

A Study of the Factors Affecting Life Satisfaction of Korean Youths

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Abstract. Adolescence is a period of transition to pass through from kid to adult and it is a very important period to think about directions where to go in the future and establish one's ego. However, the level of life satisfaction investigated from Korean youths in adolescent period is shown as the lowest among OECD countries. In this study, to analyze factors which affect to life satisfaction of youths and their learning attitude - essential school activity prior to life satisfaction in youth period, we firstly focused on relationships with parents, peers, and teachers as factors which affects to learning attitude and life satisfaction. We analyzed structural relationships among factors using structure equation model and provided discussions with further research directions.

Keywords: Adolescent, Learning Attitude, Life Satisfaction, Parenting Style, Peer Attachment, Relationship with Teacher

1 Introduction

This study aimed to examine how the factors related to learning of youths affect to life satisfaction. We used the third raw data of first grade in middle school of '2012 Korean Children and Youth Panel Research', performed by National Youth Policy Institute. This paper is organized as follows: i) Deriving several variables affecting life satisfaction based on literature reviews, ii) Identifying data structure of variables through exploratory factor analysis, iii) Analyzing structural relationship among variables with structural equating model, iv) Investigating the statistical gender difference of research model, v) Discussing the analysis results and future research direction with concluding remarks.

2 Literature Review

Parenting Style means various types of parenting divided by how parents bring up their children and how characteristics of parenting affect to psychological growth and behavior of children[1]. In this period, children needs more friends than any other period, and the level of perceived happiness of children get higher

as relationships with peer is more stable. Because children consider their friends as primary attachment subject and make relationships with them, not parents, in adolescent period[2], they have higher level of life satisfaction as they have more friends[3]. Teachers have important influence righteous development as well as cognitive development such as objective knowledge and students develop necessary knowledge, skills, value, attitude, a view of society through teachers [4]. Learning Attitude means attitude of learners when learning something, which includes individual's positive or negative disposition in learning [5]. Learning Attitude means attitude of learners when learning something. Life Satisfaction is an evaluation about how much individual is satisfied with one's life in general life and it can be used interchangeably with the concept of living satisfaction, quality of life, subjective well-being, and happiness [6].

3 Research Model and Hypothesis

3.1 Research Model

Based on the previous studies, we suggest the research model depicted in Figure 1 to understand life satisfaction of youth. The model considers four antecedent variables, Parenting Style(PS), Peer Attachment(PA), Relationship with Teacher(RT), Learning Attitude(LA), and one consequent variable, Life Satisfaction(LS).

3.2 Operational Definitions of Research Constructs

In this study, we adopt five research constructs as shown in the research model. To clarify the concept of the constructs, we establish the operational definition of the five constructs and their measurement variables as shown in Table 1.

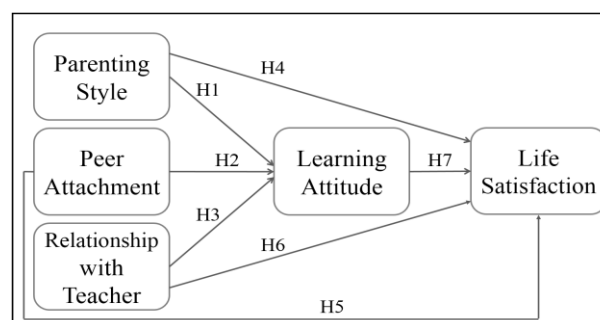


Fig. 1. Research Model

Table 1. Operational Definition and Measurement

Constructs	Operational Definition
Parenting Style	Various types of parenting divided by how much parents give love to children
Peer Attachment	Desires to consider peers as special social subjects.
Relation of Teacher	Interaction between students and teachers through building a relationship
Learning Activity	As reactions of learners in learning, positive or negative disposition and attitude of individuals about learning
Life Satisfaction	To evaluate how much individuals are subjectively satisfied with one's life.

3.3 Research Hypothesis

In this study, we established 7 research hypotheses based on the research model.

H1.: Parenting Style will have a positive influence on Learning Attitude of youths.

H2: Peer Attachment will have a positive influence on Learning Attitude of youths.

H3: Relationship with Teacher will have a positive influence on Learning Attitude of youths.

H4: Parenting Style will have a positive influence on Life Satisfaction.

H5: Peer Attachment will have a positive influence on Life Satisfaction.

H6: Relationship with Teacher will have a positive influence on Life Satisfaction.

H7: Learning Attitude of youths will have a positive influence on Life Satisfaction.

4 Empirical Analysis

4.1 Data Collection

Research data was surveyed and collected in 'Korean Children and Youth Panel Research', performed by National Youth Policy Institute[7]. 2,352 surveys are collected but we used only 2,258 surveys excluding some cases with missing value and low credibility. Also, we replaced responses marking 'I have no idea' with mean 2.5 for 5-point scale.

4.2 Factor Analysis and Reliability Analysis:

In this study, we conducted exploratory factor analysis to identify the data structure of measurement variables and reliability analysis to confirm consistency of the variables.

Table 2. EFA and Reliability analysis

Factor Var	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	Com.	α
PA4	.827	.116	.146	.094	.105	.739	.884
PA2	.810	.084	.198	.115	.090	.723	
PA3	.809	.126	.066	.065	.075	.685	
PA1	.784	.106	.206	.116	.106	.692	
PA5	.774	.084	.087	.056	.160	.642	
RT3	.111	.825	.043	.115	.045	.710	.841
RT2	.160	.786	.032	.140	.107	.675	
RT4	.074	.761	.116	.173	.051	.631	
RT5	-.014	.743	.072	.055	.062	.564	
RT1	.205	.693	.046	.228	.070	.582	
PS3	.169	.088	.802	.098	.067	.694	.758
PS4	.208	.078	.769	.114	.075	.659	
PS2	.188	.065	.763	.132	.136	.657	
PS1	.038	.039	.636	.006	.043	.409	
LA3	.096	.130	.110	.794	.142	.688	.776
LA2	.057	.127	.096	.784	.032	.644	
LA4	.165	.170	.098	.728	-.044	.597	
LA1	.065	.271	.032	.624	.299	.559	
LS3	.168	.121	.151	.134	.843	.794	.814
LS2	.092	.034	.053	.013	.821	.687	
LS1	.197	.130	.117	.159	.804	.741	
Eigen Value	6.22	2.56	1.81	1.69	1.47	Cum. Var. (%) 65.585	
Var. (%)	16.76	15.01	11.57	11.47	10.76		

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's Measure : 0.877, Bartlett's Test : P-value = 0.000

4.3 Path Analysis

To figure out the structural relationship among the constructs, we conduct path analysis using Structural Equation Model. Table 3 shows the model fit of the suggested research model. All fit indices meet the recommended level.

Table 3. Fit Measure

Fit Index	Value	Recommended Level
χ^2	1549.457(.000)	The smaller, the better
df	176	-
χ^2/df	4.503	< 3.0
Goodness Fit Index	0.967	> 0.90
Adjusted Goodness Fit Index	0.956	> 0.90
RMSEA	0.039	< 0.05, very adequate
SRMR	0.0359	< 0.10
Normed Fit Index	0.936	> 0.90
Non Normed Fit Index	0.965	> 0.90
Comparative Fit Index	0.971	> 0.90

Table 4 shows results of path analysis and statistical significance of each path.

Table 4. Results of Path Analysis

Hypothesis	Path	Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Results
H1	PS → LA	0.195	6.888	0.000***	Supported
H2	PA → LA	0.106	3.776	0.000***	Supported
H3	RT → LA	0.410	14.082	0.000***	Supported
H4	PS → LS	0.150	5.400	0.000***	Supported
H5	PA → LS	0.226	8.189	0.000***	Supported
H6	RT → LS	0.075	2.708	0.007***	Supported
H7	LA → LS	0.217	7.184	0.000***	Supported

5 Conclusions and Implications

The results of study are meaningful for following reasons. First, Korea society emphasizes on achievement of learning and provides high quality of education environment compared to any other countries. However, Korean youths actually think quality of education and life satisfaction are very low contrary to existing well-made education environment [8]. This means that learning environment is not a critical factor for satisfaction of learning and life. This study is meaningful not only because it is examined how relationships with parents, peers, and teachers are important to

learning attitude and life satisfaction, but also because it is confirmed that learning attitude mediates the influence of social interaction or relationships of youth to life satisfaction. However, the following further research are needed to overcome research limitations: i) controlling income level among respondents such as household income, ii) considering personal psychological condition – self-esteem or social confidence.

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