

# Psychological Security and Academic Adjustment in the Presence of Father Among Fourth and Fifth Grade Elementary Students: Understanding the Relationship and Mediator Effects

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## Abstract :

**This research has aimed to examine the relationship between psychological security and academic adjustment in father's presence as a mediating variable among fourth and fifth-year students in primary schools .To achieve this objective, the researchers used the Psychological Security Scale developed by Zainab Shaqeer ,and the Academic Adjustment Scale by Yongman, which was translated by Hussein Abdulaziz Aldarini, on 105 participating students. The data was analyzed using Model 1 by F. Hayes, the results found that Father's presence mediates the relationship between psychological security and academic adjustment among the study simple.**

**Key words: psychological security, academic adjustment, Father's presence, primary school students.**

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## Introduction:

Human beings strive to fulfill their physiological, psychological, and social needs continuously from childhood to old age. Each stage of life has its unique needs, which vary in intensity and urgency from individual to individual. Unsatisfied needs create tension and imbalance for individuals, driving them to exert efforts to fulfill those needs. Thus, needs become a motivator and driving force for behavior. Needs range from basic ones such as food, sleep, and clothing to the need for security, self-esteem, and affirmation.

The need for security is one of the essential psychological needs for healthy psychological development, social harmony, and individual well-being. It is closely related to the instinct of self-preservation and the feeling of trust and reassurance. This is manifested in psychological

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security, which refers to an individual's sense of safety, trust, and emotional well-being within their social environment. Psychological security can contribute to academic adjustment, indicating a learner's ability to adapt, engage, and develop academically. It encompasses academic performance, learning motivation, and social integration within the school environment.

Kong and An (2004) defined psychological security, based on Maslow's (1942) hierarchy of needs, as the feeling resulting from the presence of danger or risks to an individual's physical or psychological well-being, as well as the perception of one's strength or weakness in dealing with such dangers or risks. It mainly relates to the feelings of certainty and controllability. Researchers widely use this term (Sun and Yao, 2009; Zhao and Jing, 2013; Yu and). Hart et al. (2005) suggest that psychological insecurity refers to individuals' concerns about potential harm and threats. The feeling of psychological security is a subjective judgment of an individual's control over their environment and its controllability. It is a self-awareness state based on one's personality traits (Wang, Long, Chen, & Li, 2019, p. 2). In this study, we adopt a procedural definition of psychological security as an individual's perception of safety, support, and acceptance in their social relationships. It is manifested through trust and comfort in expressing oneself, sharing thoughts and emotions, and encompasses personal development, future vision, general and academic life, mood state, and various social relationships and interactions.

Academic adjustment, on the other hand, refers to the process through which students adapt to the demands, expectations, and challenges of the educational environment. It encompasses academic, social, and emotional aspects and represents students' ability to integrate into the academic environment, engage in learning activities, develop effective learning strategies, and manage transitions between educational levels. (Misra & McKean, 2000). It is evident in cognitive adjustment, which refers to learners' cognitive and intellectual aspects of adaptation (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997), social adjustment, which relates to students' ability to navigate and establish positive relationships within the educational institution (Chickering & Reisser, 1993), emotional adjustment, which involves students' ability to manage and regulate their emotions, develop emotional resilience, coping strategies, and maintain psychological well-being (Misra & McKean, 2000), and adjustment during transitions to new educational environments, such as transitioning between institutions or academic levels and adapting to changes in curricula (Henderson & Emerson, 2006). In this study, we adopt a procedural definition of academic adjustment as an ongoing psychological process through which learners achieve compatibility with their surrounding academic environment. It includes dimensions such as diligence, compliance, the teacher-student relationship, with the aim of achieving psychological well-being.

Both psychological security and academic adjustment are considered as an important variable in the learner's life, and presence or absence of the father figure significantly contributes to achieving high levels of both. The absence of the father figure, whether permanent (such as death) or temporary (due to divorce, family problems, migration, or work), can lead to a decrease

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in psychological security and academic adjustment. Several studies have focused on examining the impact of the father figure on psychological security and academic adjustment, highlighting that the presence of a supportive father positively influences students' psychological security, enhancing their well-being and confidence. This, in turn, can contribute to improving psychological adjustment and academic flexibility in academic settings, as demonstrated by studies like Chopra R. and Kalita R. (2006), which found that primary school students from single-parent families experienced more difficulties in psychological, social, and academic adjustment compared to children from intact families.

Another study conducted by Bronstein, Clauson, Frankel Stoll, and Abrams (2016) revealed that children from intact families exhibited higher levels of academic adjustment. This relationship between psychological security and academic adjustment in the presence or absence of the father figure is the focus of our study, which aims to understand this relationship among fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study. In a study by Shinn (1978), the impact of the father's absence on children's cognitive development was analyzed. The study concluded that the absence of the father and limited interactions with their children have a strong correlation with lower cognitive abilities in mental tests. These difficulties were attributed to financial constraints and anxiety disorders resulting from the father's absence (Eizirik, 2004).

Furthermore, Downey (1994) conducted a study to examine the academic performance of children from single-parent families (409 children deprived of their mother and 3,483 children deprived of their father) compared to children from intact families (14,269 children). The study found that the academic performance of children deprived of either the mother or the father was relatively equal. However, the study highlighted that the group of children from intact families outperformed both groups of children deprived of either the mother or the father in terms of academic achievement. This study shed light on the negative impact of the absence of one parent's care on children's academic performance (B. Downey, 1994).

Numerous studies, including Pedersen et Robson (1969), Lamb et al. (1983), Caldera (2004), and Brown et al. (2012), have indicated that the presence and involvement of the father in early childhood upbringing are predictive factors for children's secure attachment. Based on the above, our current research is grounded in John Bowlby's attachment theory, which emerged in the 1950s as a result of his intensive research and clinical observations. Bowlby challenged prevailing beliefs that downplayed the importance of emotional bonds during infancy. He clarified that infants are biologically predisposed to form attachment relationships with their primary caregivers, usually their mothers, as a means of seeking security, comfort, and protection. These early experiences shape the child's internal working models and influence their expectations, beliefs, and behaviors in future relationships.

John Bowlby's attachment theory has revolutionized our understanding of the human psyche and the profound impact of early relationships on psychological security. This theory, based on

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empirical evidence, elucidates the dynamics of attachment and emphasizes the role of secure attachments in shaping individuals' beliefs, expectations, and behaviors throughout their lives. By recognizing the importance of caregiver sensitivity and responsiveness, attachment theory provides valuable insights into promoting psychological security, enhancing healthy relationships, and improving overall well-being. Integrating attachment theory across various domains, including parenting, clinical practice, education, and social policy, offers a promising means of enhancing psychological life and creating caregiving and learning environments that support psychological security, resilience, and academic, social, and psychological adjustment (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000).

To explore the nature of the relationship between psychological security and academic adjustment among fourth and fifth year primary students participating in the study, we employed a multi-faceted approach using the Model 1 framework outlined in "Introduction to Mediation, Moderation, and Conditional Process Analysis" published by The Guilford Press. We aimed to examine the levels of psychological security and academic adjustment and investigate the relationship between them. Additionally, we sought to investigate the influence of the presence or absence of the father figure on the relationship between psychological security and academic adjustment among the participating students. So the analysis involved exploring the interactive, dual, and multiple relationships between psychological security and academic adjustment, employing the techniques described in PROCESS, a tool developed by Andrew F. Hayes.

### **Methodology:**

The researchers used a non-experimental quantitative research methodology employing a descriptive correlational-causal research design.

### **Study Participants:**

The study included a total of 105 male and female students who were purposefully selected from the fourth and fifth grades of primary schools of Laghouat city, Algeria.

### **Study Limitations:**

**Objective Limitations:** The study's scope is limited to the variables under investigation and the selected sample of elementary school children.

**Spatial Limitations:** The study was conducted in Maamar Boukhalkhal School and Farhat Belkacem School in the city of Laghoit, , Algeria.

**Temporal Limitations:** The study was conducted from October 2017 to January 2018.

### **Study Instruments:**

### 1. Psychological Security Scale:

The scale, developed by Dr. Zainab Shaqeer in 2005, consists of 54 items. The responses are measured on a four-point scale ranging from strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), to strongly disagree (1) when the direction of the items is positively oriented toward psychological security. However, the scoring is reversed (0, 1, 2, 3) when the direction of the items is negatively oriented toward psychological security. The total score ranges from 0 to 162, where scores from 0 to 30 represent low psychological security, scores from 31 to 62 indicate below-average psychological security, scores from 63 to 96 represent moderate psychological security, scores from 97 to 131 indicate high psychological security, and scores from 132 to 162 represent very high psychological security. The items are distributed across four dimensions, as shown in the following table:

**Table No. (1) shows the distribution of factors of the items of the psychological security scale.**

Factors	Items
The formation of the individual and his vision for the future	.28-27-26-25-24-23-22-21-20-5-4-3-2-1
The general and working life of the individual	-33-32-31-30-29-14-13-12-11-10-9-8-7-6 .37-36-35-34
Individual's mood	.47-46-45-44-43-42-41-40-39-38
.Social relations and social interaction	.54-53-52-51-50-49-48-19-18-17-16-15

Dr. Shaqeer assessed the validity of the Psychological Security Scale using both face validity and criterion validity. The criterion validity was determined by applying the Psychological Serenity Scale, developed by Taif Hospital, which resulted in a correlation coefficient of 0.80. Discriminant validity and item validity were also calculated. As for reliability, it was measured using test-retest reliability, yielding a correlation coefficient of 0.85, and Cronbach's alpha, which was calculated as 0.91 (Shaqeer, 2005, pp. 11-17).

### Validity evidence for the Psychological Security Scale in the current study:

The psychometric properties of the Psychological Security Scale were confirmed on a sample of 47 male and female students. The results for validity and reliability were as follows:

#### Validity:

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To assess the construct validity, we calculated the construct validity using internal consistency, which is based on calculating the correlation coefficients between the item score and the total score of the corresponding dimension. The results were as follows:

Table (2) shows the results of the correlation coefficients between each item and the total degree of the axis of the individual's formation and vision for the future

Factor	Item No.	R	P	Item No.	R	Sig
The formation of the individual and his vision for the future	1	0.57	0.01	22	0.52	0.01
	2	0.12	Not statistically significant	23	0.50	0.01
	3	0.47	0.01	24	0.66	0.01
	4	0.57	0.01	25	0.58	0.01
	5	0.38	0.01	26	0.50	0.01
	20	0.52	0.01	27	0.56	0.01
	21	0.50	0.01	28	0.38	0.01

The table above shows statistically significant correlation coefficients between items in the Individual Formation dimension and items related to the participant's vision of the future and their total score, ranging from 0.38 to 0.66 at a significance level of 0.01. However, item number 2 showed a non-significant correlation, which led to its removal from the scale.

Table (3) shows the results of the correlation coefficients between each item and the total degree of the axis of public and work life of the individual

Factor	Item No.	R	Sig	Item No.	R	Sig
The general and working	6	0.50	0.01	29	0.47	0.01
	7	0.47	0.01	30	0.46	0.01
	8	0.40	0.01	31	0.46	0.01

life of the individual	9	0.38	0.01	32	0.23	Not statistically significant
	10	0.17	Not statistically significant	33	0.46	0.01
	11	0.36	0.01	34	0.53	0.01
	12	0.28	Not statistically significant	35	0.34	0.05
	13	0.33	0.01	36	0.43	0.01
	14	0.49	0.01	37	0.34	0.01

The results of the significant correlation coefficients in Table (3) indicate that they ranged from 0.33 to 0.53. However, the correlation coefficients for items 10, 12, and 32 did not reach statistical significance. Therefore, the researchers decided to exclude these items from the analysis.

Table (4) shows the results of the correlation coefficients between each item and the total degree of the individual's mood axis.

Factor	Item No.	R	Sig	Item No.	R	Sig
Individual's mood	38	0.58	0.01	43	0.67	0.01
	39	0.64	0.01	44	0.63	0.01
	40	0.59	0.01	45	0.55	0.01
	41	0.67	0.01	46	0.53	0.01
	42	0.62	0.01	47	0.57	0.01

Based on the results presented above, it is evident that all correlation coefficients between the items of the individual's mood state and their total score were statistically significant, ranging

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Table (5) shows the results of the correlation coefficients between each item and the total degree of the axis of social relations and social interaction.

	Item No.	R	Sig	Item No.	R	Sig
Social relations and social interaction.	15	0.49	0.01	49	0.60	0.01
	16	0.51	0.01	50	0.36	0.05
	17	0.58	0.01	51	0.49	0.01
	18	0.56	0.01	52	0.15	غير دال
	19	0.49	0.01	53	0.57	0.01
	48	0.41	0.01	54	0.58	0.01

Based on the results shown in Table 6, the correlation coefficients between the items and the total score of the social relationships and social interaction dimension were statistically significant, ranging from 0.36 to 0.58, except for item 52 which did not show statistical significance.

Regarding the reliability (consistency) of the scale, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for each dimension after removing items that were found to be unreliable. The results for each dimension are as follows:

- Self-composition and future vision dimension: Cronbach's alpha coefficient = 0.78
- General life and work dimension: Cronbach's alpha coefficient = 0.70
- Mood state dimension: Cronbach's alpha coefficient = 0.81
- Social relationships and social interaction dimension: Cronbach's alpha coefficient = 0.73

These results indicate that all dimensions of the psychological security scale demonstrate appropriate reliability for personality measures, according to the classification provided by Mr. Abu Hashem (2006). It states that an appropriate reliability coefficient is 0.70 or higher, considered high if it reaches 0.80 or higher, moderate if it ranges between 0.60 and 0.70, and low if it is below that range.



## 2. Academic adjustment Scale:

Youngman and Hussein Abdulaziz Aldarini developed the Academic adjustment Scale. The test consists of 34 items divided into three dimensions, and the items are distributed among three factors as shown in the following table:

Table No. (6) shows the distribution of the axes of the items of the academic adjustment scale.

Factors	Items
Seriousness and diligence	34-31-29-25-22-20-19-13-11-7-5-1
Comply with	-28-26-24-23-18-17-16-15-14-10-9-8-3-2 32
Relationship with the teacher	33-30-27-21-12-6-4

(Qurishi, 2002, pp. 88-91)

The adaptation of the scale was done by Aldarini, and acceptable validity and reliability coefficients were obtained. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency reached 0.65. To assess the validity of the scale, the congruent validity approach was used by applying the "Study Habits and Attitudes" scale developed by Jaber Abdulhamid Jaber and Sulaiman Al-Sheikh for the Qatari environment. The scale showed a correlation coefficient of 0.84 with study habits and a correlation coefficient of 0.90 with attitudes towards studying, consisting of the dimensions of teacher satisfaction (0.90) and acceptance of education (0.70) (Qurishi, 2002, pp. 88-91).

Regarding the verification of the validity evidence in the local environment (Algeria), the researcher Qurishi (2002) estimated the total scale stability coefficient to be 0.71, and the validity was assessed using the hypothetical construct validity through the face validity approach.

### Statistical Methods:

The researchers employed various statistical methods to achieve the study's objectives using the SPSS package, including:

- Frequencies and percentages.
- Chi-square test (K2).

- Correlation coefficient (R).
- Coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>).
- F-test.
- T-test.
- Simple regression coefficient.
- Multiple regression coefficient.

## Results

Answering the research questions:

Answering Research Question 1:

To answer the first research question, which states, "What is the level of psychological security among fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study?" we calculated the observed frequencies and compared them to the expected frequencies using the chi-square goodness-of-fit test, as shown in the following table:

**Table (7)** illustrates the level of psychological security among the participating students.

Level		FO	%	FE	K <sup>2</sup>	df	Sig
Psychological Security	low	00	00%	35	17,65	4	0.01
	Without the middle	00	00%				
	Moderate	28	26.7%				
	High	55	52.4 %				
	Very high	22	21%				
Total		105	100%				

Based on the data in the table above, we observe that the majority of fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study had a high level of psychological security, with a percentage of 52.4%. Additionally, 26.7% of them had a moderate level of psychological security, while 21% of the participating students had a very high level of psychological security.

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The calculated value of 17.65 at a significance level of 0.01 is less than 0.05, indicating statistically significant differences between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies in favor of the observed frequencies at a high level of psychological security.

Therefore, we can conclude that the level of psychological security among fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study is high.

To determine the level of psychological security among the participating students according to the presence or absence of the father, we calculated the cross-tabulated frequencies as shown in the following table.

Table 10 illustrates the level of psychological security according to the presence or absence of the father among the participating students.

## Father's Presence

**Table (8) shows the level of psychological security according to the presence and absence of the father among the study participants**

Father's presence						
Psychological security	Absent		Present		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
moderate	8	%7,76	20	19,04	28	
		42,10 %		23,25		
High	7	%6,66	48	%45,71	55	
		36,84 %		%55,81		
Very high	4	%3,80	18	%17,14	22	
		21,05		20,93		
Total	19	%18,1	86	%81,9	105	
		%100		%100		

Based on the data provided in the table above, the following observations can be made:

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- Students with a moderate level of psychological security and an absent father account for 7.76% of the total participating students and 42.10% of the children with an absent father.
- Students with a high level of psychological security and an absent father account for 6.66% of the total participating students and 36.84% of the participating students with an absent father.
- Students with a very high level of psychological security and an absent father account for 3.80% of the total participating students and 21.05% of the children with an absent father.
- Students with a moderate level of psychological security and a present father account for 19.04% of the total participating students and 23.25% of the children with a present father.
- Students with a high level of psychological security and a present father account for 45.71% of the total participating students and 55.81% of the children with a present father.
- Students with a very high level of psychological security and a present father account for 17.14%

Translation of the provided text into English:

**Answer to the second question:**

To answer the first question, our parents' consent was required to determine "the level of academic adjustment among fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study." We calculated the observed frequencies and compared them to the expected frequencies using the chi-square test, as shown in the following table:

**Table (9) shows the level of academic adjustment among the participating students.**

level		FO	%	FE	K <sup>2</sup>	Df	Sig
academic adjustment	low	00	00%	53	13,03	2	0.01
	Medium	34	32.4%				
	High	71	67.6%				
Total		105	100%				

Based on the data in the table above, we note that the majority of fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study had a high level of academic compatibility, with a percentage of 67.6%. Meanwhile, 32.4% of them had a moderate level of academic compatibility, and 21% of the participating students had a very high psychological compatibility level.

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The value of 13.03 was obtained at a significance level of 0.01, which is less than 0.05. This indicates statistically significant differences between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies in favor of the observed frequencies in terms of high academic compatibility.

Therefore, we can conclude that the level of academic adjustment among fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study is high.

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**Table (10) shows the level of academic adjustment according to the father's attendance and absence among the study participants**

Father's presence						
academic adjustment	absent		Present		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Medium</b>	5	%4,76	29	%27,61	34	%32,38
		%26,31		%33,72		
<b>High</b>	14	%13,33	57	%54,28	71	%67,62
		73,68		%66,27		
<b>Total</b>	19	%18,1	86	%81,90	105	%100
		%100		%100		

Based on the data in the table above:

- Students who have a moderate level of academic adjustment and an absent father represent 4.76% of the total participating students and 26.31% of the children who have an absent father.
- Students who have a high level of academic adjustment and an absent father represent 13.33% of the total participating students and 73.68% of the participating students who have a present father.
- Students who have a moderate level of academic adjustment and a present father represent 27.61% of the total participating students and 33.72% of the children who have a present father.

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- Students who have a high level of academic adjustment and a present father represent 54.28% of the total participating students and 66.28% of the participating students who have a present father.

### Validation of the Study Model:

To validate this study, the researchers used path analysis to determine the relationship between psychological security and psychological compatibility among fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study, taking Father's presence (present/absent) as a moderating variable. The researchers relied on a theoretical model, Model (1), using the Macro Process SPSS and SAS package. The researcher followed the following steps:

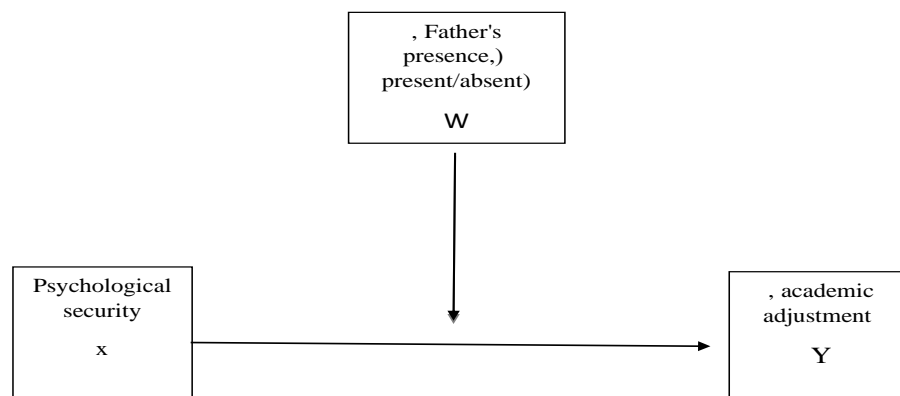
- Selecting the model that achieves the study's objective through the Macro Process SPSS and SAS package (Mediation Witch process - Model 1) for the intermediate and moderated variables.
- Drawing the conceptual (theoretical) diagram of the study.
- Drawing the statistical model diagram that illustrates the path relationships between the variables (Model 1).
- Calculating path coefficients.
- Analyzing and interpreting the results.

### Explanation of the study model:

- Psychological security is the independent variable (x).
- Psychological compatibility is the dependent variable (y).
- Presence of the father (present/absent) is the moderating variable.

**Define the conceptual plan (model)**

**Figure (1) illustrates the conceptual scheme (model) of the study**



**Determine the statistical scheme (model) of the study:**

**Figure 2 shows the diagram (statistical model) of the study**

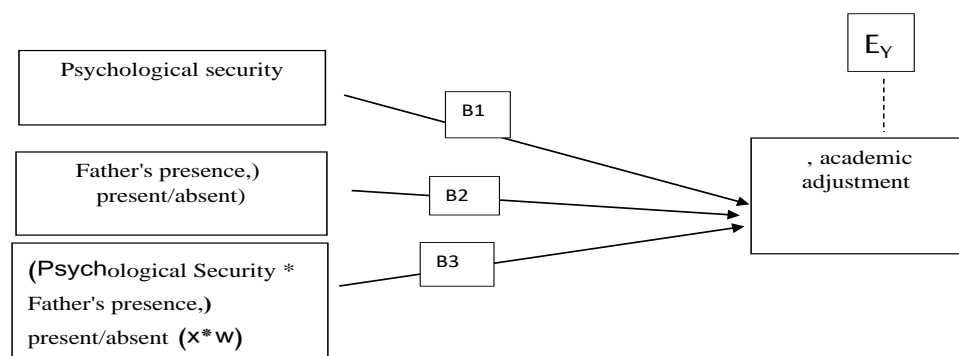


Table (11) shows the value of the linear correlation between psychological security and school compatibility Presence of the father (present / absent)

R	R <sup>2</sup>	MSE	F	Df1	Df2	P
0.40	0.167	16.92	6.76	3	101	0.01

The table above shows the results of multiple regression analysis for the relationship between psychological security and academic compatibility. The correlation coefficient was estimated at 0.40 with a significance level of 0.01. The determination coefficient was 0.167, and the F-test value was 6.76 at a significance level of 0.01.

Therefore, the regression model indicates a statistically significant moderate positive relationship between psychological security and Father's presence (present/absent) and academic adjustment among fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study.

Table (12) shows the regression model The relationship between (psychological security, presence of the father present/absent) and academic compatibility

Model	COFF	Se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	17.32	9.41	1.83	0.06	-1.35	36.00
Psychological security	0.077	0.081	0.94	0.34	-0.08	0.23
Father's presence	0.986-	5.17	-0.19	0.84	-11.25	9.28
Interaction (psychological security and Father's presence)	0.0047	0.045	0.104	0.917	-0.084	0.094

The results are as follows:

Constant: This coefficient represents the constant value in the model, which is 17.3204. It can be used to estimate the constant value that is not dependent on other variables in the model.

Psychological security: This coefficient indicates the impact of psychological security on academic compatibility. The coefficient value is 0.0770, with a standard error (SE) of 0.0819. The t-value is 0.9404, and the significance level (p) is 0.3493. The lower limit of the confidence interval (LLCI) ranges from -0.0855 to the upper limit of the confidence interval (ULCI) ranges from 0.2395. This suggests that psychological security has a weak, statistically non-significant effect on academic compatibility.

Presence/Absence of the father: This coefficient indicates the impact of the variable "presence/absence of the father" on psychological security. The coefficient value is 0.9860, with a standard error (SE) of 5.1788. The t-value is -0.1904, and the significance level (p) is 0.8494. The lower limit of the confidence interval (LLCI) ranges from -11.2593 to the upper limit of the confidence interval (ULCI) ranges from 9.2873. This suggests that the presence/absence of the father has a weak, statistically non-significant effect on academic compatibility.

Interaction between psychological security and presence/absence of the father (Int1): This coefficient indicates the interaction between psychological security and the variable "presence/absence of the father." The coefficient value is 0.0047, with a standard error (SE) of 0.04. The t-value is 0.1044, with a significance level (p) of 0.91. The lower limit of the



Psychological Security and Academic Adjustment in the Presence of Father Among Fourth and Fifth Grade Elementary Students: Understanding the Relationship and Mediator Effects confidence interval (LLCI) ranges from 0.08 to the upper limit of the confidence interval (ULCI) ranges from 0.09. This suggests that the interaction between psychological security and the presence/absence of the father has a weak, statistically non-significant effect on academic adjustment among the participating students.

**Table (13) shows the effect of the interaction between psychological security and Father's presence (present / absent) on academic compatibility.**

Psychological ) Security*	R <sup>2</sup>	MSE	F	Df1	Df2	P
Presence of the father present/absent)	0.0001		0.010	1	101	0.917

The table above illustrates the impact of the interaction between psychological security and paternal presence on psychological adjustment. The coefficient of determination was found to be 0.0001, and the F-test value was 0.01. These results indicate that the interaction between psychological security and paternal presence (present/absent) has a weak and statistically non-significant effect on academic compatibility.

#### **Summary of model results:**

- There is a moderate negative relationship that is statistically significant between psychological security and paternal presence, and psychological adjustment among fourth and fifth-grade elementary students participating in the study.
- There is a weak and statistically non-significant effect of psychological security on academic adjustment among fourth and fifth-grade elementary students participating in the study.
- There is a weak and statistically non-significant effect of paternal presence on academic adjustment among fourth and fifth-grade elementary students participating in the study.
- The interaction between psychological security and paternal presence has a weak and statistically non-significant effect on academic adjustment among fourth and fifth-grade elementary students participating in the study.

Based on the results summary, we can conclude that paternal presence can be considered a mediating variable in the relationship between psychological security and academic adjustment among fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study.

#### **Discussion:**

#### **Results of Answering the First Question:**

## Psychological Security and Academic Adjustment in the Presence of Father Among Fourth and Fifth Grade Elementary Students: Understanding the Relationship and Mediator Effects

These results can be interpreted as indicating that the participating students in the study who have developed secure attachments with their parents, particularly their fathers, show a positive impact on their psychological well-being. This is because fathers play a central role in providing emotional support, guidance, and family stability. The presence of a vigilant and attentive father is crucial for children to develop a positive self-concept, self-satisfaction, and actively engage and achieve more in future situations compared to children living only with their mothers.

The father also plays an important role in shaping the child's higher self or conscience based on their imitation of the father's personality. Through the process of modeling, the child acquires and internalizes attitudes that condemn any deviation from that behavior. Subsequently, imitation becomes a behavioral aid for the child to adapt to society and align with reality. Therefore, the presence of a strong paternal image is necessary for the child's social and psychological development, and this image cannot be replaced by any compensatory efforts on the mother's part. In this regard, Sa'eed Othman (2009) argues that living in single-parent households due to divorce or death exposes children to addiction and various deviances, which leads to variations in treatment, fluctuation, and loss of security and reassurance. Consequently, they search for these in other often distorted places. Broken homes, especially due to divorce, have an impact on children's emotional adjustment, acting as a solid barrier preventing the satisfaction of their basic needs and hindering the acquisition of necessary social skills for personality growth (Othman, 2009). Depriving a child of satisfying their needs from one parent creates feelings of tension and psychological distress, leading to difficulties in self-adaptation and interactions with others. They suffer from internal conflicts, experience intense emotional outbursts during this period, and consistently feel psychological dissatisfaction, which inevitably affects their mental health negatively.

### Results of Answering the Second Question:

The results indicate that children with absent fathers constitute a small percentage of the participating students in the study, who exhibit average academic compatibility, while they represent a high percentage of children showing high academic compatibility. This can be explained by the presence of other factors that may influence the relationship between children and their absent fathers, such as children's attempts to compensate for the father's absence by enhancing their academic achievement and working hard to promote emotional connection and self-confidence. Additionally, this may be attributed to the presence of a supportive environment, such as the mother, a teacher, or the school environment, contributing to the elevation of psychological compatibility among the participating students in the study.

Furthermore, the results of this study demonstrate that children with present fathers constitute a high percentage of the participating students who show high academic compatibility. This reflects the important role of fathers in providing material and emotional support, which

Psychological Security and Academic Adjustment in the Presence of Father Among Fourth and Fifth Grade Elementary Students: Understanding the Relationship and Mediator Effects contributes to the development of learning motivation and enhances their psychological well-being, ultimately leading to an increase in their psychological compatibility.

### Results of Model 1:

Through the verification of the proposed model in our study, we arrived at a result stating that " Father's presence is considered a mediating variable in the relationship between psychological well-being and academic adjustment among fourth and fifth-grade students participating in the study." This result can be interpreted as follows: psychological well-being increases in children through their positive relationships with significant individuals in their lives, including their father. The father represents an important source of emotional and psychological support, which, in turn, contributes to enhancing their psychological well-being. The role of the father as a mediating variable in the relationship between psychological well-being and academic adjustment can be explained by the fact that Father's presence contributes to enhancing children's psychological well-being through providing emotional support and supervision. This, in turn, leads to increased academic compatibility. Additionally, the father may provide a stable learning environment, enhancing opportunities for academic achievement and compatibility among children. This is supported by studies such as Kruk (2012) and UNICEF (2007), which found that children with absent fathers face difficulties in social compatibility, are likely to experience problems in friendships, exhibit clear behavioral issues, and display a defensive and intimidating personality as an attempt to conceal their underlying fears and dissatisfaction resulting from the absence of security and psychological stability. Furthermore, children with absent fathers face numerous academic challenges, such as poor academic performance and compatibility. Studies, including Flouri and Buchanan (2003), have confirmed that Father's presence plays a significant protective role against poor compatibility and helps achieve acceptable levels of mental health.

In the context of attachment theory, Father's presence as a mediating variable between psychological well-being and academic adjustment can be understood in relation to early attachment experiences, particularly with parents. These experiences shape individuals' internal working models and relationships, influencing their sense of psychological security. Father's presence in a child's life can significantly contribute to their sense of psychological security. Fathers can provide emotional support, care, and stability, which enhance secure attachment to the father. This, in turn, can positively impact the child's overall psychological well-being, including their academic adaptation. This is evident in various studies, such as Al-Asiri (2003) and Frouja (2011), which suggest that individuals' academic and social compatibility at different stages of development depends on their sense of security and comfort during childhood. If a child is raised in a safe and nurturing environment, they will grow and develop smoothly, achieving their desired goals (Naissa, 2014).

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