



The Predictive Role of Parents' Marital Relationship Quality on The Adolescents' Psychological Capital

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ABSTRACT

Background and Aim: Family problems are considered an essential problem for children's growth and this tension often plays a role in children's lives. The purpose of the present study was to investigate the predictive role of the quality of parents' marital relationship on the psychological capital of adolescents. **Methods:** The current research is considered applied research in terms of its purpose. This research is a descriptive-correlation study investigating the relationship between two variables. The statistical population of the present study included couples referring to 15 counseling centers and their teenage children in Tehran and Isfahan in 2022. Therefore, 150 couples with children aged 13 to 17 were selected in a targeted way. Then, couples responded to Busby et al.'s Marital Relationship Quality Questionnaire (1995) and children responded to Luthans Psychological Capital Questionnaire (2007). The final sample size was 520 people, which included 150 couples (300 people) and 220 of their teenage children. **Results:** The regression analysis showed that the marital relationship quality variable can significantly predict psychological capital. Considering that the value of $R^2 = 0.388$ was obtained, it can be concluded that the quality of the parents' marital relationship predicts about 39% of the children's psychological capital. **Conclusion:** Therefore, it can be concluded that the quality of parents' marital relationship can have significant psychological effects on children.



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Introduction

The family is the most important institution of human society, which is the most basic and the first institution of society, and the first step to establishing this social institution is marriage (Navabinejad et al., 2023). In other words, the family is recognized as the most important unit of society, and marriage is the most basic human relationship; Because it forms the primary structure of family relationships and the growth of the next generations (Parsakia & Darbani, 2022). Family problems are considered an important problem for children's growth, and this tension often plays a role in children's lives (Lampropoulou, 2018). Although parental conflict is a source of psychological pressure, its effect on children, like any other stressful factor, largely depends on the cognitive evaluation and perception of it. Hence, children who perceive conflict as highly threatening and blame themselves for the conflict may have particularly strong negative emotional reactions; On the contrary, their trust in their abilities to help themselves or their parents can reduce the feeling of distress and despair (Rezapour Mirsaleh et al., 2022). In other words, when a child observes parental disagreement, he considers it as a threat to his and his parents' well-being; Therefore, the marital relationship has long-term effects on children's performance, especially when conflicts are observed as permanent, chronic, and frequent (Zokaei Ashtiani et al., 2017).

One of the important variables in marital relationships is the quality of the couple's marital relationship. Marital quality is considered relative agreement between husband and wife on important issues, sharing in common tasks and activities, and showing affection. Many words have been used to describe the quality of marital relationships, such as compatibility, satisfaction, satisfaction, integration, and commitment. However, there is little agreement about the meanings used for this term, which is partially due to the lack of sufficient theoretical foundations to define the quality of the marital relationship (Pirmardvand Chegini & Karami, 2021). In other words, the quality of marital relations is a multi-dimensional concept and includes various dimensions of the couple's relationship, such as compatibility, satisfaction, happiness, cohesion and commitment (Pirmardvand et al., 2021).

Larson and Holman (1994) stated that marital quality is a dynamic concept because the nature and quality of relationships between people change over time, which allows the identification of factors affecting the quality of a relationship. The dimensions of the quality of marital relations are: agreement: the feeling of reaching the optimal level of some activities in life; Satisfaction: which refers to the person's pleasant feeling from doing the activity; Cohesion: It is the feeling of accomplishing the activity with the help of each other (Ganong et al., 2019). In short, it can be said that the quality of marital relationships is the individual measurement of the feeling of satisfaction, happiness, and marital stability in each couple (Pirmardvand Chegini et al., 2020). Couples who lack the necessary communication skills to organize emotional expression maintain marital conflicts and lead to subsequent marital dissatisfaction (John et al., 2019). Marital quality is considered one of the most important indicators of joint life among those who are married. Marital quality is a concept that has special importance, and much research in the field of marital relations is in line with it (Pirmardvand Chegini & Karami, 2021).

On the other hand, psychological capital is mainly derived from theory and research in positive psychology. In other words, this word is one of the words recently presented in scientific texts and is the result of the work of positive psychologists (Wong et al., 2023). Psychological capital is a set of positive traits and abilities in people that can play a role in the growth and promotion of a person, like a strong source (Vilarino & Zopez-Zafra, 2022).

Psychological capital focuses on activities that lead to the well-being of individuals, building positive individuals, thriving communities, and social justice (Avey et al., 2011). The image that positivist psychologists give of human nature is optimistic and hopeful; Because they believe in the ability to expand, nurture, flourish, and perfect human beings and transform into what is humanly capable (Mozaffari et al., 2023). Therefore, psychological capital is a combined and interconnected structure that includes four perceptual-cognitive components: optimism, resilience, hope, and self-efficacy (Luthans et al., 2015). Optimism is an interpretation style that attributes positive events to permanent,

personal, and pervasive causes and negative events to external, temporary, and specific circumstances (Newman et al., 2018). Resilience is a class of phenomena characterized by a pattern of positive adaptation in the context of considerable problems and risks (Junaid et al., 2021). Hope is a positive motivational state based on a proactive driver of a sense of dynamic success and a sense of success of solutions (Hargrove et al., 2019). Finally, self-efficacy is a person's firm belief in his abilities to mobilize motivational and cognitive resources and the strategies needed to implement certain successes (Mozaffari et al., 2023).

A person's psychological capital affects not only his performance but also the performance of others and those around him (Luthans et al., 2011). Luthans et al. (2015) consider psychological capital as a composite structure of four perceptual-cognitive components: hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience (Luthans et al., 2015). These components in an interactive process give meaning to a person's life, continue the person's efforts to change stressful situations, prepare him to enter the scene of action, and guarantee his resistance and stubbornness in achieving his goals (Panahi & Fatehizadeh, 2018). Psychological capital is important in several aspects. Providing mental and physical health, increasing life expectancy, proving the value of happiness for humans, and measuring the quality of life index and economic and social indicators. In fact, psychological capital is the greatest desire and the most important goal of human life, which affects people's mental health more than any other factor (Rafaq et al., 2020). The components of psychological capital interact with each other and influence each other (Dirzyte et al., 2022). In other words, psychological capital is a positive psychological developmental state with the following characteristics: Committing and making the necessary effort to succeed in challenging tasks and tasks, having positive citations about present and future successes, persistence on the way to the goal and, if necessary, changing the path to reach the goal in order to achieve success. The last characteristic is persistence when faced with difficulties and difficulties to achieve success (Shabani et al., 2019). The beliefs of a person with high psychological capital are characterized by a specific range of

behavior for a task and motivating better performance in several ways; In particular, self-efficacy beliefs that affect a person's sense of ability and self-confidence in their perceived ability to perform a required task, meaning that people will strive to achieve their goals (Pretorius, 2022). Furthermore, increasing the sense of control or authority over life conditions causes better performance (Mikus et al., 2022). Despite the high importance of both variables mentioned in this research, so far, research has yet to investigate the relationship between the quality of married life of parents and the psychological capital of children. In other words, the studies conducted on the quality of marital relationships and other marital variables have considered the effects of marriage on children. In addition, researches that have addressed the effects of parents' marital relationship and family relationships on children are often qualitative and the lack of quantitative research in this field is strongly felt. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the predictive role of the quality of parents' marital relationship on the psychological capital of adolescents.

Method

The current research is considered applied research in terms of its purpose. This research is a descriptive-correlation study investigating the relationship between two variables. The statistical population of the present study included couples referring to 15 counseling centers and their teenage children in Tehran and Isfahan in 2022. Therefore, 150 couples with children aged 13 to 17 were selected in a targeted way. Then, couples responded to Busby et al.'s Marital Relationship Quality Questionnaire (1995) and children responded to Luthans Psychological Capital Questionnaire (2007). The final sample size was 520 people, which included 150 couples (300 people) and 220 of their teenage children.

Materials

1. Busby et al.'s Marital Relationship Quality Questionnaire (1995): The revised form of this questionnaire was created by Busby et al. in 1995, which is used to measure the quality of marital relationships. This questionnaire is graded on a Likert scale from completely agree (score 5) to completely disagree (score 1). This questionnaire consists of 14 items and 3 subscales of agreement (6 questions), satisfaction (5 questions) and cohesion (3 questions), which show the total score of marital quality, and high scores indicate higher marital quality. The reliability of the questionnaire was reported by Cronbach's alpha in the study of Holist

and Miller (2005) for the three subscales of agreement, satisfaction, and desirable coherence. In Yousefi's research (2010), the Cronbach's alpha coefficients and the division of the marital quality questionnaire in the whole sample for 14 extracted items and four factors, separated by gender, were higher than 0.70, which indicate the homogeneity and homogeneity of the items in the questionnaire.

2. Luthans Psychological Capital Questionnaire (2007): This questionnaire was used by Luthans (2007) to measure the structures that measure hope, resilience, optimism and self-efficacy. This questionnaire contains 24 questions, each subscale consists of 6 items, and the subject answers each item on a 6-point Likert scale (completely disagree to completely agree). All items are scored directly. In this way, completely agree with a score of 6, agree with a score of 5, somewhat agree with a score of 4, somewhat disagree with a score of 3, disagree with a score of 2, and completely disagree with a score of 1. To obtain the score of psychological capital, first the score of each sub-scale is calculated separately, and then their total determines the total score of psychological capital. Luthans and colleagues (2007) in their research on samples of management students, managers and technicians obtained the lowest Cronbach's alpha of 0.88. In another study, Luthans and colleagues (2010) reported higher than 0.70 for all subscales except resilience and 0.69 for resilience. In the study of Forohar et al. (2011), Cronbach's alpha of the psychological capital questionnaire was estimated at 0.87.

Implementation

In order to carry out the present research, the necessary arrangements were first made with 15 counseling centers and the results were in writing. Then, the research tool was provided to the people who had the criteria to enter the statistical sample of the present study. It should be noted that all participants were informed about participating in the research and the necessary ethical principles were observed. Finally, after collecting the required number of questionnaires, the collected data were subjected to statistical analysis. For this purpose, SPSS software was used and the data were analyzed in two parts, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics in this research included mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis, and inferential statistics included regression tests to determine significance and predictability.

Results

The demographic findings of the present study are divided into two parts. In the first part, the findings indicated that the average (standard deviation) age of the couple was 36.91 (9.56) years. Most parents had a bachelor's degree; 198 (66%) had a bachelor's degree. Regarding the adolescents participating in the research, the demographic findings indicate that their average (standard deviation) age was 15.14 (2.40) years; Among the adolescents participating in the present study, 155 (70.45%) were boys, and 65 (41.93%) were girls. The table below reports the results of the descriptive statistics of the research variables.

Table 1. Descriptive findings of research variables

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Quality of marital relationship	300	36/51	10/03	0/533	0/899
Psychological capital	220	57/44	14/23	0/297	1/182

According to the reported results, the skewness and elongation values of both variables are in the range of -2 to 2; Therefore, it can be concluded that the data has a normal distribution, and parametric tests can be used.

Therefore, Pearson's correlation test was used to check the correlation between the quality of marital relationships and psychological capital. The results of the Pearson correlation test are reported in the table below.

Table 2. Pearson correlation test results

Variables	Coefficient of correlation	Sig.
Quality of marital relationships	0/333	0/001

The above table shows the results of the Pearson correlation test. As can be seen, the correlation coefficient between the quality of marital relationships and psychological capital is 0.333. Considering that $P = 0.001$ was obtained, it can

be concluded that the correlation between the two research variables is significant with 99% accuracy. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between the quality of parents' marital relationship and the

psychological capital of adolescents. In the following, regression analysis was used to check the prediction of children's psychological capital based on the quality of parents' marital relationships. Before performing this test, the

tolerance coefficient and variance inflation factor were checked for both variables. The table below reports the VIF value and the tolerance coefficient of the variables of marital relationship quality and psychological capital.

Table 3. Variance inflation factor and tolerance coefficient of research variables

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Quality of marital relationship	0/441	6/226
Psychological capital	0/415	5/392

Regression analysis can be used if the variance inflation factor is lower than 10 and the tolerance coefficient is higher than 0.2. Based on the results reported in the above table, it can

be seen that the values obtained for the variance inflation factor and the tolerance coefficient, the regression model has a good fit, and the regression analysis test can be used.

Table 4. The results of the regression analysis test in order to predict the psychological capital of teenage children based on the quality of the parents' marital relationship

Predictor variable	Non-standard coefficients		Beta	t	F	R ²	Sig.
	B	SE					
Constant	16/382	0/208		10/535	-	-	0/000
Quality of marital relationship	0/359	0/009	0/366	4/192	5/043	0/388	0/002

In the above table, the regression analysis results of predicting the psychological capital variable based on the quality of the marital relationship are reported. The value of $P = 0.002$ shows that the quality of parents' marital relationship can significantly predict children's psychological capital. Finally, considering that the value of $R^2 = 0.388$ was obtained, it can be concluded that the quality of the parents' marital relationship predicts about 39% of the children's psychological capital.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted to investigate the predictive role of the quality of parents' marital relationship on the psychological capital of adolescents. The results of the statistical analysis of the data showed that the quality of the parents' marital relationship can significantly predict the amount of psychological capital of adolescents. Although many researchers have addressed the effects of divorce on children or the effects of various domestic problems on children, researchers have attempted to explain these effects after the separation of parents or after a long time has passed since the peak of the problems. For example, Garriga and Pennoni (2020), in

research to investigate the causal effects of divorce and temporary separation of parents on children's cognitive abilities and psychological well-being based on the quality of marital relationships, showed that conflicts between parents and divorce have significant negative effects on young children. They concluded that these children have more behavioral problems and hyperactivity than children from families where parents have a high-quality marital relationship. (Garriga & Pennoni, 2020). In this research, the effects of parents' marital relationship quality on children's psychological capital, a variable related to positive psychology, has been investigated. In other words, the current research showed that the negative atmosphere of the house and the low quality of the relationship between parents might not only have negative effects on the children but can also prevent the development of positive abilities and characteristics in the children. This is one of the significant distinguishing aspects of this study. In explaining the obtained results, it can be said that teenagers are at the turning point of personality formation and identification (Lampropoulou, 2018). Marital relationship quality is a multidimensional variable that can

provide comprehensive information about marital relationships (Luthans et al., 2015). Therefore, it can be concluded that teenagers whose parents have a low-quality marital relationship do not learn many communication skills correctly; In addition, when parents do not have a high-quality marital relationship, positive characteristics such as components of psychological capital and other abilities are less seen in the home environment, and children have little opportunity to learn and internalize it. On the other hand, when the parents' marital relationship is rich and high-quality, by using psychological capital and healthy skills in solving conflicts and healthy communication patterns, the couple provides conditions in which children can develop more psychological capital in themselves. In fact, in such families, children can objectively observe the different dimensions of psychological capital in their family, and the cultivation and development of psychological capital is facilitated; On the contrary, in an environment where the parents' marital relationship is of low quality, objective access to psychological capital is difficult for children, and this disrupts the growth of their psychological capital.

Like all research, the present research had limitations, among which the following can be mentioned: 1) In this research, a self-report questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. Obviously, using such a tool cannot give 100% correct and accurate results. This is because participants may choose options that do not correspond to reality in order to make themselves or their relationship look better or to make it look worse. In addition, the conditions of the questionnaire implementation may have influenced the participants' responses. 2) In this research, only couples had visited counseling centers and only in two cities of Tehran and Isfahan, and teenagers were also children of these people. Therefore, the obtained results cannot be generalized to other societies and the whole society. 3) no questionnaire has 100% validity and reliability; Therefore, this also reduced the accuracy of the current research results.

Considering the mentioned limitations, researchers should consider other variables and different statistical communities in their future research. In addition, due to the lack of quantitative research on the effects of marital

variables on teenagers, it is suggested to conduct more studies in this field.

The obtained results show more importance of parents' marital relationship. Therefore, establishing family therapy and couple therapy centers and training expert counselors in this field are strictly emphasized.

Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article has no financial sponsor or conflict of interest.

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