THE INFLUENCE OF FAMILY SATISFACTION AND SCHOOL SATISFACTION TOWARDS PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN IRAN

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THE INFLUENCE OF FAMILY SATISFACTION AND SCHOOL SATISFACTION TOWARDS PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN IRAN

by

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATION

AWB	Affective Well-Being
CWB	Cognitive Well-Being
FSS	Family Satisfaction Scale
PAC	Parents Adolescents Communication
PWB	Psychological Well-Being
SAAS-R	School Attitude Assessment Survey–Revised
SCT	Social Cognitive Theory

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PENGARUH KEPUASAN KELUARGA DAN KEPUASAN SEKOLAH TERHADAP KESEJAHTERAAN PSIKOLOGI DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR SEKOLAH TINGGI DI IRAN

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bermatlamat mengkaji kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar berdasarkan kepuasan keluarga dan sekolah. Kepuasan keluarga dipengaruhi oleh kohesi, kebolehsuaian dan komunikasi. Sebaliknya, kepuasan sekolah dipengaruhi oleh sikap terhadap sekolah, sikap terhadap guru, persepsi diri terhadap akademik, penilaian matlamat dan motivasi. Berdasarkan matlamat kajian ini, objektif berikut dipenuhi. Pertama, tahap kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar didokumentasikan. Kedua, usaha dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti perbezaan status kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar berdasarkan gender dan kumpulan umur. Seterusnya, kajian mengkaji sumbangan kohesi, kebolehsuaian dan komunikasi keluarga terhadap variasi kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar. Yang terakhir, persepsi diri terhadap akademik, motivasi, sikap terhadap sekolah, sikap terhadap guru dan penilaian matlamat turut dikaji berhubung dengan sumbangan setiap faktor terhadap kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar. Tiga model yang menyokong teori yang dibahas turut digunakan. Pertama, model Ryff, yang menyokong hujah tentang kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar. Kedua, model Circumplex, yang menjelaskan tentang kepuasan keluarga. Ketiga, model McCoach, yang menyokong hujah tentang kepuasan sekolah. Sampel kajian terdiri daripada 376 orang pelajar sekolah tinggi di Khomeinishahr, Iran. Sampel berumur di antara 15 hingga 18 tahun, dipilih berdasarkan teknik persampelan berstrata rawak. Kaedah yang digunakan dalam kajian ini termasuk ujian t sampel bebas, ANOVA satu hala, regresi pelbagai (regresi berhierarki).

Keputusan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar adalah pada keadaan yang sederhana. Sehubungan dengan itu, umur adalah faktor yang signifikan kerana pelajar dalam kumpulan umur 15 tahun dan 16 tahun berada dalam keadaan kesejahteraan psikologi yang lebih baik berbanding dengan kumpulan pelajar yang berumur 18 tahun. Namun demikian, faktor gender adalah tidak signifikan. Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa binaan kepuasan keluarga (kohesi, kebolehsuaian dan komunikasi) dan binaan kepuasan sekolah (persepsi diri terhadap akademik, motivasi, sikap terhadap guru, dan penilaian matlamat) secara signifikan menyumbang terhadap varians kesejahteraan psikologi. Berdasarkan keputusan yang diperoleh, kajian ini mencadangkan penganjuran program liburan dan menempatkan mereka selaras dengan keperluan psikologi pelajar bagi meningkatkan status kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar. Sebagai tambahan, penyelidikan ini mencadangkan agar pihak ibu bapa membiasakan diri dengan atribut remaja pada umur yang berbeza dalam usaha mengadakan interaksi yang baik dengan mereka. Justeru, adalah perlu bahawa pendidikan, guru dan staf sekolah yang lain mengadakan program khusus untuk meningkatkan persepsi diri terhadap akademik dan juga motivasi.

THE INFLUENCE OF FAMILY SATISFACTION AND SCHOOL SATISFACTION TOWARDS PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN IRAN

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine students' psychological well-being based on family and school satisfaction. Family satisfaction is influenced by cohesion, flexibility and communication. On the other hand, school satisfaction is influenced by attitude towards school, attitude towards teacher, academic self-perception, goal valuation, and motivation. According to the aim of this study the following objectives were to be fulfilled. First, the level of psychological well-being of students had to be determined. Secondly, an attempt was made to identify the differences of the status of students' psychological well-being based on gender and age group. Next, the study examined the contribution of cohesion, flexibility and communication towards the variation of students' psychological well-being. Finally, academic self-perception, motivation, attitude towards school, attitude towards teacher and goal valuation were examined with regard to their contributions to students' psychological well-being. Three models that support theoretic argument of this study were used. Ryff's model that defends psychological well-being argument, Circumplex Model that asserts family satisfaction subject and, finally, McCoach's model that supports the argument of school satisfaction. The samples comprised 376 high school students with the age ranging between 15, to 18 years old in Khomeinishahr, Iran, chosen by random stratified sampling technique. The methods used in this study included independent samples t-test, one-way ANOVA, and multiple hierarchical regressions. The results of this study revealed that the students' psychological well-being is at a moderate state and, in this regard, age was a

significant factor as the students of 15 and 16 years old are in a better state of psychological well-being than the 18 year old age group. However, gender is insignificant. The findings also showed family satisfaction constructs (cohesion, flexibility and communication) and school satisfaction constructs (academic self-perception, motivation, attitude towards teacher, and goal valuation) contribute significantly towards the variance of psychological well-being. From the obtained results, this study suggests that family's ability to create a balance between cohesion, flexibility, and communication among its members should be improved by enhancing knowledge of parents. This study also recommends an opportunity to develop students' cognitive abilities and motivation in order to intensify self-perception and motivation by providing teenagers a good chance to participate in extracurricular activities or developing programs, which helps students express their own ideas or thoughts. Moreover, a fruitful and friendly communication between teachers and students should be created by developing teachers'skills, attitudes and knowledge of students' emotional needs. This study also suggests that the obstacles and problems hindering the promotion of students' psychological well-being should be explored, identified and solved. Finally, in order to increase students' psychological well-being, it is suggested that the conditions of other sources community such as economic and social conditions, individual freedom and social, as well as personal security and civil rights should be examined.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

The inspiration behind this study originates from three main issues that will be explained in the following sections. The primary section of the current chapter is concerned with a general explanation of the concept of psychological well-being. The second part focuses on family satisfaction followed by the concept of school satisfaction. Then, a background of the current study is presented by giving a summary of psychological well-being status, family and educational systems in Iran. Next, the problem which led to the administration of this research has been stated followed by the research objectives and questions along with the hypothesis of the current study. The significance of the present study, the operational definitions, and conceptual framework comprise the ending section of this chapter. The following paragraphs present an overview of the concepts of psychological well-being, family satisfaction and school satisfaction which remain as the fundamental issues concerned in the current research.

The psychological well-being (PWB) of individuals and communities are important because it expresses whether or not people feel content with their lives. There is evidence has proven that good life conditions are vital to the individuals' psychological well-being and pursuing these circumstances is essential for community policy. Many indicators were identified as factors that allow an individual to evaluate his or her life conditions as well as that cause failure to assess what an individual believes and sense about his or her life. Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976) identified some of these factors and demonstrated that a person's

happiness is influenced by his gratification with factors like family, education, marriage, job, income, city, country, health, friendship, and neighbours.

Subsequently, many psychologists refer to family relationship as one of the most essential factors in a person's psychological health. In this field, Bowlby (1977), a famous theorist of attachment theory, argued that individuals' family experiences affect their emotional relation and behaviour. Furthermore, he explained that the existence of one main causal relationship between children's experiences and their parents' abilities would create emotional bonds.

Due to this causal relationship, it has always been recognized that family interactions influence and transfer skills and abilities among members. Such skills and abilities are social skills, such as skills in interpersonal relation, social rules such as observance of community norms, as well as problem solving capabilities. Therefore, identification of the vital factors relating to family's relationship is an essential step in strengthening this fundamental social institution to make a fruitful interaction among family members.

Based on Family System Theory, cohesion, flexibility and communication are three main concepts of family relationship, and since these three aspects had been frequently regarded as highly pertinent in a variety of family theory, family therapy approaches and family models, hence in order to evaluate family satisfaction, this study focuses on family cohesion, family flexibility and family communication.

Obviously, family is not the only serious factor that forms the members' beliefs and behaviours. Teachers, educators, and school environment also affect a person's feelings and mannerisms as well. According to McCoach and Siegle (2003), adolescents' beliefs of educational environment can affect their motivation and the amount of effort that they put into schoolwork. Similarly, this emphasis can be seen

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in the study administered by Eccles and Wigfield (2002). They affirmed that one of the noteworthy outcomes of school climate is students' perception of school which plays a crucial role in their performance.

Therefore, beside family, this research also considers school systems in order to study the role of school satisfaction including attitude towards school, attitude towards teacher, academic self-perception, goal valuation and motivation on psychological well-being of students that is more understandable by reviewing the background of this study.

1.2   Background of Study

This section primarily focuses on an overview of individuals' psychological status in the world and to keep with the matter in hand, in Iran specifically. In 2001, the World Health Organization stated that during the two upcoming decades, the world will witness major changes in the levels of concerns towards non-communicable diseases in comparison with infectious diseases. As non-communicable diseases, such as mental illnesses, will become a more important topic of concern than infectious diseases and will become the first on the list of causes of disability and premature death.

Presently, roughly 450 million people around the world suffer from psychiatric problems. Subsequently, mental disorders are responsible for slightly more than 1% of deaths worldwide. It has been predicted that by 2020, mental and neurological disorders will increase by nearly 15% worldwide (World Health Organization, 2001).

In the context of Iran examination of the results obtained from different studies show that the individuals' psychological well-being is at an alarming state.

There are also signs that have been interpreted to predict the prevalence of psychological diseases. Based on a conducted research, 44.5% of students in Bandar Abbas suffer from depression (Moosavi, Adli, & Nikooee, 1998). Subsequent research also revealed that 36% of people in Kurdistan suffer from depression. However, there is no significant difference between their gender regarding the depression (Khairabadi & Yosefi, 2002).This figure reached approximately to 43% of secondary school students who were discovered to have psychological problems such as negative thoughts, neurosis, sensitivity to interpersonal relationships, obsessions, depression, anxiety, aggression, and somatization in the city of Sari (Hosseini, Moosavi, & Rezazadeh, 2003).

The alarming results from a study showed that 58%8 of girls and boys at high school in Sari, Iran were suspected of having psychological problems (Masoudzadeh, Khalilian, Ashrafi, & Kimiabeigi, 2004). Figure 1.1 illustrates some of the information collected on the psychological disorder rates in Iran from 1998 to 2004.
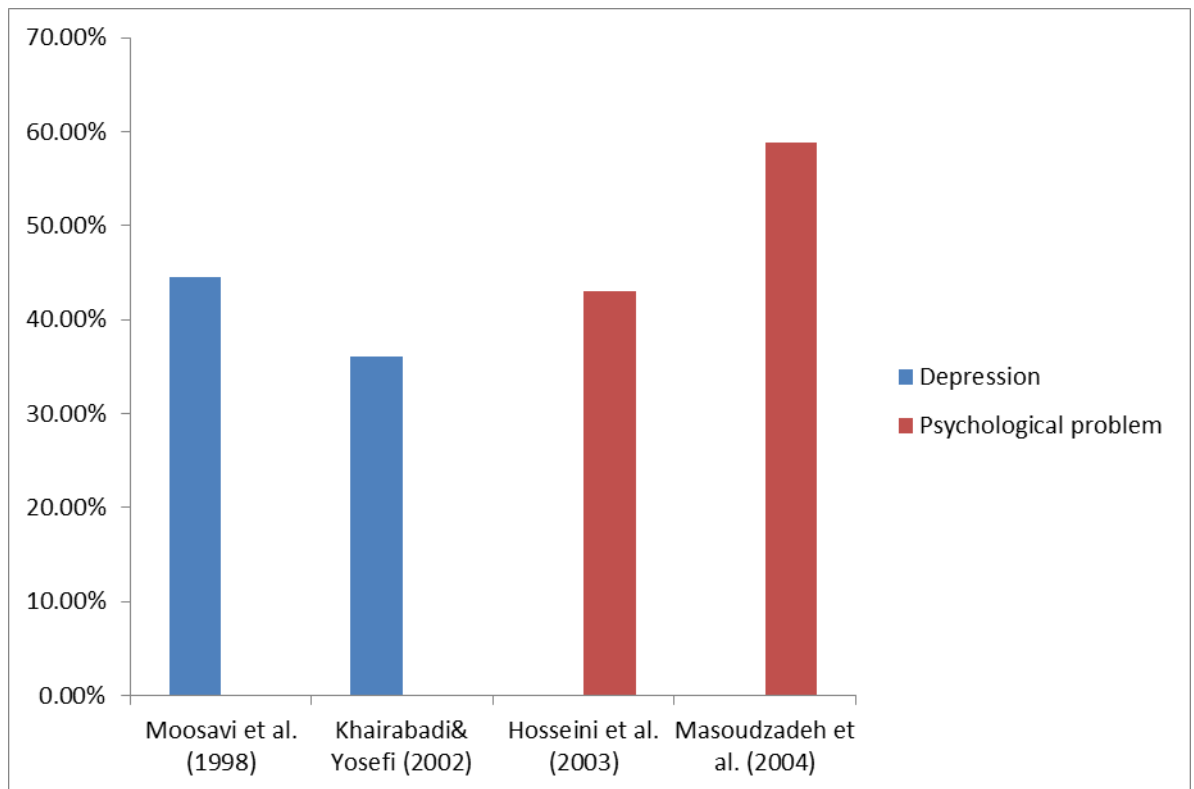
Figure 1.1. Frequency of psychological disorder in Iran from 1998 to 2004

Many factors can weaken the growth of psychological disorder and strengthen psychological well-being. Since based on attachment theory, and social cognitive theory family and school are two the most important factors in shaping individuals' emotion and behaviour, this study focuses on cohesion, flexibility and communication of family as the means of family satisfaction.

Moreover, emphasis is placed on attitude towards school, attitude towards teacher, academic self-perception, goal valuation, and motivation as the means of school satisfaction. In the following paragraphs, the researcher tries to explain how the above-mentioned components can lead to changes in the individuals' behaviour and function in Iran.

The review of relevant literature indicates that family structure affects family members' function. Hamidi (2005) stated that the structure of fugitive girls' family in

the sphere of expressing emotions and unity have a lower function than what the social norms define. It also has been observed that 77% of runaway behaviour of teenage girls can be predicted by two variables, including marital relationships and parental relationships with youth (Samani, 2006). Researchers have commented on the lack of attachment between youths and their parents, is the cause of mental disorders (Bowlby, 1977; Darvizeh, 2003). On the other hand parents' attachment to their children results in the development of social adjustment among them (Vahedi & Moradi, 2002).

Other studies have further substantiated that children's perfectionism is the result of family adjustment as well as unity (Jamshidi, Razmi, Haghighat, & Samani, 2008). Moreover, it is highlighted that the level of family adaptation affects the students' mental health (Shakeri, 2003) and adjustment and family unity can influence the formation of identity among teenagers (Razmi, 2004).

In some studies, the remarks are directed towards the interactional pattern among family members. In this regard researchers discovered that not only higher levels of conversation between parents and teenagers result in a lower rate of drug abuse (Sarvestani, 2003) but also family conversation can predict children's anxiety as well as their depression states (Kouroshnia & Latifian, 2007).

However, family is not regarded as the only critical factor that can shape the members' beliefs and behaviours. Based on social cognitive theory teachers, school staff, and school environment are also capable of influencing individuals' feelings and behaviour. Indeed, school has been defined as a place that can develop welfare among individuals (Fraillon, 2004; Olenchak, 2009), while an incorrect educational environment could increase stress and incompatibility among youths (Neihart, Reis, Robinson, & Moon 2002).

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Experts believe that school atmosphere is one of the important components involved in a school's evaluation. In this regard, a research has shown that positive school climate results in an increase in students' academic achievement levels (Atoofisalmani, Bahari, & Goodarzi, 2008). Specifically, a teacher's social behaviour towards his or her students affects the students' learning, vitality and motivation. Besides, a positive social interaction results in a feeling of self-esteem and friendly communication among students as well (Oreizisamani, Abedi, & Taji, 2007; Nasr Isfahani, 1992).

Educational psychology researchers have introduced academic self-perception as another noteworthy element in school appraisal. Based on the investigations conducted in Iran, students' positive cognitive beliefs about their abilities affect their academic achievements as well as their mental status (Aminizorar, 2007). Conversely, an individual's negative perception of his educational capabilities increases mental disorder tendencies (Salahshour, 2003). However, Yarmohamadian, Molavi, and Iranpour (2003) stated that there is no meaningful relationship between students' self-perception, adjustment, mutual friendship and accepting age mates.

Goals are also considered as a central component that can guide students' emotions. As purposefulness can be a predicting factor for happiness among students (Jokar, 2007). Finally, motivation is the last component that this section focuses on as another main factor in school assessment. Motivation is derived from the value that students place on their schools (Razavieh, Latifian, & Fooladchang, 2006). Some researchers have shown that motivation promotes academic achievements (Abedi, Oreizi, & Nazhad, 2005) and reduce risky behaviours (Mazloomy, Ehrampoosh, Servat, & Askarshahi, 2010).

As a result, after scrutinising the aforementioned studies as well as the relative literature, it was discovered that apparently there is an increasing tendency of psychological disorders among youths in Iran. This is while individuals' psychological well-being is a very important issue for each society because it is one of the criteria for community assessments. It plays a major role in ensuring the dynamism and efficiency of the society.

Besides, youths are the assets of each country and they hold some major responsibilities in economic and social affairs. As 31% of Iran population are between 15 to 29 years old (The Unit of News Center, 2013), Iran will lose its assets and face many problems if mental disorders were to spread among its youth population. Therefore, the government of Iran should consider this as a warning and it is time for the government to implement appropriate policies to overcome this problem.

In this regard, researchers mentioned that psychological disorder is probably due to the inefficacy of family and schools system of Iran. They recommended that subsequent researchers should examine the family and school in order to identify the effective factors that could improve the family and the school systems.

This research attempts to examine the significance of family cohesion, flexibility and communication as well as students' attitude towards school, their attitude towards teachers, academic self-perception, motivation and goal valuation on students' psychological well-being. Since this research is conducted on high school students, hence, the next section deals with the status of education and the educational system in Iran.

1.2.1 Educational System in Iran

Educational system is defined as the general principles of institutions and official organizations to transfer knowledge in the best way and also to train highly skilled human resources for the society (Alagheband, 2010). At the moment, the 12-year Iranian educational system is divided into three periods starting after the pre-school period. The stages are as follows (Safi, 2009): a. Elementary school (5 years) b. Secondary school (3 years) c. High school (4 years)

Each period follows specific cognitive, emotional, and psychological objectives as well as having its specific characteristics. Due to importance of high school in this study the following section will provide information on high school education in Iran specifically.

High school, goals and structure: High school is regarded as the period of 'transformation' from basic education which is general and non-specialized to a more specialized education (higher education). Likewise, this period is also known as the time of transformation from childhood to youth.

Based on psychological pressures and adaptation difficulties that teenagers experience, this middle period provides them with specific characteristics. This period is the main source used to produce semi-skilled human resources and is also known as the transformation period since it involves:

a. Transformation from a general and non-specialized education to specialized education within university environment

b. Transformation from educational environment for the working and living environments

c. Transformation from childhood (the period in which the needs of individuals are fulfilled under the supervision of others) to maturity (the period in which the individuals start to be independent and undertake different responsibilities) (Safi, 2009)

High school is the period between 'Elementary School' and 'Secondary School' on the one hand, and 'Higher Education' on the other hand. It caters for students from the age of 15 to 18 years old. During the high school period, there are various programs divided into different fields and majors which provide good opportunities for students to choose their fields of study based on their interests, knowledge as well as the needs of the society.

High school in Iran involves three distinct divisions: a. Theoretical, b. Technical-Vocational/Professional, and c. Manual Skills (Dabiri Isfahani, 1997). The 'Theoretical' division include three fields of study: 1) Mathematics and Physics, 2) Experimental Sciences, and 3) Literature and Humanities. The two other branches (Technical-Vocational/Professional and Manual Skills) include many fields as choices and are related to industry, services and agriculture.

As a result, high school students choose to study one of the above mentioned divisions usually after they have passed the first year of study at high school level. Graduates of high schools in Iran will be awarded a diploma in one of the aforementioned fields.

1.3   Problem Statement

Psychological problems in Iran have considerably increased in recent years. Based on the conducted researches in Iran, almost 36% of students at Sabzevar University suffered from anxiety and that nearly 24% suffered from depression (Mehri & Seddighi, 2011).

Similar researches also revealed that 32% of students at University of Medical Sciences of Gonabad, suffered from depression (Tavakolizadeh & Khodadadi, 2010). More seriously, it was found that 60% of students in Hamedan are at a risky level of depression, anxiety, and social malfunction (Sadeghian, Moghaddarikoosha, & Gorji, 2009).

In this regard, researchers considered a possible link between psychological disorder with age and gender. They mentioned that as a person ages, depression and anxiety increases (Sadeghian et al., 2009; Masoudzadeh et al., 2004). On the contrary, it was stated that satisfaction with life and positive emotions will slightly increase as age increases while negative emotions will decrease (Zandypour & Yadegari, 2007).

In this setting, some researchers believe that mental disorder is more common among females rather than among males (Farahbakhsh, Gholamrezaee, & Nicpe, 2005; Masoudzadeh et al., 2004; Hosseinian, Zahraei, & Khodabakhshi, 2003; Saki & Keikhaveni, 2002). Yet, other researchers argue reversely that the disorder is seen more among males rather than females (Aghayousefi & Sharif, 2011; Mehri & Seddighi, 2011; Michaeli, 2010; Akbari, Mahmoudalilou, & Aslanabadi, 2008). However, some researchers found no significant difference across gender (Tavakolizadeh & Khodadadi, 2010; Hosseininasab, Ahamadiyan, & Ravanbakhsh, 2008; Khairabadi & Yosefi, 2002).

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In conclusion, the evaluations of past studies show a significant growth in psychological problem while, there is no clear distinction between individuals' psychological health and their age and gender. On the other hand, researchers mention to family and school as the principal factors that influence an individual's behaviour and emotion. According to some conducted studies in Iran 77% of the reasons of dropout were associated with school and 33% with family. The more important reasons of dropout from the students' standpoint are behaviour of teachers, lack of interest of school and, lack of motivation (Akrami, 2014).

It is argued that teenagers' quality of life is influenced by their relationships with parents (Schumm & Bugaighis, 1986). Adolescent who acquires his or her childhood experiences in an unfavourable family environment has behavioural changes and social abnormalities that have an impact on his or her future growth (Navabinejad, 2008; Sanaee, 2001); while at this age, adolescents have various needs such as searching for their identities, having self-worth, creating positive relationship with others, and obtaining necessary skills in friendship (Shoarinezhad, 2013).

Such needs are provided in satisfactory and warm family atmospheres. If a family were to face stress, deformation, and had cold relationships with family members, or failure to meet teenager's demands, a person may commit maladaptive behaviour which sometimes results in social damage (Ahmadi, 2004; Hosseinian et al., 2003). Accordingly, the experiences that family members attain in the family are the most important origins of both happiness and distress (Ainsworth, 1989).

With reliance on conducted investigations, researchers considered family as the main key for explanation individuals' abnormal behaviour. In this regard, it was found that individuals' function is affected by family structure (Hamidi, 2005) and the main cause of mental disorder in a family is due to lack of attachment between

parents and their children (Darvizeh, 2003). Studies also indicated that children's anxiety and depression as well as drug abuse are predictable through communication among family members (Kouroshnia & Latifian, 2007). In light of the mentioned studies as well as other previous research that introduced relationship among family members as the reason of individuals' behavioural problem, this study focuses on the contribution of cohesion, flexibility, and communication as family satisfaction towards students' psychological well-being.

Besides family, school is also a place where students spend much of their time every day. Subsequently, students are most likely to have frequent interactions with their teachers. Therefore, teachers, school staffs and school environment can also be effective in developing individuals' perceptions and behaviour and play a crucial role in the appraisal of children's quality of life and productivity.

In this scope, Roeser, Eccles, and Sameroff (2000) introduce school as an important place that significantly affects students' happiness and growth. Engels (2004) also asserted that students' well-being cannot be considered as an isolated unit from the school context. Moreover, investigations have shown that the increasing rate of dissatisfaction among students will lead to maladaptive functioning. This simply illustrates that teenagers' ideas of their educational environment, including school, teacher, and class atmosphere, have a crucial influence on their educational function, cognitive and emotional process as well as their academic motivation (Kavoosian et al., 2007; Aminian & Seyed Mirzayi, 2010). The findings also showed that in contrast with positive academic self-perception which increases mental health and academic achievement (Aminizorar, 2007), negative academic self-perception decreases mental health (Salahshour, 2003). Thus, schools should not be neglected in the studying of individuals' behaviour (Verkuyten

& Thijs, 2002). With regards to the mentioned studies, school is another capable factor of individuals' behavioural problems. Therefore, this study focuses on the contribution of attitude towards school, attitude towards teacher, academic self-perception, goal valuation, and motivation as school satisfaction towards students' psychological well-being.

As a result, despite the importance of family and school in shaping individuals' experience, emotion, and behaviour, still there are lacks of research regarding the influence of family and school on psychological well-being in Iran.

In fact, previous studies have not directly conducted a research on the correlation of PWB with family gratification and school contentment. That is why, in response to the studies which declared that psychological disorders are increasingly spreading in Iran, the Department of Education in Khomeinishahr, Iran requested for further research to explore the factors which contribute to the improvement of students' well-being.

Therefore, based on recommendations from the Department of Education in Khomeinishahr (2012), the current study examines the influence of family and school satisfactions on students' psychological well-being. Figure 1.2 presents an overview of the status of psychological disorder in Iran from 2009 to 2011.
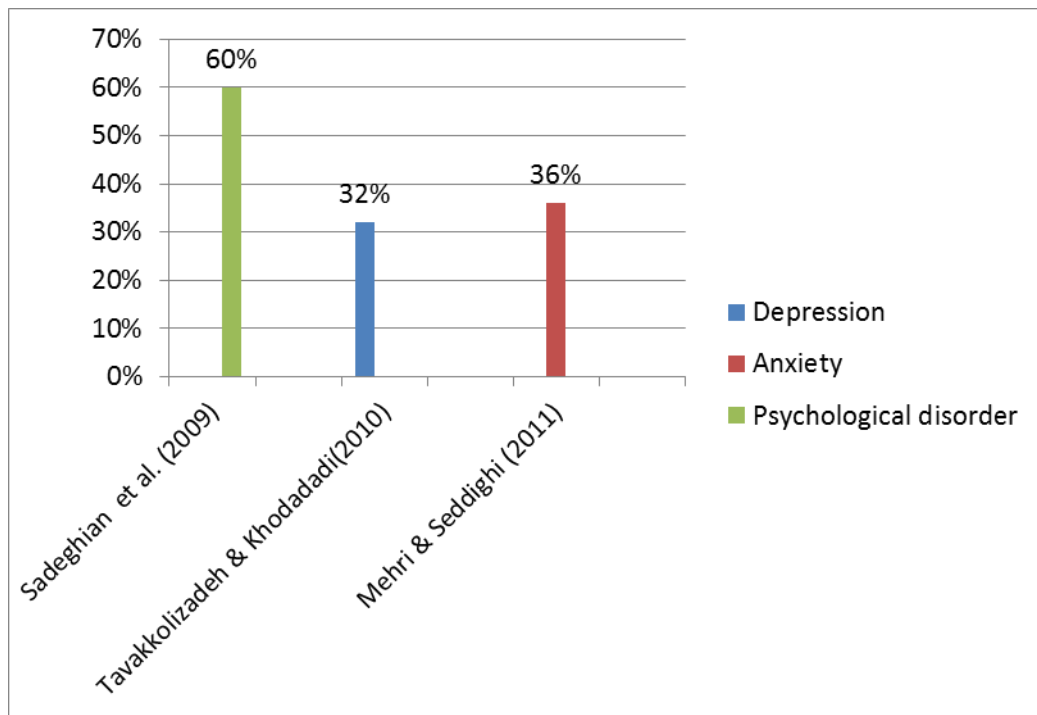
Figure 1.2. The status of psychological disorder in Iran from 2009 to 2011

1.4   Research Objectives

This study attempts to discover the roles of family satisfaction and school satisfaction in ensuring psychological well-being of students in Iran. For this purpose, the research objectives are classified as follows:

i. To examine the status of psychological well-being of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran.

ii. To study the status of psychological well-being of male and female high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran.

iii. To investigate the status of psychological well-being of different age groups of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran.

iv. To examine the contribution of family satisfaction constructs (cohesion, flexibility, and communication) towards the variation of psychological well-being of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran.

v. To study the contribution of school satisfaction constructs (attitude towards school, attitude towards teacher, academic self-perception, goal valuation, and motivation) towards the variation of psychological well-being of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran.

1.5 Research Questions

The specific research questions of the present study are based on the five research objectives:

Q1: What is the status of psychological well-being of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran?

Q2: Is there any significant difference in the status of psychological well-being of male and female high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran?

Q3: Is there any significant difference in the status of psychological well-being of different age groups of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran?

Q4: Do family satisfaction constructs (cohesion, flexibility, and communication) significantly contribute to the variation of psychological well-being of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran?

Q5: Do school satisfaction constructs (attitude towards school, attitude towards teacher, academic self-perception, goal valuation, and motivation) significantly contribute to the variation of psychological well-being of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

According to the research questions, the following hypotheses will be assessed.

H01: There is no significant difference in the status of psychological well-being of male and female high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran.

H02: There is no significant difference in the status of psychological well-being of different age groups of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran.

H03: There is no significant contribution of the family satisfaction constructs (cohesion, flexibility, and communication) towards the variation of the psychological well-being of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran.

H04: There is no significant contribution of school satisfaction constructs (attitude towards school, attitude towards teacher, academic self-perception, goal valuation, and motivation) towards the variation of the psychological well-being of high school students in Khomeinishahr, Iran.

1.7 Significance of Study

The findings of the present study concentrate on the debated issue and they are expected to provide some applicable knowledge for Iranian families, educational planners in the Ministry of Education in Iran and the Department of Education in Khomeinishahr, school staff and other researchers in Iran. Furthermore, since this study has made an attempt to identify various dimensions of family satisfaction and school satisfaction, hence, students' psychological well-being may be predicted based on different aspects of family and school.

Moreover, by examining students' subjective experiences, it can offer valuable insights into specific aspects of their families and schools as well as their contributions to the students' satisfaction. The study may result in the development of a template or a model capable of introducing a way to improve the students' well-being in their lives. In other words, by investigating and understanding the interaction processes of the mentioned factors, it will be possible to assess students' state for the development of a better and higher level of satisfaction and, consequently, to improve family and school functions in Iran.

1.7.1 Families in Iran

It is noteworthy that individuals' attitude towards family is among the important factors related to a family's health. One belief is that society's health and development depends on families' health. Accordingly, this study examines the factors that can influence one's attitude towards his or her family such as cohesion, flexibility and communication. Based on family system theory and Circumplex model, these components are perceived as the improvement for family health.

Hence, the findings may help families in the planning of a beneficial communication-interaction pattern among the members. In addition, the findings may also provide some information that will show some strategies that parents can assess their relationship with their children.

1.7.2 Educational Planners and Ministry of Education in Iran

By focusing on the role of school satisfaction components on students' psychological well-being, the present research will be able to provide educational planners and Education Ministry of Iran with useful

information which can help them design an acceptable educational environment for students.

An inappropriate educational environment can simply damage the psychological health of students. Hence, by gathering information on how to solve the relevant problems, educating the young generation correctly, and recognizing their problems it will be a promising investment in a developing society. Subsequently, the results of such studies are undeniably of advantage in the process of achieving the relevant goals.

1.7.3   Department of Education in Khomeinishahr, Iran

The findings of this study are especially valuable for the Department of Education in Khomeinishahr, Iran. This research was administered based on the recommendations of respective organizations to diagnose the strengths and the weaknesses of schools' operation. Since a satisfactory atmosphere will provide students with the grounds to express positive emotions, so this is obviously one of the duties and the missions of the authorities in the Department of Education in Khomeinishahr.

Furthermore, it is evident that the absence of psychological well-being in schools is a waste of financial resources provided by the Department of Education. This, in turn, will make individuals, families, and the society to encounter unpleasant social consequences.

1.7.4   School Staff in Iran

The findings of the current study could also be utilized as a useful feedback for the school staff and might also attract their attention to the existing deficiencies within the learning atmosphere. Moreover, the study can

also pave the way for school authorities in Khomeinishahr, Iran, to eliminate the inefficiencies and to create a favourable organizational atmosphere for students.

It is also expected that school principals, teachers, and counsellors would be able to create appropriate opportunities for constructive growth through the development of positive emotions. Consequently, this can lead to improvements in the students' psychological well-being state.

1.7.5 Other Researches in Iran

As many researchers will administer new studies as well as will investigate families and schools from a various angles to acquire new results, the findings of this investigation could pave the way for subsequent studies and also prepare applicable knowledge for positive psychology.

1.8 Conceptual and Operational Definitions

This research involves several key words that are operationally defined through this part.

1.8.1 Psychological Well-Being (PWB)

Psychological well-being refers to how people assess themselves and the quality of their lives. Ryff (1989) designed a multidimensional model to evaluate life quality of individuals. She identifies six dimensions for this model as follows:

a. Self-acceptance: This is the ability to see and admit individual's strengths and weaknesses.

b. Purpose in life: This constitutes having aims and ideas that make life more meaningful and oriented.

c. Personal growth: This is the feeling of one's aptitudes and potentials that will be completed over time.

d. Positive relationship with others: This refers to having close and desirable associations with significant persons.

e. Environmental mastery: This is defined as the ability to control and administer the requirements of daily life.

f. Autonomy: This is considered as being independent and having the capability of resisting social pressures that generate particular thoughts.

In this study, the students' psychological well-being is determined by the scores that they obtain in Ryff's questionnaire. The higher scores demonstrate the healthier condition of psychological well-being level and vice versa.

1.8.2 Family Satisfaction

Family satisfaction is the degree to which a member has an overall satisfaction with his or her family members as well as having a feeling of satisfaction with his or her relationships within it (Carver & Jones, 1992). In this study, family satisfaction is examined in the contexts of cohesion, flexibility, and communication. Olson and Wilson (1986) defined them as follows:

a. Family cohesion is a degree of proximity, intimacy or emotional closeness within a family.

b.   Family flexibility is regarded as the amount of variability in the roles, styles, discipline rules and leadership that family members might have towards each other.

c.   Family communication is defined as the proceedings of exchanging information, ideas, opinions and feelings among family members.

In the current study, family satisfaction is identified based on the scores that students achieved after completing the following two questionnaires: Family Satisfaction Scale and Parents Adolescent Communication scale. The higher the scores, the more the students will be satisfied with their family.

1.8.3   School Satisfaction

School satisfaction, which is defined as an indicator of the learning environment, allows students to move a step closer to their academic and social goals and also to have a qualitatively good school life (Hascher, 2003). In this research, school satisfaction is studied through the scores which students attained from the School Attitude Assessment Survey-Revised questionnaire. This questionnaire is designed by McCoach and Siegle (2003) and focuses on five components. The higher the scores, the more the students will be satisfied with their school. The components of this questionnaire include:

a.   Attitude towards school which include the students' interests in school, their feelings of pride in and reliance on it.

b. Attitude towards teachers which are defined as accepting teachers as those who are supportive and effective.

c. Academic self-perception which is considered as an explanation associated with an appraisal of one's perceived academic capabilities.

d. Goal valuation which refers to the significance of academic goals for individuals.

e. Motivation which involves students' self-generated ideas, senses and actions that are systematically directed towards the access of the goals.

1.8.4 High School Students in Iran

High school in Iran is defined as a mediator between the public and higher education period. This stage starts after the secondary school level and continues for 4 years and includes 15 to 18 year-old students (Safi, 2009). Consequently, this study involves high school students in Iran who are in the age range of 15, 16, 17, and 18.

1.9 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The following figure represents a general image of the contribution of family satisfaction and school satisfaction as independent variables towards the students' psychological well-being as dependent variable. Each independent variable consists of various components. Family satisfaction includes cohesion, flexibility and communication. School satisfaction addresses components of attitude towards teacher, attitude towards school, academic self-perception, goal valuation, and motivation. Additionally, Figure 1.3 also reflects age and gender as two demographic

variables in this study. As the arrows show, it is assumed that psychological well-being is affected by family satisfaction and school satisfaction with regard to different gender and age.
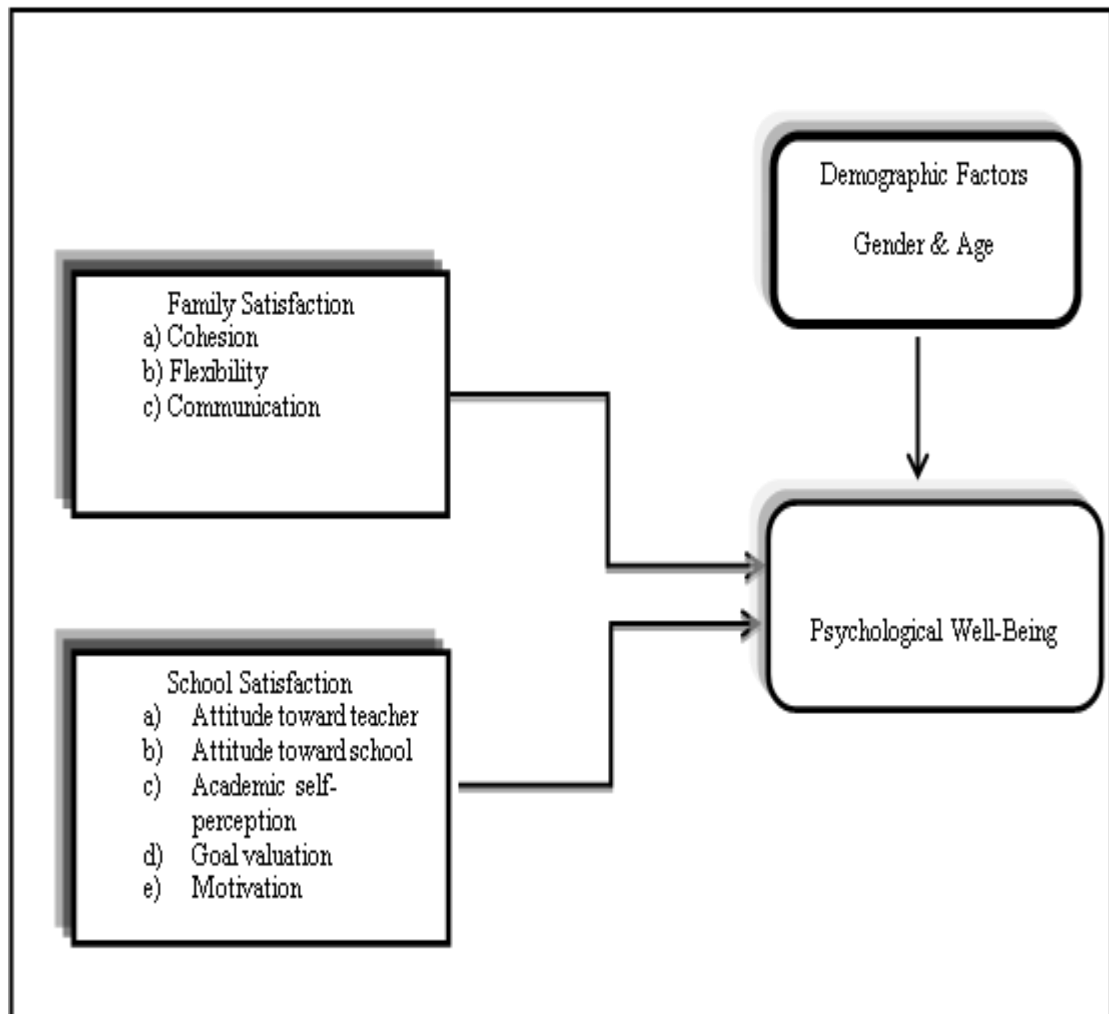
Figure 1.3. Conceptual framework