# Relationship of High Risk Behaviors and Negative Life Events with Mental Health of Female Students in High Schools

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## Dear Editor- in- Chief

Today, life is full of dominant changes. Interaction of individual characteristics with environment determines the adjustment and reactive responses. Economic and social changes are important factors that have influence on adolescence's life (1). Change in life has positive or negative effects. Negative changes in life lead to high risk behaviors and increase the risk of unsecure behaviors. High risk behaviors include physical abuse, substance abuse and violence. Adolescents are at high risk to show these behaviors. Since, they encounter with issues like; identity crisis, adolescence pride, tendency to independence and so on. High-risk behaviors in adolescence are the most important social and health issues that can effect on society and family. Some teenagers show their high risk behaviors by abusing substance and consuming alcohol, so, they illustrate their dependence by these behaviors. They want to be as adults, but they are not independent (2). Some teenagers encounter with stressful experiences and they cannot cope with problems. Identity crisis may lead to tension and mental problems in adolescents. Therefore, adolescence is the risky stage of life. Parents should be aware of these behaviors for preventing likely risks (3). The important factors of death in adolescence are: abusing substance, consuming alcohol, unsecure sexual behaviors, suicide, accident and AIDS. All of the mentioned factors are acquired behaviors and they could be prevented. Family's function has a clear influence on mental health of adolescents (4). Promotion of mental health in adolescence is the most popular preventing method for high-risk behaviors (5).

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between high-risk behaviors and negative life events with mental health of female students in high schools of Karaj, central Iran. The *research design was descriptive-correlational.* The population of study includes all high school female students in Karaj (2014-2015). Among all students 200 students were selected by multi-stage cluster sampling. Data were collected using Iranian adolescents Risk-taking Scale (IARS), Adolescent Family Inventory of Life Events (A-FILE), Ryff's Scale of Psychological Well-Being (RSPWB-18) and Demographic questionnaire.

Data were analyzed using descriptive procedures and inferred methods like, regression, Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate analysis of variance.

There was a significant relationship between high-risk behaviors and psychological well-being (R=0.263, $P \leq .05$) and between negative life events and psychological well-being (R=0.252, $P \leq .01$). Results of multiple regression showed that high risk behaviors, life events, birth order

and number of children significantly can predict psychological well-being. High risk behaviors and life events have negative relationship with psychological well-being. Structural Equation Model showed that following variables predict and explain the psychological well-being: high-risk behaviors about 0.16%, life events about 0.159%, number of children about 0.21% of psychological well-being. In psychological well-being scale, master environment (0.81) has greatest point and in life events, substance abuse (0.79) has the greatest point. Results showed that there was not a significant relationship between high-class area and low class area in terms of high-risk behaviors, negative life events, and socio-economic states.

Analysis of data explains that stressful life events have a close relationship with psychological well-being. High risk behaviors, life events, birth order and number of children have the significant role for predicting and explaining mental health of adolescence. High risk behaviors and life events have negative relationship with mental health. It means that with increasing the high risk behaviors and negative life events, mental health will be decreased. There is a positive relationship between number of children and mental health. High risk behaviors and life events have negative relationship with psychological well-being. Besides, number of children has positive relation with psychological well-being. With regression model, high-risk behaviors (0.16%), life events (0.159%), number of children (0.21%), explain and predict psychological well-being. Adolescent with higher mental health and physical activities have a better understanding of their mental health status (6). Depression and substance abuse increase the tension and anxiety and it shows the deep and negative relation of high-risk behaviors and mental health (7, 8). Stressful life events have a close relation with psychological well-being and decrease mental health. Today, training the way of solving problem is important than solving problem.

Therefore, if results of our study lead to the improvement and modification of education, the aim of study will be fulfilled.

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