Study of Family Health Structure and Social Determinants; A cross-sectional study based on path analysis

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Abstract: The family, as one of the important institutions of society, influences other social institutions; it also influences the society as a whole. If the family fails to function normally, it will cause a great many problems. In other words, healthy society involves healthy families. This research has been concerned with family health and the social factors which influence it. **Method:** The method of this research is survey. The population consists of the Tehrani families, with at least one child, who has lived together at least five years. The sample consists of 367 families that have been randomly selected. **Finding:** The data gathering is based on the questionnaires. The data analysis shows that … The second variable which has a strong and meaningful relation with family health is the relationship between the families with the relatives. The economic and cultural similarity of navigated family as well as the social environment showed no meaningful relationship with the family health. **Conclusions:** families are influenced by the society. The family is closely related to the social, political, economic, and social institutions; these institutions influence the family both directly and indirectly.

Introduction

The family, as one of the important institutions of society, influences other social institutions; it also influences the society as a whole. If the family fails to function normally, it will cause a great many problems. In other words, healthy society involves healthy families. To put it another way, the success or failure of a society depends upon in the way in which the institution of family functions. Similarly, families are influenced by the society. The family is closely related to the social, political, economic, and social institutions; these institutions influence the family both directly and indirectly. The importance of family has caused many scholars to study it in various ways, taking different approaches. The psychologists, sociologists, lawyers, economists, and the experts in Islamic studies each take a particular approach to the examination of family and its health.

In addition putting emphasis on the consideration of the person and his personal characteristics, the psychologists regard the psychological context of a family as important; and they maintain that the interactions among the family members play a key role in the psychological context of family, determining the reactions relevant to this context. They hold that the psychological context of family determines the way in which its members behave (Ahmadi, 1386, 21-22). According the sociologists, family enjoys a special status. Adopting different approaches, they have examined this social institution. Some sociologists speak of the effects of cultural system of society, and hold that the family health depends upon the commitment to the values. On the other hand, they maintain that the abnormality of family is due to ignoring these values. According to these scholars, the development of healthy family involves the knowledge of cultural effects, and the improvement of the cultural and religious conditions of society. According to other scholars, healthy family depends upon economical issues; thus, they hold that the improvement of the economic conditions of society is one of the major factors in the development of healthy family (Farjad, 1382: 148). They hold that economic problems in families are one of the major causes of conflict, tension, and misbehavior. Some others are of opinion that government plays a major role in the development of healthy families. Some sociologists have studied the family in functionalist terms. They maintain that each family member performs a particular function (Bradshaw, 1386, 46). In their view, the family whose members fulfill their functions normally is a healthy family. Some other sociologists take a dialectic approach to family; they maintain that family, like other social institutions, has been based on conflict and its members try to dominate others (Chibucos and Leite, 2005: 184). Islamic Studies scholars maintain that Islam has not neglected the role of family in society. There is a wide variety of Quranic verses and traditions about family which

have been put forward in ethical and legal terms. These teachings are concerned to help organize families whose members can easily attain moral and spiritual perfection. Recently, the social changes have caused families to face a great many problems, which have influenced the traditional system of family, causing a lot of changes in the family. To know all these changes and appropriate planning in dealing with them involves detailed studies. Speaking objectively, the women's access to virtual atmosphere has made a great many changes in their status in today's world; their access to economic sources due to owning jobs and their dealings with new social arenas also has transformed the traditional structure of the family, making a new balance in the family inevitable. Mass media is among other factors which influence family considerable. The family members spend time reading newspaper, listening to radio, watching television, and browsing internet; and mass media thus distract attention from family. Another factor which has been recently influencing the family is the fact that many functions of the family are now performed by the state or other social institutions. This has caused both weak family relations and dissatisfaction of the emotional needs of family members. Furthermore, such issues as addiction, increasing rate of divorce, increase in marriage age, and other social factors have caused the families to face new problems which, in turn, has negatively influenced the health of family. Globalization and the increase in international relations also have introduced different models of family relations, preparing the ground for choosing among different life styles. According to Mr. Behnam, in western industrial countries in recent decades family has been transformed by the second wave of modernization, which may be called postmodern, and in other societies it continues to develop along the lines of the family patterns of the west. All the above mentioned issues show that the study of family health and it characteristics is necessary so that a healthy way of life may be identified. It goes without saying that talk of all factors in the health of family in one single article is not possible; we can only consider only a small number of these factors. Therefore, this writing is concerned with the analysis of family health and the most important social factors associated with it. This research is concerned with the characteristics of a healthy family and the social factors in it. Depending on the culture, the characteristics of a healthy family would be different. As I already said, this research is concerned with the characteristics of a healthy family and the concept of family health in Iran and the factors which, in our culture, influence the family health.

Method

In this study, traversal method was used to collect data. Analysis unit was family and the statistical community of the research was Tehrani families who had at least one child; the sample volume had been estimated 367 families by using Cochran formula (Saraee, 1382: 13). According to the general census of population and housing in 1385, the household number of Tehran was 2227892 of which about 1650000 families had three members that was the statistical community of the research (general census of population and housing in 1385, 1388:89). Sampling method was random and systematic. The made questionnaire via researchers contained 140 questions that used for collecting data after pre-test and ensure of its reliability and validity. It is noteworthy that the respondents or the research observing unit was women and related information to their families and their husbands were asked from them.

The reliability and validity of the research's questionnaire

The goal of reliability is an instrument for measuring it that should be assessed that the measuring instrument is out of Systematic and random errors to which extent. To test the reliability, different methods are used. In this study, to assess the reliability of the data, internal consensus method and its main index, Cronbach's alpha test was used. The amount of Cronbach's alpha was more than 90% in this research. Also, to ensure the validity of the measuring instrument, the following affair has been done. 1. Some questions are ones that have been used in the similar researches. 2. Supervisor and other expert professors are surveyed for providing superficial validity. 3. The validity of questionnaire has been evaluated during the preliminary test; and questions has been reviewed and revised with doing 60 questionnaires as preliminary test.

Research's findings

In this section, the major findings of the research have been explained in two sections of descriptive and explanative: First, we describe some underlying variables: Finding shows that 109 people or about 30 per cent of respondents in this sample belong to the age group of 40 to 49 years old that make the feature of this distribution. 108 people or more than 29 per cent belong to the age group of 30 to 39 years old. In total, more than 59 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group 30 to 49 years old. According to the statistical society, as it is expected, the least age group belongs to 20-29 years old that is 9.9%.

Finding shows that the highest percentage of Educational level in the studding sample is diploma. 151 people or about 41 per cent of respondents are in diploma level that includes distribution feature and the highest number and percentage of respondents. Considerable number and percentage of respondents who are 123 people or 33.7 per cent placed in literacy level of under-diploma. 76 people or 9.20 percent of respondents placed in the level of Associate Degree and Bachelor's Degree. In general, according to the distribution statistical society, the respondents' education level has been considered.

Description of Family Health (dependent variable)
Using six explained components, the dependent variable means the amount of Tehran family health has been measured. The following table shows the distribution of this variable at three levels:

Table1: Percentage and frequency distribution of total family health index of the respondents

Family health	Frequency	Percentage
low	22	6.0
average	241	65.7
high	104	28.3
sum	367	100.0

As described before, we describe healthy family with 6 components including: Communion, independence and freedom, satisfaction, providing members' needs, Integrity and ethical values. Percentage and frequency distribution of these components are in the following table 2. Our first hypothesis was the relation of family health with navigated family health. According to theoretical discussions, we expect that healthier navigated family of the couple increase the possibility of the family's success.

Table 3: Relation of navigated family health with the respondent' family health

Navigated family health / Family health	Low	Average	High	Sum
Low	6.0	0	3.2	17.5
average	65.7	13.2	71.9	71.3
high	28.3	86.8	24.9	11.3
Sum	100 (367)	10.3 (38)	67.8 (249)	21.7 (80)

Kendall Tau c= 0.29, significance level= 0.000, Ka square= 96.14, significance level= 0.000 and Gama= 0.72
Spearman-Brown= 0.148. Significance level= 0.000

Viewed Kendall, Gama, Ka square and Spearman coefficients show that seen differences between dependent and independent variables are not random since such a possibility is less than 1 in 10000. Therefore, it should rule for a significance relation between these two variables. According to this matter that the navigated family health overtakes the family health, it can be confirmed that navigated family health has reasonable effect on the amount of family health.

Table 4: Relation of the equity of family economic wealth of the couple with their own family health (percent)

Economic equity / Family health	Uniform	Non-uniform	Sum
Low	5.6	7.0	6.0
average	67.4	61.0	65.7
High	27.0	32.0	28.3
Sum	72.7 (267)	27.3 (100)	100.0 (367)

Kendall Tau c= 0.30, significance level= 0.52, Ka square= 1.34, significance level= 0.51

Table 2: Percentage and frequency distribution of health indicators of the respondents' families

Component	Communion between family members Frequency	Communion between family members Percentage	Independence of family members Frequency	Independence of family members Percentage	Satisfaction of family members Frequency	Satisfaction of family members Percentage	Providing family members' needs Frequency	Providing family members' needs Percentage	Family Integrity Frequency	Family Integrity Percentage	Ethical and Islamic values Frequency	Ethical and Islamic values Percentage
Low	17	4.6	37	10.1	29	7.9	19	5.2	23	6.3	18	4.9
average	218	59.4	276	75.2	244	66.5	208	56.7	259	70.6	220	59.9
High	132	36.0	54	14.7	94	25.6	140	38.1	85	23.2	129	35.1
Sum	367	100.0	367	100.0	367	100.0	367	100.0	367	100.0	367	100.0
Average rating	2.31		2.04		2.17		2.32		2.16		2.30	

Table 5: average rates according with Mann-Whitney U test

Economic equity	N	Average of rates	Sum of rates	Mann-Whitney U	Significance level
Homologous family health	267	182.13	48628.50	12850.5	
non-homologous family health	100	189.00	18899.5		0.507
Sum	367				

Spearman-Brown= 0.035. Significance level= 0.50

Table 6: Equity relation for the family's cultural wealth of the couples with their own family health (in percent)

Cultural equity / Family health	homologous	non-homologous	Sum
Low	6.1	5.8	6.0
average	65.3	66.2	65.7
High	28.6	27.9	28.3
Sum	58 (213)	42 (154)	100.0 (367)

Kendall Tau c= -0.005, significance level= 0.92, Ka square= 0.039, significance level= 0.98, Spearman-Brown= -0.005, significance level= 0.92

Due to the non-significant value of the Kendall, Ka square and Spearman, it can be said that there is no significant relation between cultural equity and family health in the current research. Meanwhile, surveying the related statistics show that the relation of cultural equity and family health's components means communion, independence and freedom, satisfaction, providing members' needs, Integrity and ethical & Islamic values is not significant.

Due to the value of the Kendall, Ka square and Spearman, it can be said that differences were seen between the amount of independent and dependent variable cannot be accidental, because such a chance is 1 in 10,000. Therefore, it should be some rules for changing the relation between these two variables. Kendall's Tau-c coefficient shows the intensity of dependency and its direction. Due to the positivity of this coefficient, the relationship between the two variables is direct and increase of kinship relations will increase the family health.

Table 8: The relation of family health with having relationship with relatives (in percent)

Relationship with relatives / Family health	Low	Average	High	Sum
Low	54.5	7.2	.7	6.0
average	45.5	77.9	50.0	65.7
High	.0	14.9	49.3	28.3
Sum	2.9 (11)	56.5 (208)	40.6 (148)	100 (367)

Kendall Tau c= 0.31, significance level= 0.000, Ka square= 101.06, significance level= 0.000 and Gama=0.73, Spearman-Brown= 0.428, significance level= 0.000

Gamma coefficient calculated 0.73 and shows that using independent variable of kinship relations, we can decrease 73% of forecast error for Family Health. Therefore, this hypothesis that "kinship relations have direct impact on the amount of family health" is confirmed.

Table 9: Relation of family's social environment health with respondents' family health (in percent)

social environment health / Family health	Low	Average	High	Sum
Low	6.5	5.9	5.0	6.0
average	62.0	65.9	80.0	65.7
High	31.5	28.2	15.0	28.3
Sum	25 (92)	69.5 (255)	5.5 (20)	100 (367)

Kendall Tau c= -0.033, significance level= 0.34, Ka square= 2.48, significance level= 0.64
Spearman-Brown= -0.049, significance level=

Table 7: Average rates according with Mann-Whitney U test

Economic equity	N	Average of rates	Sum of rates	Mann-Whitney U	Significance level
Homologous familyhealth	213	184.38	39272	16321	
non-homologous family health	154	183.48	28256		0.92
Sum	357				

Due to the non-significant value of the Kendall, Ka square and Spearman, it can be said that there is no significant relation between social environment health and family health in the current research. The values of environment health equity with family health's components means communion, independence and freedom, satisfaction, providing members' needs, Integrity and ethical & Islamic are not significant.

Table 10: equity relation of cultural wealth of the couples' family with relative's relationship (in percent)

Equity of cultural wealth / Family relationship	homologous	non-homologous	Sum
Low	4.7	.6	3.0
average	54.5	59.7	56.7
High	40.8	39.6	40.3
Sum	58.03 (213)	41.96 (154)	100 (367)

Kendall Tau c= 0.021, significance level= 0.81, Ka square= 5.35, significance level= 0.069 and Gama=0.024, Spearman-Brown= 0.012, significance level= 0.81

Due to the non-significant value of the Kendall, Ka square and Spearman, it can be said that there is no significant relation between cultural equity and kinship relations in the current research. Due to the non-significant value of the Kendall, Ka square and Spearman, it can be said that there is no significant relation between economic equity and kinship relations in the current research

Table12: Relation of economic wealth equity of the couples' family with kinship relations (in percent)

Equity of economic wealth / Family relationship	homologous	non-homologous	Sum
Low	3.0	3.0	3.0
Average	57.7	54.0	56.7
High	39.3	43.0	40.3
Sum	72.75 (267)	27.24 (100)	100 (367)

Kendall Tau c= 0.031, significance level= 0.54, Ka square= 0.41, significance level= 0.81 and Gama=0.069, Spearman-Brown= 0.032, significance level= 0.54

Multivariate regression analysis of factors affecting the health of the family

After considering the relations between the main variables of the research, , both dependent and independent, now it is suitable to use a multivariate regression analysis from the index relation of the family heath (dependent variable) with independent variables. Multivariate regression analysis enables the researcher to research the relation of each independent variables with dependent variable with statistical controlling of the impact of other independent variables and avoids extra assessment of the amount of independent variables' influence due to the correlations among them. In multivariate regression analysis against simple multivariate regression, all original independent variables are analyzed together to see the extent and effect of these variables on the dependent variable with controlling the other variables. The summary of these results can be seen in table 16.

Table 11: Average rates according with Mann-Whitney U test

Cultural equity	N	Average of rates	Sum of rates	Mann-Whitney U	Significance level
homologous relative relationships	213	183.06	38992.5	16201∘.	
non-homologous relative relationships	154	185.30	28535.5		0.81
Sum	357				

Table 13: Average rates according with Mann-Whitney U test

Economic equity	N	Average of rates	Sum of rates	Mann-Whitney U	Significance level
homologous relative relationships	267	182.22	48652.5	12874∘.	
non-homologous relative relationships	100	188.76	18875.5		0.54
Sum	367				

Table14: Results of multivariate regression of family health index and other variable

Name of the independent variable	Amount of F coefficient	Amount of Beta coefficient	Significant level	R Square
kinship relations	201.08	0.41	0.000	0.35
Navigated family health	157.02	0.37	0.000	0.46
Cultural equity	-	0.031	0.46	-
Economic equity	-	0.032	0.44	-
Social equity	-	0.059	0.16	-

According to this table, one of the independent variables that has huge impact on the family health and explains its greatest changes is the amount of kinship relations. Since in this analysis, other independent variables were controlled, we name the gained Beta coefficient as regression coefficient and its amount is comparable to Beta coefficient of other variables. Beta coefficient of the first variable means kinship relations that were 0.54 in the past, decreases to 0.41. The coefficient of determination do not show any difference and therefore, R Sq of the calculation shows that about 35% of family health variance can be explained via this variable. Meanwhile, it reconfirms multivariate regression analysis for the relative hypothesis. It means that more kinship relation increases family health. Meanwhile it should be notified that this relation can be vice versa, too. It means that healthier family, kinship relation is more.

Next independent variable in the relation is navigated family health that its Beta coefficient is 0.73 and is less than the previous variable. In this case, Beta coefficient decreases from 0.57 to 0.37. Adding the navigated family health, R Sq coefficient adds to the previous independent variable and it can be said: 46% of family health variance could be explained by the linear combination between kinship relation and the navigated family health. Here our multivariate regression analysis for the relative hypothesis is reconfirmed again. The regression line equation based on these two variables can be written as follows:

Family health= constant amount + 0.41 * kinship relations + 0.37 * navigated family health

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this research was surveying the family health and social factors affecting it. This study is done via traversal method and the statistical community of the research was Tehrani families who had at least one child. According to Cochran formula, statistical sample was determined around 367 people that were selected randomly from 22 districts of Tehran. Descriptive findings showed that 22 persons or 6% of our sample families have low family health. Around 66% including 241 families have average

health. 104 persons or about 28% of the families have high family health. According to the analytical results, there is a significant and relatively strong relation between family health and navigated family health. Therefore, it can be said that out findings confirm systematic and learning theory of the family. Thus, families should know that their behavior and action reproduce directly from their children and most likely will affect their future family life. Therefore, they should be aware if their relation with their spouse, children and others. They should know that they are pattern of their children. Educational institutions and mass media should consider these affairs in their planning and providing social and cultural programs and give parents more information in this regard and pay more attention to family health. Also, an average significant relation has been seen between the family health and kinship relation in the results of this research. Therefore, our findings confirm the net theory and it can be said that net theory is workable in out statistic society. According to this finding, with different policies should emphasize on the necessity of kinship relation and do necessary investments in this regard. Different programs in this way can be encouraged for expand kinship relation and inform the society about the importance of kinship relation. It should be added that while the gained correlation between family health and kinship relation do not show one-way causal relationship, this relation can be consider two-ways and it can be said that family health affects kinship relation. For a closer look at this relationship, more research is needed to be done. Finally, variables of cultural and economic equity of navigated families and social environment variable do not show a significant effect on the family health in this research. Cultural and economic equity have no significant effect on kinship relation, too. If this finding is correct, it can be concluded that strong emphasis of equity theory on family health are not confirmed at least in our statistical society. One could also say that more complex society and other numerous factors are not important as before in the kinship relations' health, as well as cultural and economic equity of the source families that are emphasized in our culture a

lot. Meanwhile, it is not necessary to consider them as the highest priority in marriages. However, more research is needed in this area for a definitive judgment.

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