

Familism, Sibling Relationship and Psychological Wellbeing in Young Adults

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A cross-sectional study was conducted to ascertain the mediating role of sibling relationship on familism and psychological wellbeing in young adults. The sample consisted of 120 participants of the age range of 20 to 25 years. Familism Scale (Sabogal et al., 1987), Sibling relationship Inventory (SRI: Stocker & McHale, 1992), and Flourishing Scale (Choi et al., 2009) were used to study variables. After computing descriptive statistics of the data and reliability analysis for each scale, Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to assess the relationships while hypothesized mediation model was assessed through hierarchical regression. The results indicated a positive relationship amongst familism, sibling relationship and psychological wellbeing. It was also found that sibling relationship mediated between familism and psychological wellbeing.

Keywords: familism; sibling relationship; psychological wellbeing.

Psychological wellbeing is a critical element which invigorates connectedness and attachment. It is generally affected by financial status (Bani-Mustafa & Oskrochi, 2018), gender (Moen & Kim, 2002), age (Deaton, 2015), marital status (Marks, 1996), number of children at home (Umberson, 1989), highest qualification (Price & Shields, 2005) and job status (Crohan et al., 1989) but in this study, the focus was on how familism and sibling relation affect psychological wellbeing. Psychological wellbeing is studied by how an individual feels about himself and his life which is formed during his interaction with his family members and siblings.

Familism is a culture based construct of valuing family which focuses on relationship between family members to be supportive, attached, connected and that the family should be preferred over self. Familism is a multidimensional construct which includes values of fundamental nature e.g. strong family identification, family obligation, support, attachment and interconnectedness (Sabogal et al., 1987). Familism is conceptualized with two essential dimensions i.e., attitudinal and behavioral (Calzada et al., 2013). Cauce et al. (2002) have found structural familism as a third dimension of familism. According to Fuller-Iglesias & Antonucci, 2016, higher familism in combination with family support was related to better physical and psychological wellbeing and the discrepancy between the two resulted in low mental and physical health in Mexican population.

Siblings can serve as social partners, role models, and foils and are capable to affect the development of others. Sibling relationship is assessed through children's perception of sibling relationship qualities (Stocker et al., 1997). Marotta (2015) found that there is a significant relationship between the quality of the sibling relationship and psychological outcome, particularly affectivity, altruism and self-esteem, when demographic and variables of familial structural (age difference, sibling contact, gender concordance, and minority status) during emerging adulthood.

Psychological well-being suggests the degree to which individuals feel that they have significant authority over their exercises and their life. It focuses on positive emotional well-

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being of an individual (Edwards, 2005). Hedonic and Eudemonic are the two types of wellbeing. Hedonic wellbeing indicates subjective feelings of happiness. Eudaimonic wellbeing refers to psychological wellbeing. Ryff's (1995) proposed model that shows six factors that affect psychological well Being. These factors include self-acceptance, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relation with others, autonomy and purpose in life.

Feinberg et al. (2012) found a mediating role of closeness and social support between Familism and Psychological health in Latinos, Asians and Europeans. Latinos reported the highest levels of familism of the three cultural groups, and women reported higher familism and support, as well as poorer psychological health than men.

Main Effect model suggests that advantages or disadvantages of social relationships are independent of the level of stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985), e.g. if greater social support is gained from one's relationships, better health will be experienced as an outcome, even in lower stress level's for the individual.

Keeping in view the existing research, it is to be noted that the three variables are related in a way that a positive mental state of psychological wellbeing is associated with valuing, relationship and interaction with our family members and sibling, as they are the closest people one can have.

Familism is one method of esteeming family connections which underscores close family ties, interconnectedness, and preferring needs family before one's own needs (Bardis, 1959). It has been demonstrated to be related with mental health (Campos et al., 2014), and hypothesized to be applicable for physical health (Katiria Perez & Cruess, 2014). While the importance of familism for health is progressively clear, it isn't yet evident whether these qualities are identified with kin relationship (Campos et al., 2014). It is a common phenomenon which can provide a key to maintain equilibrium in our life. It seems as if there is hardly any emphasis on it. This research will be helpful in understanding how familism and sibling relationship develop to attain psychological wellbeing in young adults. It will also be helpful in future providing directions for maintaining psychological wellbeing.

Method

Cross Sectional research design was used to conduct this present study.

Participants

A convenient sample comprising of 120 participants including both men and women was included in this study. The age range of the participants was 20 to 25 years. As per criteria for inclusion, only regular students were included in the study. However, those whose parents or family members were diagnosed with any form of physical or psychological disease, were excluded from the present study.

Table 1

Demographics showing sample characteristics (N=120)

<i>Variables</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>f(%)</i>
Age	2.91(1.51)	
No. of siblings	3.71(1.79)	
Gender		
Female		95(79.1)
Male		25(20.8)

Marital status	
Married	16(13.3)
Single	104(86.7)
Birth order	
First	40(.33)
Middle	38(31.7)
Last	42(.35)
Family system	
Joint	45(37.5)
Nuclear	75(62.5)
Life Style	
Rural	16(13.3)
Urban	104(86.7)
Religion	
Islam	119(99.2)
Other	1(.83)

Note. M=Mean; SD=Standard Deviation; f=frequency; %=percentage

Assessment Measures

Demographic Questionnaire

Demographic information was also inquired from the participants which included particulars of age, gender, birth order, marital status, socio economic status, family system and religion.

Familism Scale

It assesses the beliefs and attitudes regarding nuclear and extended family by measuring obligation to family, as a primary source of social support, and consideration of family opinions when making important decisions (Sabogal et al., 1987). The scale has 14 items with a 5-point Likert scale to indicate agreement as implied by 1 and disagreement as implied by 5. It consists of three subscales of familial obligations, perceived support from the family and family as referents. The value of Cronbach's alpha was .78 for this study.

Adult Sibling Relationship Questionnaire (Short Form).

It is a self-report instrument assessing children's perception of sibling relationship qualities. This questionnaire has 46 items on a 5-point Likert scale with the range of 1 implying Not at all and 5 implying Very much. It consists of 7 subscales of intimacy, antagonism, quarreling, emotional support, dominance, maternal rivalry, knowledge and paternal rivalry. The value of Cronbach's alpha was .93 for this study.

Flourishing Scale

It is a brief 8-item summary measure of the subjective success in different areas of psychological wellbeing such as relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism. The scale has 8 items with 7 point Likert scale to indicate disagreement and agreement with the range of 1 standing for strongly disagree and 7 standing for strongly agree. The reliability of flourishing scale is .88 for this study.

Procedure

Before conducting the application of scales, participants were briefed about the purpose of the study. They were assured of the fact that their confidentiality would remain intact. Informed consent was taken from participants and they were told about their right to withdraw. Demographic form, Adult sibling relationship questionnaire (short form) and Flourishing scale were administered on the participants. The SPSS version 22 was used to analyze the data gathered from the participants.

Results

Table 2

Pearson Product Correlation of Demographics Characteristics, Familism, Sibling Relationship, Psychological wellbeing in Young Adults

Measures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1-Age	1	.2*	.13	-.43**	.21*	.07	.02	.10
2-Gender		1	.02	-.05	.20*	.09	-.06	.156
3-No. of siblings			1	-.15	-.07	.21*	-.09	.10
4-Marital status				1	-.08	-.20*	-.09	-.16
5- Income					1	-.18	.02	-.12
6-Familism						1	.31**	.49**
7-SR							1	.38**
8-PWB								1

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01;***p<.001,Gender(male=1, female=2), Marital Status (Married=1, Single=2), SR=Sibling Relationship, PWB= Psychological Wellbeing.

Familism, sibling relationship and psychological wellbeing are positively correlated with each other. It was also found that familism was positively correlated with the number of siblings which indicates that people having a large number of siblings were high in familism. Moreover, marital status was negatively correlated with familism, which means that married people have higher familism than single individuals.

Table 3

Multiple Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Familism predicting Sibling relationship (N=120)

Predictor	R ²	Sibling Relationship	
		ΔR ²	B
Step 1	.06	.06	
Age			-3.34
Gender			3.46
Marital status			.36
Step 2	.26	.2***	
Familism			.54***
Total		.26	

Note. ***p<.001

Table 4.3 showed that 26% variance was explained by the overall model in sibling relationship with F (6, 98) = 5.69, p<.001. None of the covariates predicted sibling relationship. In addition to this, after controlling for the covariates, familism had significantly and positively

predicted sibling relationship (mediator).

Table 4

Multiple Heirarchical Regression for Familism predicting Psychological Wellbeing Controlling for Sibling Relationship (N=120)

Predictor	R ²	Psychological Wellbeing	
		ΔR^2	B
Step 1	.05	.05	
Age			-2.93
Gender			3.29
Marital Status			-4.19
Step 2	.26	.21***	
Familism			.57***
Step 3	.33	.07**	
Familism			.44**
Sibling relationship			.09*
Total		.33	

Note. *p<.05,**p<.01,***p<.001

The results of table 3 showed that 33% variance was explained by the overall model in psychological wellbeing with $F(7,90) = 6.28, p=.000$. None of the covariates predicted psychological wellbeing. Also controlling for covariates, familism positively and significantly predicted dependent variable (psychological wellbeing). Moreover, sibling relationship also positively and significantly predicted psychological wellbeing. However, the effect of familism remained significant, but the value of independent variable became less significant from .57 to .44 indicating the mediating effect of sibling relationship between familism and psychological wellbeing.

Discussion

The present study emphasizes relationship familism and sibling relationship with psychological wellbeing. The main reason for carrying out this research was to find out how familism and sibling relationship develop to attain psychological wellbeing in young adults.

The first hypothesis of the study was that Familism and Sibling relationship are positively correlated with psychological wellbeing. This hypothesis was supported by the results of the present study. The results depicted that Familism was positively correlated with sibling relationship and psychological wellbeing. It was also found that sibling relationship was positively correlated with psychological wellbeing.

The findings of this study are supported by research as Corona et al. (2017) found that high familism in combination with high stress is associated with Subjective Wellbeing than low familism in combination with high stress. Shepherd et al. (2020) also found that sibling and maternal attachment were significantly associated with wellbeing in later-life, but the results were non-significant for paternal attachment.

It was also hypothesized that sibling relationship is likely to mediate between familism and psychological wellbeing in young adults. This hypothesis was also supported by the results of the present study. It was found that familism led to psychological wellbeing by partially facilitating sibling relationship. Familism was not directly associated with psychological

Wellbeing. In other words, valuing, warm, close and supportive relationships and prioritizing needs of the family over one's own needs, was not sufficient alone to psychological wellbeing. Neither was sibling relationship. Familism and sibling relationship only contributed to better psychological wellbeing in association with sibling relationship. However, sibling relationship was related to better psychological wellbeing. These findings are in line with existing literature as Cohen & Wills (1985) found the mediating role of closeness and social support between familism and psychological health in Asian, Latino and European population.

Conclusions

It was concluded in the current study that married individuals are higher in familism than single ones. It was also observed that individuals with greater number of siblings were higher in familism. There are many factors that cause familism in young adults such as environmental factors, personal needs and culture etc. that may affect the mental health. Greater awareness and family counselling is needed to promote the sense of familism which would strengthen the family bonds by enhancing sibling relationship, thus leading to psychological wellbeing.

Limitations and Suggestions

Questionnaires used in the present study were all from foreign authors and were very lengthy. Indigenous scales need to be developed to assess these variables. This study was only conducted on the young adults from collectivistic population and have not been compared with individualistic population. For further exploration and better understanding comparison with other cultures is suggested.

Implications

The present study was conducted to find out the relationship of familism and sibling relationship with psychological wellbeing in young adults. The findings showed that familism and sibling relationship both were associated with psychological wellbeing. Thus, clinicians can assist those individuals having low psychological wellbeing by enhancing their familism and strengthening relationships with their siblings by planning appropriate counseling sessions. This research proved to be beneficial in finding out the predictors of psychological wellbeing which are familism and sibling relationship.

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