

An Examination of the Relationship between Social Support and Life Satisfaction with Self-Esteem among High School Students

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Abstract

The study was carried out to determine the relationship between social support and life satisfaction with self-esteem among high school students. To do so, 137 female students and 115 male students (the first, second, and third grades) of gifted students in high school were selected using the census method. The social support scale (Maleki and Elliot, 2004), self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1967), and grade point average (GPA) of students were used to collect data. The findings indicated that life satisfaction with three components (satisfaction with friends, school, and family) is a significant predictor of self-esteem. However, there were no positive and significant correlations between social support and self-esteem. Further, the t-test findings of two independent groups showed that the amount of support and satisfaction that girls receive from their friends and family is significantly more than that of boys. Nonetheless, there were no significant differences in self-esteem between girls and boys.

Keywords: *Social support, life satisfaction, self-esteem*

Introduction

All people differ in mental, physical, emotional, and social aspects. In the meantime, along with a group of people in society who are mentally and intellectually backward, there are some with better intelligence and among the gifted. Some psychologists consider giftedness to be talent, learning, and academic progress, and some see it as change and flexibility in adapting to the environment. According to Losito, gifted children are the ones whose potential intelligence is greatly affected by thought in productive thinking and evaluative thinking. Moreover, one can almost safely state that if they are provided with appropriate educational experiences, they will become problem solvers, innovators, and determiners of the cultural policy of their society in the future (Babaei Kaniari, 2000; quoted by Ibrahimi, 2011).

Self-esteem and the category of self-worth are the most essential elements in the development of the personality of children and adolescents. Self-esteem, decision-making power, innovation and creativity, and mental health have a direct relationship with the amount and manner of self-esteem and feeling of self-worth of a person (Biyabangard, 2003).

Self-esteem originates from an individual's beliefs about all the traits and characteristics in them and shows the value that the information within the self-concept has for a person. Self-esteem is the difference between the perceived self (or self-concept) and the ideal self. If the difference and distance

between the perceived self and the ideal self is large, it results in low self-esteem, and if the difference and distance are small, it usually leads to high self-esteem. People with high self-esteem believe that they can do something, interact with others, enjoy the support of others, and have enough satisfaction with their lives, resulting in academic progress (Zienivand, 2005).

One of the components with a role in an individual's self-esteem is life satisfaction. The feeling of satisfaction and happiness from aspects of life is one of the components of people's positive attitude towards the world in which they live. Life satisfaction has a close but complicated relationship with values, and the standards based on which people assess their subjective understanding of happiness vary. Life satisfaction shows the balance between an individual's desires and his status quo. In other words, the greater the gap between the level of an individual's aspirations and his objective situation, the lower his satisfaction will be (Inghart, 2013).

In the studies carried out on the psychological structure of "subjective well-being" in the last two decades, the three-dimensional model of subjective well-being, composed of positive feelings, negative feelings, and life satisfaction, has been considered. The subjective perception of life satisfaction varies from two other dimensions. Life satisfaction is more of a cognitive category, whereas negative and positive feelings are emotional ones (Diener, 1984; cited by Greenspoon and Saklofske, 1997).

Life satisfaction is among the aspects with a close relationship with different elements like education, personality, genetics, economic and work elements, social relations, and social life. All these sometimes have a significant and sometimes non-significant relationship with life satisfaction. They cannot explain why life satisfaction exists at one level for a person and not at a different level when all are combined. One of the variables probably associated with life satisfaction is social support (Ebrahimi, 2011).

Many scholars and clinical researchers like Maslow, Berhan, and Phillips argue that social support, as a social factor, makes people ready to encounter problems, increases the probability of one's success in different areas, and leads to self-efficacy and positive self-esteem and sense of security increases; thus, brings about the possibility of growth and self-improvement for the individual (Ghalati, 2001).

What could be understood from the various definitions of social support is the level of an individual's perception that s/he is the attention and interest of others, that he is a valuable person to them, and that they help him/her if s/he gets into trouble. Based on this definition, social support has two basic aspects: one is the mental aspect, showing the individual's ideas and perceptions of the support of the people around him/her, and the other is the real (objective) aspect, which is the real assistance and help provided to the person (Zeinivand, 2005).

There are many sources of social support provided to the individual. The support of groups like family, peers, friends, relatives, and teachers are located in this large spectrum - some of which officially and some unofficially provide social support for the individual (Sivandani, 2010).

These support sources make the person feel cared for, loved, self-respected, and valuable and feel that s/he is part of a wide communication network (Lindzy and Tompsan, 1988; Beecher and Grath, 1992; quoted by Mahdian 2006).

Social support is sometimes conceptually or operationally defined as the existence of social relationships or the number of social relationships, and sometimes social support could be defined as the functional content of relationships, which means the degree of emotional connection in existing relationships or the existence of physical and tangible support and informational support, and so on (Tabe Bordbar, 2002).

Human behavior is affected by social elements, and human personality is perfect if there is a proper interaction and exchange between him/her and the environment. Here, the support of the people around greatly affects the individual's behavior, and on the other hand, man is a flexible being. S/he not only adapts to the environment but also transforms it according to his wishes (Welsh and Karen, 2001).

Overall, social support is associated with different elements like educational methods, values and beliefs governing the

individual and society, peers, family, and education; each of these elements alone could help in the formation of self-esteem to play a role and result in an individual's life satisfaction.

Student behavior and personality development are affected by the support of those around them, and considering the significance of life satisfaction in their future personality traits and the wide role of self-esteem as a cognitive mediator in life, it is an effective factor in the academic progress of knowledge. Hence, the question is, what is the relationship between the perception of support from family, teachers, friends and life satisfaction with self-esteem? Is there a relationship between the perception of support from family, teachers, friends, and life satisfaction?

Significance and necessity

Among the most effective and important systems in the world today and in the future is the education system of each country. A system whose main theme and focus is "human and education," a system which is responsible for the education of physically and mentally healthy people on the one hand and, on the other, responsible for the education and supply of human resources needed by society. Moreover, every educational system is always assessed by relevant experts to reach the best outcomes in removing obstacles and deficiencies throughout the educational processes and optimal use of the data, and in the end, the final product of education is the graduates with some features. Educational progress can be one of the most important and objective criteria for assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of educational systems (Sivandani, 2010).

The present study is intended to increase the existing knowledge on self-esteem. Practically, one must say that the perception of support and life satisfaction is affected by very diverse conditions and fields. If there is a relationship between these variables and self-esteem, it can create conditions and grounds for improving the perception of support and life satisfaction and, thus, reaching high and desirable self-esteem. On the other hand, by increasing the knowledge about the effect of social support and its relationship with self-esteem, the conditions of the impact of this support can be increased by informing the family, teachers, and friends in different ways, and it could result in favorable outcomes in the student's life satisfaction. Thus, by examining the elements effective in self-esteem and individual perceptions with cognitive support and how they are related and knowing the elements affecting them, the efficiency of the family and other social institutions could be increased.

Hence, a child who succeeds in education is approved and accepted by his parents, teachers, peers, and the larger society, his self-esteem increases, s/he feels sufficient and worthy in life, and in case of failure in education, s/he doubts her/his own ability and competence and feels incompetent, unworthy and inferior compared to successful students and stops studying.

Further, in our country (Iran), some students are introduced as brilliant talents or gifted with different tests and study in these schools. Hence, besides identifying the effective elements in their cognitive development, paying attention to other personality dimensions is one of the necessities that should not be ignored by educational experts.

Concerning the research topic, there are studies that have been conducted in the country, and we will state some of them:

In a study entitled "Investigation of the level of life satisfaction of male and female students," Ghahreman (2005) concluded a significant difference between the two genders in terms of the variable of life satisfaction and that girls have a higher level of life satisfaction than boys.

Amini (2003) conducted a study entitled "Evaluation of the Role of Self-efficacy, self-regulation and Self-esteem in the Academic Progress of third-year high school students in Shahrekord." The findings indicated a positive and significant relationship between all 3 variables of self-efficacy, self-regulation, and self-esteem with academic progress, and 0.021% of academic progress is explained by self-efficacy. Further, such findings showed that all 3 studied variables in the group of boys have a positive and significant relationship with academic progress. In the group of girls, self-efficacy, and self-regulation had a positive and significant relationship with academic progress. However, self-esteem has no significant relationship with it.

Zeinivand (2005) conducted a study entitled "Investigation of the relationship between self-esteem and social support with the academic progress of second-year students of Dere Shahr High School" on 72 students sampling from all second-year students. His findings indicated the combination of two variables, self-esteem and social support, explaining about 0.116 variance in the academic progress scores. A significant difference was found between the social support of girls and boys, and girls have more social support. Further, there was a significant difference between the self-esteem of girls and boys, and boys had more self-esteem.

Mahdian (2006) conducted a study entitled "Investigation of the Relationship between Social Perception and Intelligence Beliefs with Academic Achievement in the Third-year High School Students of Kashmar" on 192 male and female students using a multi-stage cluster sampling method. The findings indicated that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between social support and academic progress, as well as between intelligence beliefs and academic progress. Further, the results of the t-test between girls and boys showed that girls have more support than boys.

Mortazavi (2004) conducted a study entitled "The Mutual Relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Support from Family, teachers, and Close Friends with life satisfaction." The findings indicated a positive and significant relationship

between the perception of support from family, teachers, and friends and self-efficacy.

Abutalebi (2010), in "Examining the relationship between types and sources of social support with mental well-being and academic progress of pre-university female students," concluded that there is no significant relationship between social support and academic progress.

Heydari (2009), in a study entitled "Relationship between emotional intelligence and social support with life satisfaction in pre-university students of Rashtkhwar City," concluded that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and social support and life satisfaction. Further, the findings indicated that girls had a higher average than boys in both social support and life satisfaction ($P < 0.01$).

Younesi et al. (2008; Gharaei, 2010) conducted a study comparing mental health, self-esteem, and responsibility in middle school Female students from Divorced and normal Families in Firozabad City in the academic year 2008-2009. The results indicated that the daughters of divorced and normal families had been equalized in terms of the mother's education and the income level of the families. However, they differ from each other mentally and psychologically and in terms of personality. Thus, divorced girls are at a lower level in terms of mental health, responsibility, and self-esteem compared to their peers in normal families, and this is due to the separation of their parents, which affects their spirit and personality as well.

In a study entitled "Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Social Support with life satisfaction in high school students," Khishtandar (2006) concluded a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and social support and life satisfaction. Further, Pearson's correlation analysis showed that among the components of social support, only family support predicts life satisfaction. Additionally, the findings indicated that the level of life satisfaction in girls is significantly higher than that of boys. However, the support that boys receive is more than that of girls.

In a study entitled "Simple and multiple relationships of religious attitudes, mental health, life satisfaction and Self-esteem with Feelings of Happiness among Students," Borna and Savari (2009) concluded a significant correlation between predictor variables and criteria.

Coffman and Giliga (2003) examined the relationship between social support, self-efficacy, and satisfaction among 49 first-year college students, and the findings indicated that students who had high social support and self-efficacy scores had high satisfaction and social support and stress explained 41% of the variance of people's satisfaction scores, among which social support has the largest contribution, the findings of The study actually provide ways to change or prevent the elements that disrupt student adaptation.

Kirk et al. (2008) conducted a study entitled "Gender differences in life satisfaction among women and men." The results showed that men show a higher level of satisfaction than women.

In a study entitled "Social Support Associated with School and Perceived Satisfaction with Student's Life," Danielsen (2009) indicated that the increase in age and gender has an effect on student satisfaction with school and also between social support and self-efficacy of girls and boys. Moreover, there is a significant relationship between social support and student satisfaction with school, while family support has a direct effect on students' satisfaction with school.

Mahyuddin et al. (2006) presented a study entitled "Examining the Relationship between student self-efficacy and their academic performance in English language development." The results revealed that 51% of students have high self-efficacy, while 48% have low self-efficacy. Correlation analysis in the study shows a positive correlation between different dimensions of self-efficacy and academic success ($P = 0.001$ and $P = 0.48$). Thus, students' academic progress improves when students have high self-efficacy.

Wieder et al. (2005) conducted research on perceived social support and school satisfaction among two groups of 10-13 students. The findings indicated that the group that had social support was satisfied with the school, but the group that did not have enough social support was less satisfied with the school, affecting the student's academic performance.

In a study conducted on 488 students with an average age of 10 to 14 years, Loucas and Murphy (2007) examined four aspects of school climate, including friction between students, cohesion between them, competition, and overall satisfaction with school. The findings indicated a negative relationship between the components stated.

Gest et al. (2005) conducted a study on social relations and interest in school, with the outcome showing that firstly, girls reported higher levels of social support, that is, from teachers and other school principals. Secondly, students at lower educational levels, like elementary school, have expressed higher levels of social support from the school and teacher.

Jay (2003) examined the relationship between social support and well-being in elderly people. The purpose was to examine the effect of social support received from spouses, children, and friends on the life satisfaction of people aged 65 and older. The findings indicated that people with much social support from their spouse and friends have a high score on the satisfaction scale. They earn from life. Further, the findings indicated that family social support has a significant effect on life satisfaction.

Ferrari et al. (1999) showed that women need and receive more social support than men. The study that was conducted on English women shows that women have more close friends

than men and live in a wider social network. The study shows that the level of marriage, the type of workplace, and social support inside and outside the home can affect the level of women's depression. It indicated that in families in which there are no satisfactory relationships, and their relationships are weak, the level of satisfaction and social support reaches its minimum level.

Coleis (1998) examined the type of relationship between parents and teenagers in three cultures (Italian, Canadian, and Belgian). The findings indicated that compared to Canadian and Belgian teenagers, Italian teenagers have a significant relationship with their family members and share their problems and problems with their parents. Moreover, 55% of the studied Italian teenagers stated that the person closest to them was a parent, whereas in the case of 70% of the Canadian teenagers, this person was a friend of their age. To Kelis, these reveal the effect of parents' educational beliefs and the relationships governing the family, and intimate relationships between parents and teenagers are the most important elements in the lack of tendency of teenagers to spend their free time outside the home.

A review by Bjirnskov et al. (2007) concerning the relationship between gender and life satisfaction in 66 countries showed that men are more satisfied than women and show a higher level of satisfaction.

In a study entitled "Life satisfaction among people aged 18 to 64 in Switzerland, Fungelmeer et al. (2002) reached these results. There is a relationship between life satisfaction and gender, age, and marriage, as well as the level of satisfaction; men are more satisfied than women.

Methods

The study was applied in terms of its purpose and correlation in data collection. The study examined the correlation between social support, life satisfaction, and self-esteem. Correlation is to examine the relationship between the variables in the study. In correlation studies, the researcher does not manipulate the variables, but the desired variables are measured through self-report tools, and the relationship between the variables is examined (Homan, 2006).

The purpose of the practicality of the study is to provide scientific solutions to education and training centers to increase the self-esteem of students and make them interested in education that results in their life satisfaction.

Population

The population was all gifted male and female students of Birjand High School who studied in the academic year 2012-2013 – they were 252 students.

Sample size and sampling method

In the study, the sampling method was a census, and the sample size was all gifted high school students, 137 of whom were female and 115 were male. The sample size based on the sampling method includes 252 students.

Data collection tools

three questionnaires of social support, life satisfaction and self-esteem, and students' GPA were used as follows to evaluate the variables:

A) Social support questionnaire

The social support questionnaire (Malaki and Elliott, 2004) was used to evaluate social support, which measures support and help in two dimensions: amount and importance. It has 60 questions in 5 subscales associated with sources of social support (parents, teacher, classmates, close friends, and other school people), and each subscale has 12 questions. All three items or questions respectively include one of the four types of social support (emotional, informational, evaluative, and instrumental). In the study, 3 subscales (parents, teachers, and friends) were used in the dimension of the level of support, which consists of 36 questions, including a 6-point Likert scale (not at all, very little, little, to some extent, a lot, and very much) that is specified and scored from 1 to 6. To calculate the social support of each subject, the scores of each subscale were summed and averaged separately, and then the average scores of all three subscales were used to calculate the overall score of social support.

b) Life satisfaction questionnaire

A multi-dimensional questionnaire measuring students' life satisfaction (Hyunber, 2001) was used to examine life satisfaction. The questionnaire has 40 questions in 5 six-level dimensions, including family with 7 questions, friends with 9 questions, school with 8 questions, living environment with 9 questions, and self with 7 questions, which are (completely disagree, somewhat disagree, I disagree a little, I agree a little, I somewhat agree, I completely agree) marked from 1 to 6. The scale scores in the test range from 40 to 240. In this test, the questions marked with a star are scored inversely. The questionnaire form is given in the figure below:

c) Self-esteem questionnaire

To examine the self-esteem of students, the self-esteem questionnaire (Coopersmith, 1967) prepared and compiled based on his revision of the Rogers Dimond scale was used, which has 58 questions, 8 of which are (6, 13, 20, 27, 34, 41, 48, 55) lie detectors and its other 50 questions are based on 4 subscales of general self-esteem with 26 questions, social self-esteem with 9 questions, family self-esteem with 8 questions and academic self-esteem with 7 questions. Its scoring is zero and one, marked with (yes and no); so that the questions (2, 4, 5, 10, 11, 14, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 32, 36, 45, 47, 57) if answered yes, they will receive a score of one and if no, they will receive a score of zero, and the rest of the questions will

be scored in reverse (no will get a score of one and yes will zero). The minimum score that a subject can get will be zero, and the maximum is 50. If the respondent scores more than 4 out of 8 items on the lie detector, the test result is unreliable, and the subject has tried to show himself better than he is, which results in the lowering of the validity of the test. The questionnaire form is given in the figure below:

Validity and reliability of life satisfaction questionnaire:

The multi-dimensional questionnaire of life satisfaction was designed by Huebner (2001) and standardized by Latifian and Sheikh Eslami (2003) in Iranian society. Ebrahimi (2013) used factor analysis (exploratory) to determine the validity of the questionnaire, given in the table below:

Table 1. Factor loading analysis of life satisfaction subscales

Family		Friends		School		Environment		Self	
Item	Factor loading	Item	Factor loading	Item	Factor loading	Item	Factor loading	Item	Factor loading
1	0.64	1	0.66	1	0.74	1	0.57	1	0.74
2	0.77	2	0.59	2	0.57	2	0.44	2	0.87
3	0.69	3	0.88	3	0.59	3	0.57	3	0.69
4	0.84	4	0.64	4	0.54	4	0.59	4	0.80
5	0.75	5	0.75	5	0.65	5	0.54	5	0.76
6	0.66	6	0.86	6	0.66	6	0.45	6	0.83
7	0.57	7	0.79	7	0.59	7	0.46	7	0.75
		8	0.75	8	0.77	8	0.59		0.81
		9	0.66			9	0.46		0.78

Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate the reliability of the multi-dimensional life satisfaction questionnaire. Test-retest reliability and Cronbach's alpha calculated in Latifian and Sheikh Eslami (2013) were reported as 0.70 and 0.90, respectively. In Ebrahimi (2011), the Cronbach's alpha for the whole test is 0.79 - for the subscale's family 0.83, friends 0.58, school 0.80, living environment 0.33 and self 0.80. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha was 0.84 for the whole test and 0.84 for the family, 0.81 for friends, 0.83 for school, 0.63 for the living environment, and 0.83 for self, showing high reliability of the life satisfaction scale.

Validity and reliability of social support questionnaire:

The social support questionnaire (CASSS2000) was designed by Maliki and Elliot (2004) for children and adolescents and standardized in the Iranian community of Birjand by Khamsan and Farmani (2010), Sivandani (2009) used three separate (exploratory) factor analyses in his study to determine the validity of the questionnaire, and removed several questions in the parental support subscale in the factor analysis to reach a single factor structure, given in the following table:

Table 2. Factor loading analysis of social support subscales

Questions	Teacher's support	Parents' support	Friends' support
1	0.54	*	0.68
2	0.42	*	0.59
3	0.61	0.54	0.66
4	0.75	0.52	0.61
5	0.62	0.56	0.57
6	0.60	0.43	0.67
7	0.57	*	0.61
8	0.61	0.60	0.64
9	0.51	0.70	0.34
10	0.65	0.41	0.63
11	0.49	0.69	0.52
12	0.53	0.42	0.56

* Questions that have been removed in the single-factor structure.

Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate the reliability of social support subscales, as given in the following table:

Table 3. Validity data of social support scale

	Maleki and Eliot	Farmani (2010)	Sivandani (2010)	Current study
Alpha coefficient	0.97	0.93	0.91	0.93
Parents	0.54	0.90	* 0.76	0.92
Teachers	0.59	0.89	0.85	0.90
Friends	0.69	0.93	0.86	0.94

* Cronbach's alpha increased to 0.79 by deleting questions 1, 2, and 7.

Mortazavi (2004) and Mahdian (2006) used Cronbach's alpha to determine reliability in a similar questionnaire standardized in Iran. Cronbach's alpha obtained for the whole test was 0.97 and 0.91, respectively, and for the subscales of parents (0.93 and 0.80), teachers (0.92 and 0.90), friends (0.94 and 0.93).

Validity and reliability of self-esteem questionnaire:

The self-esteem questionnaire was designed by Coopersmith (1967) and standardized by Shekarashekan and Nissi (1994; quoted from Rastagari, 2004) in the Iranian society in Najaf Abad. The validity of the Coopersmith test has been reported as 0.96 for boys and 0.77 for girls. The calculated validity is 0.69 and 0.71 for boys and girls, obtained by correlating the Coopersmith self-esteem test scores with the student's grade point average at the end of the year by Shekarashekan and Nisi. In the current study, factor analysis (exploratory) was used to determine the validity of the questionnaire, as given in the following table:

Table 4. Factor loadings analysis of self-esteem subscales

Total self-esteem				Social self-esteem ¹		Family self-esteem		Academic self-esteem	
Ite m	fact or loading	Ite m	fact or loading	Ite m	fact or loading	Ite m	fact or loading	Ite m	fact or loading
1	0.26	24	0.31	11	0.33	5	0.49	7	0.55
2	0.36	29	0.21	18	0.30	12	0.57	14	0.73
3	0.23	30	0.29	25	0.24	19	0.43	28	0.37
4	0.26	36	0.24	31	0.24	26	0.41	35	0.56
8	0.23	37	0.42	32	0.52	33	0.31	42	0.27
9	0.21	38	0.24	39	0.12	40	0.36	49	0.56
10	0.21	43	0.32	44	0.12	47	0.37	56	0.44
15	0.28	45	0.35	46	0.58	54	0.35		
16	0.25	50	0.17	53	0.44				
17	0.28	51	0.19						
21	0.26	52	0.19						
22	0.27	57	0.18						
23	0.22	58	0.19						

Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate the reliability of the self-esteem questionnaire. The test-retest reliability and Cronbach's alpha calculated by Coopersmith are 0.92 for boys and 0.90 for girls, respectively, and in Shekarashekan et al. (1994) are 0.90 for boys and 0.92 for girls, respectively. In Navabi (2011), Yousefi (2008), and Nisi et al. (2006), Cronbach's alpha obtained is 0.81, 0.82, and 0.72, respectively. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha was 0.64 for the whole test, 0.60 for general self-esteem, 0.62 for social, 0.70 for family, and 0.64 for academic subscales.

Procedure

The complete list of gifted centers for girls and boys of different grades was received to obtain the study information by referring to the statistics and budget unit of the Qaen Education Department. Hence, by visiting in person at the high school for gifted girls and boys and distributing questionnaires among students of all grades with the cooperation of respected advisors and providing the necessary explanations regarding their completion and that these questionnaires will have no educational consequences for them, they were asked to read the material carefully and answer the questions honestly. The students' GPAs in the first round were obtained and recorded

on top of the questionnaires after answering the students and collecting the questionnaires with the cooperation of the school administrators.

Data analysis

The research hypotheses were analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics methods after collecting the data and information and entering the data into SPSS software. The mean and standard deviation were used in descriptive statistics in inferential statistics. Pearson's correlation test was used to examine the relationship between variables and a stepwise regression test was used to predict variables.

Table 5. Frequency and frequency percentage of demographic characteristics of sample members for age group

Age	Frequency	Frequency percentage	Cumulative frequency
14	88	35%	35%
15	94	37%	72%
16	70	28%	100%
Total	252	100%	-

As the information in the table shows, out of the total of 252 students, 35% of the people are in the age group of 14 years, 37% are in the age group of 15 years, and 28% of the people are in the age group of 16 years with the highest frequency of the sample group reserved for with 15-year-old students.

Table 6. Frequency and frequency percentage of demographic characteristics of sample members according to the field of study

Field of Study	Frequency	Frequency percentage	Cumulative frequency
General	88	35%	35%
experimental	80	32%	67%
Math	84	33%	100%
Total	252	100%	-

According to the information in the table, out of a total of 252 students, 35% of people are studying in the general field, 32%

are studying in the experimental field, and 33% are studying in the math field.

Table 7. Frequency and frequency percentage of demographic characteristics of sample members by gender

Gender	Frequency	Frequency percentage	Cumulative frequency
Female	137	54%	54%
Male	115	46%	100%
Total	252	100%	-

Based on the information in the table, of 252 people, 54% were females and 46% were males.

Table 8. Statistical indices of subjects' scores in the social support, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and academic progress questionnaire

Variables	Central indices			Indices of dispersion				
	Mean	Median	Mode	Range	S.D	Min	Max	
Life satisfaction	Family	58.37	39	42	37	47.5	5	42
	Friends	28.42	43	42	45	33.8	9	54
	School	50.32	34	26	40	82.8	8	48
	Living environment self	17.38	39	44	36	80.7	18	54
Social support	Teachers	91.47	49	51	55	07.10	17	72
	Parents	44.60	62	72	43	16.9	29	72
	Friends	13.57	58	60	57	45.9	15	72
Self-esteem	Total	95.11	12	10	10	10.2	6	10
	Social	46.4	50.4	5	7	19.1	1	8
	Family	99.5	6	6	6	24.1	2	8
	educational	94.4	5	6	6	55.1	1	7

As the table shows, the three subscales of the social support component have the highest means compared to the others.

Table 9. Correlation matrix between predictor and criterion variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Life satisfaction	1. Family	1											
	2. Friends	**0.18	1										
	3. School	**0.19	**0.31	1									

	4. Living environment	0.10	**0.27	**0.16	1								
	5. Self	0.11	**0.23	**0.26	0.03	1							
Social support	6. Parents	**0.43	**0.36	*0.15	**0.28	0.10	1						
	7. Teachers	0.50	*0.12	**0.41	**0.20	*0.12	**0.34	1					
	8. Friends	*0.14	**0.25	**0.25	**0.19	0.11	**0.30	**0.25	1				
self-esteem	9. Kelly	-0.07	-0.007	*0.15	-0.03	-0.10	**-.020	-0.03	-0.04	1			
	10. Family	*0.13	**0.22	0.03	-0.03	**0.20	**0.17	-0.09	0.80	0.01	1		
	11. Education	-0.12	**0.40	*0.14	0.03	**0.18	0.40	-0.1	0.10	-0.13	**0.49	1	
	12. Social	0.05	0.04	0.09	**0.23	-0.08	-0.11	**0.17	0.10	**-.016	-0.07	-0.06	1

* p < 0.05

** p < 0.01

To predict self-esteem, multiple regression analysis with a step-by-step method was used to enter predictive variables from the two variables of social support and life satisfaction into the regression model. In this analysis, predictor variables were social support (parents, teachers, and friends) and life satisfaction (satisfaction with family, satisfaction with friends, satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the living environment, and self-satisfaction) based on zero-order and differential coefficients. Each of them was entered into the analysis in successive steps to determine the prediction of each of them on the self-esteem variable.

Table 10. Summary of the results of step-by-step regression analysis of self-esteem according to social support and life satisfaction

Criterion variable	Model	The correlation coefficient	The square of the correlation coefficient	The square of the adjusted correlation coefficient	SE standard error
Self-esteem	1	R	R ²	R ² Adjusted	01.3
	2	0.29	0.08	0.08	98.2
	3	0.33	0.11	0.10	95.2

Predictor variable: life satisfaction (satisfaction with friends, satisfaction with school, and satisfaction with family)

Table 10 shows that in model 1, satisfaction with friends justifies 0.08% of the variance of self-esteem. In other words, 8% of the variance in self-esteem could be explained by satisfaction with friends ($R^2 = 0.08$). By adding satisfaction with the school to the component of satisfaction with friends in model 2, it increased to 0.11%. In other words, 11% of the variance in self-esteem could be explained by satisfaction with friends and satisfaction with school ($R^2 = 0.11$). By adding satisfaction with family, school, and friends in model 3, it increases the previously explained variance by 0.01%. Hence, the three variables together explain 0.12% of the variance of self-esteem ($R^2 = 0.12$).

Table 11. The results of variance analysis of self-esteem according to social support and life satisfaction

Model	Source of changes	The sum of the squares of the SS	df	Mean of squares (MS)	F	Level of significance P
1	Regression	78.220	1	78.220	31.24	0.0001
	Residuals	81.2269	250	07.9		
	Total	60.2490	251			
2	Regression	85.274	2	42.137	44.15	0.0001

3	Residuals	75.2215	249	89.8	17.12	0.0001
	Total	60.2490	251			
	Regression	62.319	3	54.106		
	Residuals	98.2170	248	75.8		
	Total	60.2490	251			

Criterion variable: self-esteem

Predictor variable: life satisfaction (satisfaction with friends, satisfaction with school, and satisfaction with family)

The results of the analysis of variance in Table 11 reveal that the sum of squares obtained in Model 1 is 220.78, and adding school satisfaction to the friend satisfaction in Model 2 changes to 274.85, and by adding satisfaction with family to satisfaction with school and satisfaction with friends in Model 3, it increased to 319.623. As the F value and significance level (P) are smaller than 0.0001, it is determined that all three components are reliable predictors of self-esteem.

F (250 and 1) = 24.31 and p > 0001.0

F (249 and 2) = 15.44 and p > 0001.0

F (248 and 3) = 12.17 and p > 0000.0

Table 12. Regression coefficients of predictor variables in step-by-step regression analysis of self-esteem

Model	predictor variables	B	standard error (SE)	Beta standard coefficient	T	Sig. P
1	Constant	70.22	98.0	-	07.23	0001.0
	Satisfaction with friends	11.0	02.0	29.0	93.4	0001.0
2	Constant	67.21	05.1	-	46.20	0001.0
	Satisfaction with friends	09.0	02.0	24.0	96.3	0001.0
	Satisfaction with school	05.0	02.0	15.0	46.2	01.0
3	Constant	11.24	50.1	-	16	0001.0
	Satisfaction with friends	10.0	02.0	26.0	25.4	0001.0
	Satisfaction with school	06.0	02.0	17.0	79.2	006.0
	Satisfaction with family	07.0-	03.0	13.0-	-26.2	02.0

Criterion variable: self-esteem

Table 11 shows the values of beta and t and the significance level of each model, which indicates the significance of the

regression coefficient. As is seen, the beta weights in the column of standardized beta coefficients are used to evaluate the contribution of each variable in the regression equation. These coefficients reveal that by changing one standard deviation in the predictor variable, a change in the criterion variable takes place by several standard deviations. According to this, satisfaction with friends has a more important role in model 3, as a change of one standard deviation in this component causes a 0.26 standard deviation increase in the self-esteem variable (P = 0.0001 and 0.26 B). In contrast, one standard deviation of change in family satisfaction leads to a -0.13 standard deviation of decrease in self-esteem (P = 0.02 and B = -0.13).

Table 12. Variables removed step by step in the regression analysis

Variables	Beta in	T	Sig.	Separate correlation	
Model 1	Parental support	-08.0	-37.1	17.0	-08.0
	Teacher support	-03.0	-58.0	56.0	-03.0
	Support from friends	03.0	50.0	61.0	03.0
	Satisfaction with family	-11.0	-83.1	06.0	-11.0
	Satisfaction with school	15.0	46.2	01.0	15.0
	Satisfaction with the environment	-04.0	-66.0	50.0	-04.0
self-satisfaction	01.0	23.0	81.0	01.0	
Model 2	Parental support	-09.0	-51.1	13.0	-09.0
	Teacher support	-10.0	-65.1	09.0	-10.0
	Support from friends	00.0	-002.0	99.0	-00.0
	Satisfaction with family	-13.0	-26.2	02.0	-14.0
	Satisfaction with the environment	-05.0	-88.0	37.0	-05.0

	self-satisfaction	-01.0	-28.0	77.0	-01.0
Model 3	Parental support	-04.0	-64.0	52.0	-04.0
	Teacher support	-11.0	-71.1	08.0	-10.0
	Support from friends	01.0	19.0	84.0	01.0
	Support the environment	-04.0	-77.0	43.0	-04.0
	self-satisfaction	-01.0	-17.0	86.0	-01.0

Predictive index in model 1: satisfaction with friends

Predictive index in model 2: satisfaction with friends and satisfaction with school

Predictive index in model 3: satisfaction with friends, satisfaction with school and satisfaction with family.

Criterion variable: self-esteem

Table 12 shows that satisfaction with friends in model 1 and with friends and with school in model 2 has been removed from the final equation. This is due to the fact that the significance level is greater than 0.05. Furthermore, in model 3, the significance level presented for satisfaction with friends, school, and family is greater than 0.05. Hence, these variables were removed from the final equation.

Conclusion

Multiple regression was used in a step-by-step method to examine the research. Self-esteem as a criterion variable and social support with three components, "parents, teachers and friends," and life satisfaction with five components, "satisfaction with family, satisfaction with friends, satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the living environment, and self-satisfaction" were used as predictor variables in this analysis. The results revealed that life satisfaction with three components (satisfaction with friends, school, and family) is the only variable to enter the regression equation. In other words, increasing the value of R by entering life satisfaction with the component (satisfaction with the environment and self-satisfaction) and social support with the component (teachers, parents, and classmates) is not powerful; therefore, they were removed from the final equation. Moreover, the analysis of regression coefficients revealed that life satisfaction with three components (satisfaction with friends, satisfaction with school, and satisfaction with family) are significant predictors of self-esteem. However, life satisfaction with two components (satisfaction with the environment and self-satisfaction) and social support with three components (teachers, parents, and friends) are not significant predictors of self-esteem.

Explanation

The study results showed a positive and significant correlation between self-esteem and life satisfaction in the components (satisfaction with friends and satisfaction with school). This is in line with those of Samadi et al. (2012), Navata et al. (2008), Sajjad Beshrpour (2012), Ghasemizadeh et al. (2010), Haghigi et al. (2004), McLean and Kermodes (2001), Asadi Sedghi Azar (2006), Neg et al. (2009), Draymond (2006) and Aghapour et al. (2010). All these studies show that the higher self-esteem people have, the more satisfied they are with life. Thus, having high self-esteem increases self-confidence, ability, and sufficiency in life, and a person feels that he has a useful and effective life. Studies indicate that people who feel good about themselves can handle their problems and have enough satisfaction with their lives. Hence, the more students' self-esteem increases, the more they try to reach success, making their life satisfaction more desirable. At the same time, this aligns with the results of Mardai et al. (2008) and Sheikhu-Islami et al. The reason for this inconsistency could be due to the difference in the questionnaire or the statistical population in which the research was carried out or due to the differences in the lifestyles of people in various societies.

Further, the results indicated that the life satisfaction component of family satisfaction has a negative and significant correlation with self-esteem - as life satisfaction increases in family satisfaction, self-esteem decreases as well. Hence, students with pleasant feelings about life, thinking that they will get high satisfaction with their family, try less. Thus, their self-esteem is likely to decrease. This finding is not in line with those of Rajabi et al. (2012), Raden (2000), Yumrantz and Saxon (2001), Smith et al. (2002), Gillies and Connell (2002), Raj and Agrawal (2005), Patil et al. (2009), Baezt and Saleh Sedekpour (2007), Pai Barna and Sawari (2009) and May and Warren (2002) have inconsistencies. All these studies, unlike the present one, show that self-esteem increases as life satisfaction increases; therefore, the more the students' satisfaction with their family or other institutions increases, the more their self-esteem increases. The reason for this inconsistency could be students' individual and cultural differences, their socio-economic and environmental status (type of life, type of school), or the rules valued in the community.

Nevertheless, the study results indicated that social support cannot significantly predict self-esteem; the support of those around you does not increase self-esteem. These are in line with the findings of Zeinivand (2005) and Touzandeh Jani et al. (2007), who found no significant relationship between social support and students' self-esteem. However, these are not in line with the results of Hesam et al. (2012), Mortazavi (2005), Behpajouh et al. (2007), Alavi and Jannatifard (2011),

Cardemiz (2006), Andred et al. (2009), Rostami et al. (2010) and Thompson (2002). All these studies show that the more a person receives support from parents, teachers, and friends, the higher their self-esteem will be. This means there is a positive and significant correlation between social support and students' self-esteem. This inconsistency could be due to the different questionnaires, the population in which the study was conducted, or the support that the students should receive from the people around them.

Further, the study results reveal that girls have more social support than boys. This is in line with the results of Zeinivand (2005), Heydari (2010), Ghalati (2001), Mahdian (2006), Mortazavi (2004), Katrin et al. (1999) and Daniel Sen (2009). However, this is inconsistent with the findings by Kjishtandar (2006), who found that boys have more support than girls.

The study results indicated that the effect of the level of satisfaction with friends and family on life satisfaction in girls is significantly higher than that of boys. This is in line with the results of Yousefi et al. (2007), Gharamani (2005), Pajouhideh (2010), Heydari (2010), and Khishtandar (2006). However, this finding is not in line with those of Kirk et al. (2008), Bransko et al. (2007), and Fongelmir et al. (2002) - boys are more satisfied with life than girls. However, in Gilman et al. (2005), Koutinho and Woolery (2004), Holsin (1998), and Zaki (2006), there were no significant differences between the life satisfaction of girls and boys. The reason for this non-alignment can be the differences in the lifestyles of people in various societies.

Further, the study results indicated no significant differences between the self-esteem of girls and boys. This is in line with the results of Mousavi (2004). Nonetheless, this is inconsistent with the results of Amini (2003), Emami et al. (2006) and Zeinivand (2005). All these studies show a significant difference between the self-esteem of girls and boys and the boys having higher self-esteem.

The study, like other humanities studies, has encountered many limitations, some of which are the study was conducted on gifted high school students; hence, the results obtained are applicable to this population, and generalization is difficult for other societies and age groups and should be done cautiously. Concerning the support perception questionnaire, one can state that as it does not measure the level of support perception from parents, friends, and teachers one by one, the subjects would have doubts, e.g., if one of the parents was kind and the other was not, the respondents would have doubts. The present questionnaires have a self-report aspect, and, like other questionnaires, they are not free of bias in answering them; self-evaluation is another problem in answering these questionnaires.

The study suggests that a separate study should be conducted with each educational level, and the results should be

compared due to the multiplicity of educational levels to examine the relationship between the variables stated. Given the effect of social support and life satisfaction on various economic and cultural fields and conditions, conducting several studies in this regard and with various populations would be better. Future researchers could involve various types of social support (emotional, informational, evaluation, and instrumental) in their analyses.

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