



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**PREDICTORS OF LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG IRANIAN UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS IN MALYSIAN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES**

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FEM 2014 3



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UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN MALAYSIAN PRIVATE
UNIVERSITIES**

By

RAZIEH TADAYON NABAVI

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

April 2014

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my best companion in life, Mohammad;
to my beloved parents to whom I owe my everything;
and to my clever kids, Hanieh and Alireza.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

**PREDICTORS OF LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG IRANIAN
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN MALAYSIAN PRIVAT UNIVERSITIES**

By

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April 2014

Chairman: Sa'odah Binti Ahmad, PhD
Faculty: Human Ecology

Throughout the ages, education has often been considered the fruits of a good life and happiness, a life that is well lived (Arani & Abbasi, 2008). In recent years, many young people have gone abroad to study and they have to live at least temporarily in new countries that are not the same as their home. Some studies have shown that many indicators can affect these students' life satisfaction. Thus, the aim of this study was to determine the predictors of life satisfaction among Iranian undergraduates who are studying in Malaysian private universities. A total of 361 undergraduates who are studying in three universities (Multimedia University, University College Sedaya International, and Asia Pacific University of Malaysia) were identified as respondents of this study by using Multi-Stage random sampling technique. Data were collected through a survey technique using self-administered questionnaire. In this study, each respondent's social support, adjustment, loneliness, career readiness, and life satisfaction were measured by the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS; Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988), the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ; Baker, Siryk, & Services, 1999), the revised Loneliness Scale University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA; D. Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980), the Career Factor Inventory (CFI; Chartrand, Robbins, Morrill, & Boggs, 1990), and The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) respectively. Data were analyzed using the descriptive and bivariate statistics such as, Pearson's correlation, Independent t-test and Multiple Regressions. The results of the study showed that the Iranian undergraduates in Malaysia were moderately satisfied with their life. Findings from Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation analyses revealed that social support, adjustment, academic achievement, and parent's income were positively related with life satisfaction, while there was a negative correlation between loneliness and life satisfaction. Independent t-test analysis revealed that there was no significant difference in life satisfaction among male and female Iranian undergraduates.

Furthermore, the results of the multiple regression analyses indicated that social support emerged as the strongest unique predictor of life satisfaction, followed by academic achievement, and adjustment. A total of 44.8% of the variability in life satisfaction could be predicted by social support, academic achievement, and adjustment. The results also indicated that social support significantly mediated the effect of loneliness on life satisfaction. Theoretically, the findings may shed light on the role of social support in predicting undergraduates' life satisfaction particularly for Iranian undergraduates who are studying abroad. From a practical perspective, the findings may imply that any effort to enhance life satisfaction for undergraduates studying abroad would be more effective if the relevant authorities such as the Iranian Embassy or the university take initiative in organizing social support and academic achievement program for them.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Sarjana Sains

**PERAMAL BAGI KEPUASAN HIDUP DALAM KALANGAN MAHASISWA
IRAN DI UNIVERSITI SWASTA MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Pendidikan sentiasa dianggap sebagai sumber utama bagi mendapatkan kehidupan yang baik, kesenangan dan kebahagiaan. Ramai orang muda berhijrah ke luar negara untuk menyambung pelajaran dan mereka perlu menetap buat sementara waktu di negara baharu yang tidak sama seperti negara asal mereka. Kajian lepas mendapati banyak faktor yang boleh mempengaruhi kepuasan hidup bagi pelajar-pelajar ini. Oleh itu, tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan peramal bagi kepuasan hidup mahasiswa Iran yang sedang menyambung pelajaran di universiti swasta Malaysia. Sejumlah 361 mahasiswa dari pada tiga universiti (Universiti Multimedia, Kolej Universiti Antarabangsa Sedaya, dan Universiti Asia Pasifik Malaysia) telah dikenalpasti sebagai responden bagi kajian ini dengan menggunakan teknik persampelan rawak pelbagai peringkat. Data telah dikumpul menerusi teknik tinjauan borang kaji selidik yang ditadbir sendiri. Oleh responden, dalam kajian ini, menggunakan sokongan sosial, penyesuaian, kesunyian, kesediaan dalam kerjaya dan kepuasan hidup responden telah diukur dengan Skala Multidimensi bagi Persepsi Sokongan Sosial (MSPSS; Zimet et al., 1988), Borang Kaji Selidik Adaptasi Pelajar di Kolej (SACQ; Baker et al., 1999), Skala Kesunyian Universiti California, Los Angeles, yang telah disemak semula (UCLA; D. Russell et al., 1980), Inventori Faktor Kerjaya (CFI; Chartrand et al., 1990), dan Skala Kepuasan dengan Kehidupan (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985). Data telah dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan bivariat seperti Korelasi Pearson dan Regresi Pelbagai. Hasil kajian mendapati, mahasiswa Iran di Malaysia mempunyai kepuasan hidup yang sederhana. Dapatan daripada analisis Korelasi Pearson Product-Moment menunjukkan sokongan sosial, penyesuaian, pencapaian akademik dan pendapatan ibu bapa adalah berkait secara positif dan signifikan dengan kepuasan hidup manakala terdapat korelasi negatif di antara kesunyian dan kepuasan hidup. Hasil ujiant menunjukkan tiada perbezaan

yang signifikan dalam kepuasan hidup antara mahasiswa lelaki dan perempuan. Hasil daripada analisis regresi pelbagai pula menunjukkan sokongan sosial adalah peramal unik yang paling kuat bagi kepuasan hidup diikuti dengan pencapaian akademik dan penyesuaian. Sejumlah 44.8% kebolehubahan dalam kepuasan hidup boleh diramalkan melalui sokongan sosial, pencapaian akademik dan penyesuaian. Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan sokongan sosial secara signifikannya mengantara kesan kesunyian ke atas kepuasan hidup. Secara teorinya, hasil kajian ini dapat memberi pencerahan mengenai peranan sokongan sosial dalam meramal kepuasan hidup, terutamanya bagi mahasiswa Iran yang belajar di luar negara. Dari perspektif praktikal, hasil kajian ini memberi gambaran bahawa sebarang usaha bagi meningkatkan kepuasan hidup mahasiswa Iran yang belajar di luar negara akan lebih efektif sekiranya autoriti berkaitan seperti Kedutaan Iran atau pihak universiti mengambil inisiatif dalam menganjurkan program sokongan sosial dan pencapaian akademik untuk mereka.



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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 17 of April 2014 to conduct the final examination of Razieh Tadayon Nabavi on her thesis entitled " Predictors of Life Satisfaction among Iranian Undergraduate Students in Malaysian Private Universities" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Science.

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DECLARATION

Declaration by graduate student

I hereby confirm that:

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- this thesis has not been submitted previously or concurrently for any other degree at any other institutions;
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