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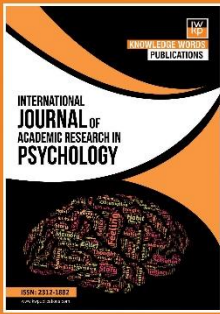
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## The Relationship between Family Functioning and Social Competence among Students

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### Abstract

The research is carried out to investigate the relationship between family functioning and social competence among students of Islamic Azad University, Salmas Branch. The Correlation Research method is used in this research to study the relationship between family function and social competence. Statistical society includes all of the students of Islamic Azad University in 2013-2014. The total amount of society was 2500 students. According to Morgan Table, the sample was assumed 302 students, which was selected by the use of multi-level cluster sampling method. In data collecting, two types of questionnaire were used: Social Competence questionnaire and McMaster's Family Assessment Device. The following results were driven after data analysis: There is a relationship between family communication and social competence. There is a relationship between family affective involvement and social competence. There is a relationship between family behavior control and social competence.

**Keywords:** Social Competence, Family Functioning.

### Introduction

In the past, to review the youth psychology, researchers used only school, society or peers mono-dimensionally to investigate the conflict and problems of young people and sake for origin of the problem only in one factor. The basis of different psychological and sociological views of new era is that only one factor can't determine the behavior of the people, but various factors are playing role on behavior forming, and they determine the contribution of each factor in behavior forming.

Most of people's behavior is affected by some factors. Therefore, the behavior problems of adolescents and youngsters are not excepted from this rule. Family peers, and cultural places (like school) are considered as main multiple factors in determining problematic behavior of adolescents and young people. For instance, at any times, peers can lead youth toward problematic behaviors. How parents behave in family and their training affect strengthening or preventing adolescent's

tendency to their peers (Diner, 2004). Furthermore, researchers study the combination of parents and peers. In most of the researches, the most parts in determining behavior forming are assigned to family. It may be due to the fact that family is the first place that everybody experience it and content and completeness of their learning has a straight relation with family functioning and its environment. This function not only consists of factors such as family welfare and parent's education, but also comprise family behavioral growth, relationship among family members, appropriate family rules, role division, confronting of family members with problems, expressing emotion, fulfilling affective needs, etc (Winter, 2000).

Considering negative relationship between family functioning and social-mental atmosphere of the class and conflict, it seems weak functioning of family create conflict and problem in communicating with others, since individual are sensitive in their social relations and has negative expectation from themselves. When they enter other social environments like class and university feels anger, rejection, misunderstanding, isolation, alienation, impatience, and stress due to shame and non relaxation, not understanding by others, feeling of unfriendly behavior with others, conflict, incuriosity, low self-confidence; so directly and indirectly they try to create unsafe atmosphere and enhance incompatibility (Lee, 2002).

Acquiring abilities to follow growth path is necessary in mental health, and emphasizes on the importance of social competence (Sroufe & Rutter, 1984). Elliot believes that social competence has significant role on social functionality and successful education and plays important role on preventing negative interactions of the others (Cartledge, 1989). Trower et al (2000) state that if a person can affect the other's behavior in a way that he wants and is socially accepted, he is socially competent (Cavell, 2004).

McFaul follows a different approach and defines social competence as public value term which reflects self judgment based on certain criteria, that individual's function in a certain social context should be appropriate, so that social competence relies on the results of social interactions of individuals and is determined by the other's interactions (Cavell, 2004). Social competence is not determined by what people do, but it is determined by evaluation of people's functioning. Social incompetence represents disability in achieving successful results or appropriate judgment of social interactions (Diner, 2004).

Felner et al introduce four categories include: cognitive skills, behavioral skills, emotional competence, and motivational role, as the main aspects of social competence.

- Cognitive skills: deciding or judgment skills and abilities, include learning abilities and ability to acquire necessary information
- Behavioral skills: negotiation, role playing, courage, protection, conversational skills to start and continue the conversation, and ability of kind behavior with others.
- Emotional competence: ordering and ability of handling emotional provoke and capacity to positively communicate with others, like ability to have positive relationship with others, expanding trust and bilateral protecting relations.
- Motivational roles and expectation: includes three separate motivational areas that are important in social competence: individual value structure, behavior growth level, effectiveness and self-control (Felner, 2001).

Family and its functioning is one of the most influential factors in constituting social competence. Social learning theory states that people learn communication skills from their family

and use these skills when encounter new situations (Bandura, 1971). Also, systems theory believes that family system affect individual's friendship (Minuchin, 1974). Furman & Wehner, in a research found a positive relation between parents and adolescent relations and their relations with friends. Beach & Brody (1985), show that parental conflicts and their divorce decreases self-respect and friendly relationship among adolescents (Islami, 2001).

Howell et al (1992), defines family functioning as the ability of the family in coordinating with changes during the life, solving conflicts, solidarity among family members and success in disciplinary pattern, performing rules and principles of the entity in order to protect the whole family system (Islami, 2001). In this research we use McMaster's model to assess family functioning. The model involves present family functioning not its previous growth and present evolutionary level; the family assessment method in this model is problem-oriented. This approach considers 6 aspects of family functioning: 1- problem solving, 2- communication, 3- roles, 4- affective responsiveness, 5- affective involvement, 6- behavior control.

**1- Problem Solving:** two types of problems are categorized in this structure: "instrumental" relating to practical and daily issues of life, such as providing food, money, and "affective" relating to affection issues

**2- Communication:** relates to the ability of family in exchanging information. In McMaster's model there are four kinds of communications: 1- clear and direct, 2- clear and indirect, 3- unclear and direct, 4- unclear and indirect (Norouzi, 2010).

**3- Roles:** the family member's behavioral patterns with other family members in a set of bilateral activities. To fulfill the roles, appropriate roles should be given to members to enable them to do their task (Barker, 1985).

**4- Affective Responsiveness:** study the effect of affective response of family in its relations (Bahari, 2008).

**5- Affective Involvement:** relates to "affective quality degree and family member's solicitousness to each other" (Barker, 1985).

**6- Behavior Control:** relates to the basic issues of family.

Based on what was mentioned in this research, we will consider the relationship between family functioning and social competence of students of Islamic Azad University.

### Research Hypothesis

- 1- There is a relationship between family communications and social competence
- 2- There is a relationship between affective involvement and social competence
- 3- There is relationship between behavior control in family and social competence

### Methodology

The researcher will be able to use correlation method when two or more sets of different information about a group or a group of information from two or more groups are available. However, this

method is use to study changes in one or more factors due to the changes in one or more other factors (Naderi & Seif-e-Naraqji, 2010).

Correlation research method is used in this research to investigate the relationship between family functioning and social competence variables.

Statistical society includes all students of Islamic Azad University in 2013-2014. The society size is 2500 individual. The sample size in about 302 individual according to Morgan's table, and is selected by cluster sampling method.

In this research two types of questionnaire are used:

### **Social Competence Questionnaire**

The questionnaire includes instrumental 47-question based on Felner hypothesis. Parandin carried out stability and justifiability estimations of this test on 450 individual (Parandin, 2009). Correlation coefficient method and Cronbach's alpha methods were used between two performance loads to estimate stability coefficient of the scale. Cronbach's alpha is used to investigate the internal consistency of scale and sub-scales. Alpha coefficient obtained from removing less correlated questions with total score is 88.4, shows the questionnaire has appropriate and acceptable internal correlation coefficient.

Also, we used retesting in stability method. 30 individual answered the questionnaire during 4 weeks. Correlation coefficient between two retesting is  $r = 0.899$ .

Justifiability of content and structure was tested to investigate the justifiability of the questionnaire. In content justifiability, according to Flener's hypothesis, the nominal and logical justifiability was approved by psychologists and psychotherapists.

Structural justifiability of the questionnaire was investigated in two ways. Correlation of total scale and subscales is high and is meaningful in 99% level. Also, structural justifiability of scale was analyzed. KMO was 0.826, so the external justifiability of research, a sample of the total volume, is observed. Total amount of correlation of questions and the test to analyze the main parameters is higher than 50%, and shows high correlation among each question and the total test.

### **McMaster's Family Assessment Devise**

Family assessment device includes 60 items to evaluate family functioning based on McMaster's pattern. The Devices uses self-report scale to measure structural pattern of family and ability of family to conform to family duty. The Devices include 6 sub-scales: problem-solving, communication, roles, affective involvement, affective accompanies behavior control, and total scale of family functioning. According to Amini (2006), alpha coefficient of total scale and subscales of communication, affective accompany, and control behavior was reported 0.92, 0.72, 0.68, respectively(1). If we don't analyze total functioning subscale, 6 other subscales are relatively independent. Family functioning device partially has simultaneous and predictor justifiability. According to Luck-Wallas couple satisfaction, the device shows average correlation in an independent study on 178 couple of 60-year-old, and is able to predict the scores of Fildelfia's middle-age morality. Moreover, it shows good justifiability for each group by distinguishing non-clinical family members in every seven subscales.

## Research Findings

### First Hypothesis

There is a relationship between family communication and social competence.

After collecting and analyzing data according to the following table, Pierson's correlation coefficient among family relations and social competence calculated as 0.31, that show meaningful relation among these two variance. Determining coefficient of this hypothesis is 9%.

Independent variance	Dependent variance	Correlation coefficient	Determining coefficient	Sig.
Family relations	Social competence	0.31	9%	0.01

### Second Hypothesis

There is a relationship between family affective involvement and social competence.

According to the following table, Pierson's correlation coefficient of affective involvement and social competence is 0.41. It represents meaningful relation between two variant. Determining coefficient of this hypothesis is 16%.

Independent variance	Dependent variance	Correlation coefficient	Determining coefficient	Sig.
Affective involvement	Social competence	0.41	16%	0.01

### Third Hypothesis

There is a relationship between behavior control of family and social competence

According to the following table, Pierson's correlation coefficient between behavior control and social competence is 0.61. It shows meaningful relation among these two variables. Determining coefficient of this hypothesis is 37%.

Independent variance	Dependent variance	Correlation coefficient	Determining coefficient	Sig.
Behavior control	Social competence	-0.61	37%	0.01

## Discussion and Conclusion

1- The first hypothesis about investigating the relationship between family communication and social competence, states collected data shows that about 31% of family communication changes and social competence is common. In the other word, 9% of social competence is due to family communication. The result is parallel with Furman & Wehner's (2002) finding about positive relation among quality of adolescent relations with parents and their friendship. Other researchers also indicate the relationship between communication patterns of family and children's communication issues.

2- The second hypothesis about relationship between family affective accompany and social competence, is parallel to Truck (2001) that believes mental affective atmosphere of family and continuous strengthening of behaviors in the most sensitive years of life, adolescence, is the most



important factor in specifying the effect of family life. Fox, Pancake & Strouf (1999), in a research about emotional skills, show that if individual fail in their affective relation and emotional control, their social conformity will be damaged and create long-lasting negative consequences and individual face important problems in their independency, constructive communication with peers, and efficient problem solving.

3- The determining coefficient of the third hypothesis about the relationship between family behavior control and social competence, is 37% that indicates the more behavior control, the less social competence. The finding accords with the research of Fox, Pancake & Srouf (1999) about emotional skills that represent if individual fail in their affective relation and emotional control, their social conformity will be damaged and create long-lasting negative consequences and individual face important problems in their independency, constructive communication with peers, and efficient problem solving.

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