



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**MODERATING ROLE OF GENDER IN RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN
PERSONAL, MATERNAL, AND CONTEXTUAL FACTORS WITH
ADJUSTMENTS AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN MASHHAD, IRAN**

NOOSHIN SABOUR ESMAEILI

FEM 2012 4

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By

NOOSHIN SABOUR ESMAEILI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

August 2012

DEDICATION

Dedication to:

My parents, without whose mind and heart this project could ever have been written.

I also dedicated this to my brother and my sister. My educational dreams could never come true without you.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of University Putra Malaysia in fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Faculty: Human Ecology

In recent decades divorce has become considerably more common. It is a life crisis for almost all families who experience it. The high number of divorced families over the past decade has created a vast amount of attention on the effects of divorce. The relationships between maternal and contextual factors with adolescents' adjustment in divorced families have been established. However, much is to be understood on what factors moderate these relationships. It has received little attention in Iran. To address this paucity, the present study was conducted to study the moderating role of gender in the relationships between maternal and contextual factors with adjustment among adolescents in divorced families. Thus, the present study is essential and

necessary. The main purpose of this study was to determine the moderating role of gender in relationships between maternal (maternal distress, economic hardship) and contextual (post-divorce parental conflict, parent-child relationship) factors with adolescents' adjustments (self-esteem, delinquency and academic achievement) in divorced families in Mashhad, Iran.

This study is a quantitative study and utilized a correlation research design. Respondents of the study consisted of 800 female and male high school students of divorced families aged between 15 and 18 years and their mothers whom were identified by probability proportional to size sampling technique.

Data were collected using self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of Centre for Epidemiology Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), Economic Hardship Questionnaire, Post-divorce Parental Conflict Scale, Parent-Child Relationship scale, Self-Esteem Scale and Youth Self-Report Scale. Academic achievement was measured by students' CGPA. All the instruments used in this study were highly reliable. Descriptive, bivariate and multivariate statistics were used in data analysis.

The findings of the Pearson correlation analyses showed that maternal (maternal distress, economic hardship) and contextual (post-divorce parental conflict, parent-child relationship) factors were significantly related to adolescents' adjustments (self-esteem, delinquency and academic achievement). The result of t-test showed that male respondents had significantly lower self-esteem and academic achievement and higher delinquency than female respondents. The hierarchical regression

analyses revealed that maternal (maternal distress, economic hardship) and contextual (post-divorce parental conflict, parent-child relationship) factors were significant predictors of adolescents' adjustments (self-esteem, delinquency and academic achievement). Parent-child relationship emerged as the strongest predictor of adolescents' adjustment (self-esteem, delinquency and academic achievement) in divorced families.

The findings unveiled that adolescent gender moderates the relationship between economic hardship, parent-child relationship and adolescents' delinquency. Male adolescents had higher level of delinquency compared to females when they experienced high level of economic hardship and low quality of relationship with their mothers. Gender also moderated the relationship between maternal distress and parent-child relationship with adolescents' academic achievement. Male adolescents had lower level of academic achievement compared to females when they experienced high level of maternal distress and low quality of relationship with their mothers.

The findings of the present study highlighted the importance of family context in enhancing self-esteem and academic achievement and preventing delinquency of high school adolescents in Mashhad-Iran. The nature of relationships between independent variables and adolescents' adjustment implied that in divorced families, adolescents' self-esteem and academic achievement can be increased and delinquency can be decreased if they do not experience maternal distress, economic hardship and continuing parental conflict following divorce. High levels of warmth by the custodial mother may have beneficial effects for adolescents' adjustment in

divorced families. This study informs parents on how their post-divorce behavior contributes to their adolescents' adjustment. This information can help parents to monitor their own behavior following divorce in order to enhance the well being of their adolescent child. This study suggests that adolescent gender is an important source of variability to consider in planning, implementing and evaluating programs for adolescents of divorced families. Findings of this study specifically supported the hypothesis that boys were more vulnerable than girls to maternal and contextual factors. Finding of this study emphasize the need to remain sensitive to gender issues in evaluating and treating child and family psychopathology.

The present results have significant recommendation for future research and practice. This study was conducted among adolescents of divorced families in Mashhad, Iran. Therefore, to generalize the result of the study to the other population; it is recommended similar study be conducted in other regions of the country and with different demographic characteristics. The present study examined adolescents' gender as the moderating variable. However, there are many other variables, such as length of parental divorce, parental education and employment status which could become moderating variables that could be studied in future researches. The present study focused on adolescents aged between 15 and 18 years old. It is suggested that future studies should also explore younger adolescents.

**Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah**

**PERANAN MODERASI GENDER DALAM PERKAITAN ANTARA
FAKTOR IBU DAN KONTEKSTUAL DENGAN PENYESUAIAN DALAM
KALANGAN REMAJA DI MASHHAD, IRAN**

Oleh

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Dalam dekad kini perceraian telah menjadi perkara biasa. Ia adalah krisis kehidupan bagi hampir semua keluarga yang mengalaminya. Bilangan keluarga bercerai yang tinggi beberapa dekad yang lalu telah mencetuskan banyak tumpuan terhadap kesan perceraian. Perhubungan antara faktor ibu dan kontekstual dengan penyesuaian remaja dalam keluarga cerai telah diwujudkan. Walau bagaimanapun, banyak lagi yang perlu difahami tentang faktor-faktor yang memoderasi hubungan ini. Ia kurang mendapat perhatian di Iran. Bagi menangani kekurangan ini, kajian ini telah dijalankan untuk mengkaji peranan moderasi gender dalam perkaitan antara faktor ibu dan kontekstual dengan penyesuaian dalam kalangan remaja daripada keluarga

cerai. Oleh itu, kajian ini adalah penting dan perlu. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan peranan moderasi gender dalam perhubungan antara faktor ibu (distres ibu, kesukaran ekonomi) dan kontekstual (konflik ibu bapa pasca penceraian, perhubungan ibu bapa-anak) dengan penyesuaian remaja (estim diri, delinkuensi dan pencapaian akademik) dalam keluarga bercerai di Mashad, Iran.

Kajian ini adalah kajian kuantitatif dan menggunakan reka bentuk kajian korelasi. Responden kajian terdiri daripada 800 pelajar sekolah tinggi lelaki dan perempuan daripada keluarga bercerai yang berumur antara 15 dan 18 tahun dan ibu mereka dikenalpasti melalui teknik persampelan kebarangkalian berkadar mengikut saiz.

Data dikumpul menggunakan borang soal selidik tabdir sendiri. Borang soal selidik skala terdiri daripada *Centre for Epidemiology Studies Depression Scale (CES-D)*, *Economic Hardship Questionnaire*, *Post-divorce Parental Conflict Scale*, *Parent-Adolescent Relationship Scale*, *Self-Esteem Scale*, dan *Youth Self-Report Scale*. Pencapaian akademik diukur berdasarkan CGPA pelajar. Kesemua instrumen yang digunakan dalam kajian ini mempunyai kebolehpercayaan yang tinggi. Statistik diskriptif, bivariat dan multivariat digunakan dalam analisis data.

Dapatan analisis korelasi Pearson menunjukkan bahawa faktor ibu (distres ibu, kesukaran ekonomi) dan kontekstual (konflik ibu bapa pasca-penceraian, perhubungan ibu bapa) mempunyai signifikan berkaitan dengan penyesuaian remaja (estim diri, delinkuensi dan pencapaian akademik). Hasil ujian-t menunjukkan bahawa responden lelaki mempunyai estim diri dan pencapaian akademik yang lebih rendah dan delinkuensi yang lebih tinggi serta signifikan berbanding responden

perempuan. Analisis regresi hirarki menunjukkan bahawa konflik ibu bapa pasca-perceraian, tekanan emosi ibu, kesukaran ekonomi dan perhubungan ibu bapa-anak adalah peramal signifikan estim diri, delinkuensi, dan pencapaian akademik. Hubungan ibu bapa-anak muncul sebagai peramal paling kuat kepada estim diri, delinkuensi dan pencapaian akademik dalam kalangan remaja dari keluarga bercerai.

Dapatan kajian mendedahkan bahawa gender remaja memoderasi perkaitan antara kesukaran ekonomi dan perhubungan ibu bapa-anak dengan delinkuensi remaja. Remaja lelaki mempunyai tahap delinkuensi yang lebih tinggi berbanding remaja perempuan apabila tahap kesukaran ekonomi adalah tinggi dan kualiti perhubungan dengan ibu yang rendah. Gender juga memoderasi hubungan antara tekanan emosi ibu dan perhubungan ibu bapa-anak dengan pencapaian akademik. Remaja lelaki mempunyai tahap pencapaian akademik yang lebih rendah berbanding dengan remaja perempuan apabila ibu mereka mengalami tekanan emosi yang tinggi dan kualiti hubungan dengan ibu mereka yang rendah.

Dapatan kajian ini mengengahkan kepentingan konteks keluarga dalam meningkatkan estim diri dan pencapaian akademik, dan mencegah delinkuensi pelajar sekolah tinggi di Mashhad-Iran. Jenis hubungan antara variabel bebas dan penyesuaian remaja memberi implikasi bahawa dalam keluarga bercerai, estim diri dan pencapaian akademik remaja dapat ditingkatkan dan delinkuensi boleh dikurangkan jika remaja tidak mengalami konflik ibu bapa, tekanan emosi ibu, dan kesukaran ekonomi yang berterusan selepas bercerai. Kemesraan yang tinggi oleh ibu mungkin mempunyai kesan berfaedah terhadap penyesuaian remaja dalam keluarga bercerai. Kajian ini memaklumkan ibu bapa tentang bagaimana tingkah laku

perceraian menyumbang kepada penyesuaian remaja. Maklumat ini dapat membantu ibu bapa memantau tingkah laku mereka selepas bercerai untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan anak remaja mereka. Kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa gender remaja adalah sumber kebolehubahan yang penting untuk dipertimbangkan dalam perancangan, pelaksanaan dan penilaian program bagi remaja dari keluarga cerai. Dapatan kajian ini secara khusus menyokong hipotesis bahawa lelaki adalah lebih mudah terdedah berbanding dengan perempuan kepada faktor ibu dan kontekstual. Dapatan kajian ini menekankan keperluan untuk terus sensitif dengan isu gender dalam penilaian dan rawatan psikopatologi kanak-kanak dan keluarga.

Hasil kajian ini mempunyai cadangan yang signifikan bagi kajian dan amalan masa depan. Kajian ini adalah dijalankan dalam kalangan remaja dari keluarga bercerai di Mashhad, Iran. Oleh itu, untuk membuat anggapan umum dapatan kajian terhadap populasi lain; adalah dicadangkan kajian yang sama dijalankan bagi kawasan lain dalam negara dan dengan ciri-ciri demografi yang lain. Kajian ini mengkaji gender remaja sebagai pembolehubah moderator. Bagaimanapun, masih terdapat banyak pembolehubah lain, seperti tempoh perceraian ibu bapa, pendidikan ibu bapa dan status pekerjaan dimana boleh dijadikan sebagai pembolehubah moderator yang boleh dikaji dalam kajian akan datang. Kajian ini member fokus ke pada remaja yang berumur antara 15 dan 18 tahun. Adalah dicadangkan kajian masa depan perlu meroka remaja yang lebih muda.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 16 August 2012 to conduct the final examination of Nooshin Sabour Esmaeili on her thesis entitled “Moderating role of gender in relationships between personal, maternal, and contextual factors with adjustment among adolescents in Mashhad, Iran” in accordance with the Universities and University colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the University Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the relevant degree.

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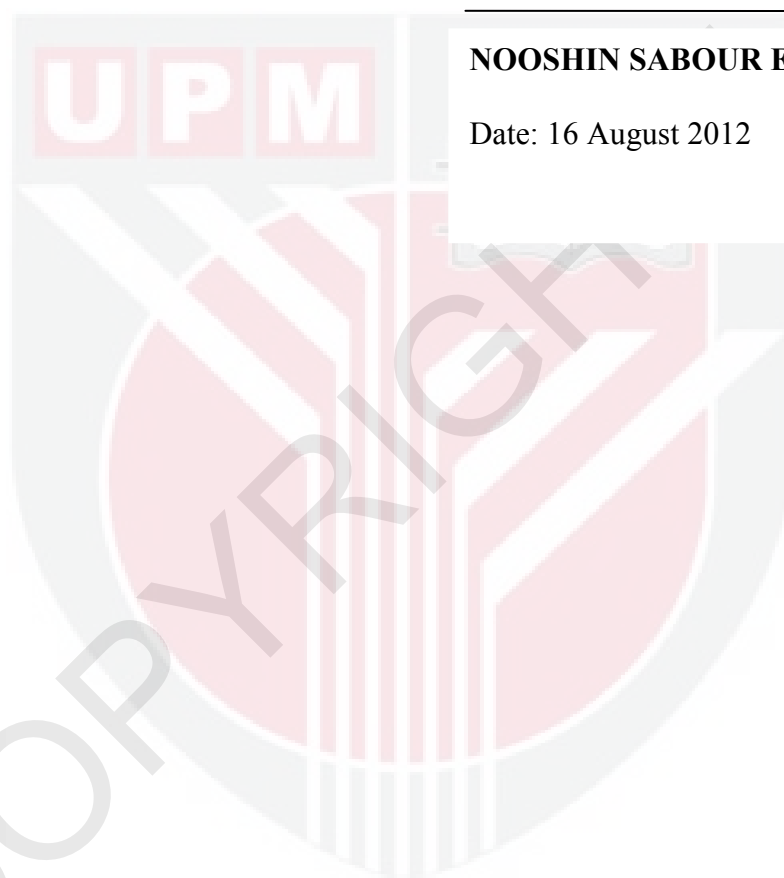
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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not currently, submitted for any other degree at University Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.



NOOSHIN SABOUR ESMAEILI

Date: 16 August 2012

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