evaluates several aspects of adolescent interactions with mother, father and peers, including communication effectiveness, feelings of anger and alienation, and levels of trust.

#### Child and Adolescent Perfectionism Scale (CAPS)

It is the most popular multidimensional assessment of perfectionism in children and adolescents. Adolescents' level of Self-Oriented Perfectionism is measured by a subscale of CAPS which makes conceptual and empirical logic to discriminate between different styles of perfectionism among

children specially adolescents and has reliable psychometric features (Flett et al., 2016).

### Procedure

After careful review of literature, research objectives were clarified and hypotheses were generated. Permission to use the research questionnaires was taken from the authors before starting the study. Informed consent was taken from principles of schools and participants. Set of questionnaire consisting of demographic information, sub-scale of Inventory of Parents and Peer Attachment (IPPA) Revised Version, measuring Mother Trust, and Child and Adolescent Perfectionism Scale (CAPS) were used to collect desired data.

Ethical considerations were taken into account when performing the research, particularly maintaining confidentiality and anonymity. Before they began participating in the research, all participants received information regarding the scale. Participants involved were allowed to leave the research at any moment. Collected data was carefully entered into statistical software to test the hypotheses, followed by result derivation, reporting and formatting.

## Results

**Table 2**

*Correlation of Maternal Trust and Self-Oriented Perfectionism (N=300)*

Measures		M	SD	1	2
1.	Maternal Trust	45.6	8.45		
2.	Self-Oriented Perfectionism	40.9	6.65	0.23**	-

$p < .01$

Results indicate that there is a significant correlation between Maternal Trust and Self-Oriented Perfectionism.

**Table 3**

*Gender Comparisons of Maternal Trust and Self-Oriented Perfectionism (N=300)*

Measures	Male(n=150)		Female(n=149)		<i>t</i> (148)	<i>p</i>	95% CI	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Maternal Trust	40.6	6.5	41.2	6.8	-0.75	0.45	-2.19	0.98
Self-Oriented Perfectionism	47.4	8.8	41.2	7.6	-3.7	0.00	-5.78	-1.7

Note. CI= confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit

Self-Oriented perfectionism among females is significant at a 0.01 level. Self-Oriented perfectionism is significantly high among females as compared to males as

indicated by *p* value whereas gender differences in terms of maternal trust are non-significant.

**Table 4**

*Comparisons of Maternal Trust and Self-Oriented Perfectionism in terms of Public and Private High School Students*

Measures	Public (n=172)		Private (n=128)		<i>t</i> (148)	<i>p</i>	95% CI	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Maternal Trust	41.0	6.7	40.7	6.4	0.40	0.68	-1.30	1.97
Self-Oriented Perfectionism	45.7	8.8	45.3	7.7	0.31	0.75	-1.79	2.49

Note. CI= confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit

The results indicate that there are no significant differences between students attending public and private schools in

terms of maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism.

## Discussion

Current study comprised of three hypotheses. First hypothesis was assumed to test a significant correlation between acceptance of perceived maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism among high

school students. Findings of the current study shows a strong correlation between acceptance of perceived maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism of high school students. Hypothesis was accepted because

*p* value shows the significant correlation at the 0.01 level.

Most related study is recently conducted by Kim (2023) in which he investigated the perceived trust of adolescent students on their parents. It was found that the trust of family was very high, followed by trust of school friends and teachers among adolescents. Similarly, Schulz et al. (2022) have highlighted important role of mothers in everyday life of adolescents. Also, there is research evidence suggesting that maternal bonding is an important predictor of perfectionism among their children (Sabrina et al., 2023). Pineda-Espejel et al. (2018) also found an association between children's perfectionism and role of parents. Contrarily, a study conducted by Stoeber et al. (2017) aimed to explore relations and differences of self-oriented perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism and socially prescribed perfectionism found no correlation between self-oriented perfectionism and trust.

The Table 3 indicates that the difference between males and females in terms of Perceived Maternal Trust is nonsignificant. Self-oriented perfectionism among females is significant at a 0.01 level. *t* value is -3.7 which shows self-oriented perfectionism is more in female students.

It was also hypothesized that there would be significant gender differences in terms of acceptance of perceived maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism among high school students. This finding is consistent with the findings of some other studies that boys have higher levels of perfectionism as compared to girls (Douilliez, 2013; Flett et al., 2000, 2016; Vicent et al., 2019). But recently conducted study by Melero et al. (2020) found contrary findings that there are no differences of gender in terms of their perfectionism.

Lastly it was hypothesized that self-oriented perfectionism would significantly differ among private and public high school students. Table 4 shows the affiliation comparison of private and public high schools in terms of maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism. Analysis showed

non-significant differences of affiliation with public or private schools for both acceptance of maternal trust and self-oriented perfectionism. There is limited specific literature on self-oriented perfectionism and maternal trust in comparison with public and private school adolescents. Hence, it is recommended for future researchers to fill this gap.

### **Conclusion**

Academic and practical performance of high school students is influenced by maternal trust and levels of perfectionism they hold for themselves. Female students in Pakistan may exhibit higher levels of self-oriented perfectionism might be due to cultural expectations, the educational system, and individualistic beliefs. The potential harms of self-centered perfectionism must be understood, and a collaborative and helpful learning environment must be prioritized by increasing awareness to students, teachers and parents.

### **Implications of Study**

This study has theoretical implications for Academics and Research because of its contribution of knowledge. It also has practical implications for all those who are concerned with better performance and wellbeing of students including their parents, teachers, educational institutes, counselors, motivational speakers, psychologists, school psychologists, and career counselors.

### **Limitations & Recommendations**

This study is limited to a single city of southern Punjab. Lack of resources for data collection limits the scope of research to limited schools of a region. Other researchers are suggested to include various samples on a larger population for even better results. It is also recommended to compare other forms of perfectionism and to measure further age groups. It would also be interesting to measure role of both parents in relation to their same and opposite gender offspring. Finally, it was found that there are less explored comparisons of public and private school

adolescents, particularly in terms of perfectionism and perceived maternal trust.

### Contribution of Authors

Momina Khushnood: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft  
Rimsha Irshad: Methodology, Writing - Reviewing & Editing, Supervision

### Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest declared by the authors.

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### Disclaimer

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### Data Availability Statement

The datasets of the current study are not available publicly due to ethical reasons but are available from the corresponding author [M.K.] upon the reasonable request.

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