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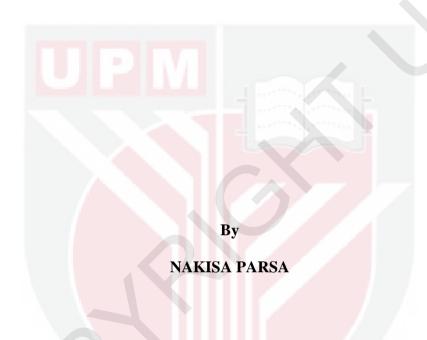
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARENTAL ATTACHMENT, INTERPARENTAL CONFLICT, ANXIETY IN SOCIAL SKILL PERFORMANCE, AND SELF-EFFICACY AMONG LATE ADOLESCENTS IN HAMADAN, IRAN

NAKISA PARSA

FEM 2014 17



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

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, Zahra Mehraban and Seyed Mohammad Ali Parsa, and siblings, Parisa, Pouria, and Bita, who always encouraged me to set high goals and believed that I could achieve them. They also taught me the value of hard work, commitment, and determination. The completion of this project would not have been possible without their unfailing love and emotional support.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in Fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARENTAL ATTACHMENT, INTERPARENTAL CONFLICT, ANXIETY IN SOCIAL SKILL PERFORMANCE, AND SELF-EFFICACY AMONG LATE ADOLESCENTS IN HAMADAN, IRAN

By

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January 2014

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Despite of, importance of self-efficacy in psychological and social well-being among adolescents, still there are students who suffer from low self-efficacy and consequently low academic performance. Therefore, it is important to examine factors influencing self-efficacy among adolescents. This study aims to determine the relationships between parental attachment, inter-parental conflict, anxiety to perform social skills and self-efficacy among late adolescents in Hamadan, Iran.

This quantitative study used a correlational research design. Participants of this study were 374 female and male University students aged between 17-19 years old. Participants were identified by probability proportional to size sampling. Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data. Instruments used to measure main variables of the study are General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE; 1995), Inventory qh" Rggt" cpf" Rctgpv" Cwcej o gpv" *KRRC="3;:;+." Vjg" Ejknftgpøu" Rgtegrvkqp" qh" Interparental Scale (CPIC; 1992), and Scale for Interpersonal Behavior (SIB; 1984). All the instruments were highly reliable. Descriptive, bi-variate and multivariate statistics were used in data analysis.

Rgctuqpøu"eqttgncvkqp"cpcn {uku"ujqygf"vjcv" oqvjgt"cvvcej ogpv"cpf"hcvjgt"cvvcej ogpv" were positively and inter-parental conflict and anxiety to perform social skills were negatively relatef" vq" cfqnguegpvøu" ugnh-efficacy. The Multiple Regression Analysis ujqygf" vjcv" oqvjgt" cvvcej ogpv." hcvjgt" cvvcej ogpv." ejknftgpøu" dktvj"qtfgt." hcvjgtøu" qeewrcvkqp." oqvjgtøu" gfwecvkqp" cpf" oqvjgtøu" cig" ygtg" ukipkhkecpv" eqpvtkdutors to self-ghhkece {0" Oqvjgt"cvvcej ogpv"gogtigf"cu"vjg"uvtqpiguv"rtgfkevqt"qh"cfqnguegpvøu" self-efficacy (Beta=.26, p<0.05). The result of study also shows that anxiety to perform social skills partially mediates the relationships between mother attachment and inter-parental conflict with self-efficacy among respondents.

The results of the present study highlighted the importance of maternal and paternal factors in enhancing self-efficacy among late adolescent students in Hamadan-Iran. However, as expected, the contributions of anxiety to perform social skills as a mediator reduce the indirect relationships between parental attachment and self-

efficacy among respondents. The nature of anxiety to perform social skills as a mediator implied that self-efficacy of adolescents can be improved if adolescents do not experience insecurity and anxiety. Therefore, adolescents need to be equipped with appropriate skills to handle anxiety in performing social skill.



Abstrak tesis ini disediakan untuk Senat di Universiti Putra Malaysia untuk memenuhi keperluan Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

PERKAITAN DI ANTARA PERAPATAN IBU BAPA, KONFLIK ANTARA IBU BAPA, KERISAUAN DALAM PERLAKSANAAN KEMAHIRAN SOSIAL DAN EFIKASI DIRI DALAM KALANGAN REMAJA AKHIR DI HAMADAN, IRAN

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Walaupun efikasi diri penting dalam kesejahteraan psikologi dan sosial dalam kalangan remaja, masih terdapat pelajar yang mengalami efikasi diri yang rendah dan seterusnya prestasi akademik yang rendah. Oleh itu, adalah sangat penting untuk memeriksa faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi efikasi diri remaja. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan perkaitan di antara perapatan ibu bapa, konflik antara ibu bapa, kerisuan melaksanakan kemahiran sosial dan efikasi diri dalam kalangan remaja di Hamadan, Iran.

Kajian kuantitatif ini menggunakan rekabentuk kajian korelasi. Peserta yang terlibat dalam kajian ini adalah 374 pelajar kolej lelaki dan perempuan yang berusia 17-19 tahun. Peserta dipilih menggunakan persampelan kebarangkalian berkadar mengikut saiz. Instrumen yang digunakan untuk mengukur angkubah utama adalah *General Self-Efficacy Scale* (GSE; 1995), *Inventory of Peer and Parent Attachment* (IPPA; 1989), *The Children's Perception of Inter-parental Scale* (CPIC; 1992), and *Scale for Interpersonal Behavior* (SIB; 1984). Semua instrumen mempunyai kebolehpercayaan yang tinggi. Statistik diskriptif, bivariat dan multivariat digunakan dalam menganalisis data.

Analisis korelasi Pearson menunjukkan perapatan ibu dan bapa mempunyai perkaitan positif dan konflik antara ibu bapa dan kerisauan melaksanakan kemahiran sosial mempunyai perkaitan negatif dengan efikasi diri. Analisis regresi berganda menunjukan pekerjaan bapa, pendidikan ibu, susunan kelahiran anak-anak, umur ibu, perapatan dengan kedua-dua ibu dan bapa adalah penyumbang signifikan kepada efikasi diri. Perapatan remaja dengan ibu muncul sebagai prediktor paling kuat bagi efikasi diri remaja (Beta=0.26, p<0.05). Keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kerisauan melaksanakan kemahiran sosial merupakan pengantara separa bagi perkaitan di antara perapatan hubungan ibu dan konflik antara ibu bapa dengan efikasi diri remaja.

Keputusan kajian menunjukkan pentingnya faktor ibu dan bapa bagi meningkatkan efikasi diri dalam kalangan remaja akhir di Hamadan-Iran. Walaubagaimanapun,

seperti dijangkakan, sumbangan kerisauan melaksanakan kemahiran sosial sebagai mediator mengurangkan hubungan tidak langsung antara perapatan ibu bapa dan efikasi diri dalam kalangan responden. Sifat kerisauan melaksanakan kemahiran sosial sebagai mediator memberi implikasi bahawa efikasi diri remaja boleh dipertingkatkan jika remaja tidak mengalami kerisauan dan perasaan tidak selamat. Oleh itu, remaja perlu dilengkapkan dengan kemahiran bersesuaian untuk kerisauan melaksanakan kemahiran sosial.



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This thesis submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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DECLARATION

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- The research conducted and the writing of this thesis was under our supervision;
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LIST OF ABBRIVATIONS

EDA Exploratory Data Analysis

GSE General Self-efficacy

IPPA Inventory of Parental and Peer Attachment

CPIC Ejknftgpøu"Rgtegrvkqp"qh"Kpvgt-parental Conflict

SIB The Scale for Interpersonal Behavior

ENF Expression of Negative Feelings

EPL Expression of/and dealing with Personal Limitation

IA Initiating Assertiveness

PA Positive Assertion

MLR Multiple Liner Regression

ReCPP Resource Center for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Self-efficacy is the personal perceived capability to accomplish specific tasks to achieve the desired results (Bandura, 1997; Ormrod, 2006). Self-efficacy is viewed an important bond between knowledge and capability and then act on information (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy is a major element for success in the life span and psychological, physical and social health (Bandura, 1994). The concept of self-efficacy has been expressed in society and the literatures. Steinberg (1999) defined it as a belief in personal's act that has an influence on the environment. Person's experiences of mastery in the past built the sense of self-efficacy (Baldwin et al., 2006; Bandura, 1977a; Bandura 1997; Caprara et al., 2006; Ferla et al., 2008). Self-efficacy is a main element of Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT).

Self-efficacy beliefs illuminate how people think, behave and feel (Bandura, 1994). In addition, it has impact on various health outcomes (Bandura, 1997; Ferla et al., 2008). During adolescence, self-awareness of ability is helpful to make a plan and pursue till achieve the goals (Pajares & Schunk, 2002; Choi, 2003). Therefore adolescents with high sense of self-efficacy make a plan and stick to it. They do not think about failure and in case it happened they improve their skills and knowledge (Luthanes et al., 2006). They show less stress in case of difficulties and challenging tasks and have positive coping mechanisms. On the other hands, adolescents with low self-efficacy have weak ambitions and low commitment to the goals they choose to follow (Langendorfer et al., 2006), hesitate about their abilities, and focus on obstacles, personal incompetence and negative results (Bandura, 1986, 1977a). According to Scott and Dearing (2012), hesitate about capability to contact with others, related to negative social relationships and that may cause depression and anxiety to perform social skills.

Late adolescence is a time of transition between puberty and legal adulthood (Macmillan Dictionary, 1981). Late adolescence is the final stage of emotional and physical growth as adolescent passed into adulthood. These slow changes of behavior and thinking during early to late adolescent, prepare them for independency. This late stage of adolescent development happens between ages of 17 to 22 years old (Lahtimen, 2007). According to Erikson's stage of development, adolescence is referring to age between 13 to 19 years old. However this varies in different culture even in the same country. Considering factors such as social, physical, cognitive, moral, emotional and behavioral development as well as age, adolescent can be defined in many other ways. Clark-Lempers et al. (1991) and ReCPP (2003) defined this age range into early adolescents (ages 11 to 13) middle adolescents (ages 14 to 16) and late adolescents (ages 17-19). Clark-Lempers et al. (1991) stated that during early and middle adolescence, individual receive a variety of support from their parents compared to late adolescents. One feature of this alteration is that, late adolescents do not look at their parents as their primary basis of support when compared to children (Clark et al., 1991; Davis, 2002). During late stage of adolescence, individuals make an important vocational and personal decision for themselves and prepare for the life choices and responsibilities they will assume during their adult lives. However, parents still function as significant sources of guidance and support, even for independent adolescents (Bowlby, 1969); and during the process of individuation they need for connectedness with the parent (Clark et al., 1991).

During late adolescence, individuals prepare themselves for the life choices and responsibilities they will assume during their adult lives. Social cognitive theory emphasize that in the development of personality, observational learning and social experience play an important role. This theory claims that human functioning are the outcomes of relations among individual (e.g., emotions, cognitions) behaviors, and environmental factors. All these factors have bidirectional affects and affected on each other (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Comparing with social cognitive theory, attachment theory explains personality formation and development in the context of one's continuing close, warmth relationships with parents (Lopez & Brennan, 2000). Attachment is defined as an emotional bond experienced with an individual who is perceived as a source of security and who provides a secure base from which to explore one's environment (Bowlby, 1979). Psychosocial development theory, emphasized that adolescent must complete successfully developmental task for this stage to achieve ego identity (e.g. the sense of self, independent form parents). Ego identity is a sense of self that develop within social interaction. According to Erikson (1968), ego identity changes through new experience due to daily relationships with others.

Adolescent's self-efficacy development is influenced by social factors such as, families, school, peers and economic condition (Bandura, 1986). There are four sources that help to develop the sense of self-efficacy believes during life times, which are mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and emotional arousal (Bandura, 1997).

Family is viewed as an initial source of self-efficacy and known as a primary source for their children and adolescent's well-being (Sorkhabi, 2005). According to Corcoran and Mallinckrodt (2000), the child-parent interaction established a person's self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) states that social guidance is one of the ways to build up adolescent's efficacy beliefs. Exclusively, when parents join in behaviors that improve self-confidence in their children's abilities, it encourages them to put more effort to succeed. On the contrary, children will learn less successful behaviors and beliefs when parents restrict or undermine their children's confidence in their abilities. Support and encourage parents are more likely to foster trust, competencies and self-efficacy beliefs in children and provide diverse and multiple opportunities for mastery experience. Such beliefs of competence are necessary as children transition to different stages of development and learn to cope with the stress entailed in these stages.

Inter-parental conflict is related to parents' withdrawal and negative response to their children's need and reduced parental physical and psychological availability (Cummings & Davies, 1994). A growing body of evidence (Bandura, 1997; Cui et al., 2005; Cummings & Davies, 1994; Fosco & Grych 2008; Grych et al., 1992) argued that parental conflict has possibilities to infer with child and adolescence development such as conflict between parents may provide a constant pressure that

damages modify and erode children's self-efficacy. In social modeling, usually adolescent imitate their parents' behavior to make a pattern of conflictive behavior (Bandura, 1997; Pryor & Pattison, 2007). Later on, this pattern affects on late adolescents quality of their social relationships and psychological well-being (Van Doorn et al., 2007).

Furthermore, parents who are not interested in their children activities and disapproved their work will reduce instructional techniques and vicarious learning that create knowledge and experience in adolescent, may cause anxiety to perform social skills and damage their children's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Kolb & Griffith, 2009). Therefore, the perceived lack of skill to perform a specific task and control over difficult situation, will produce anxiety to perform and reduce self-efficacy in adolescent. In turn, low self-efficacy may lead to anxiety to perform social skills (Endler et al., 2001; Maddux, 1991). Anxiety to perform social skills in adolescent affects on social acceptance, independence. Adolescents with low skills avoid social activities and new experience and deny their anxiety and fears by involving in risky behaviors and drug experiment (Rynn el at., 2012).

Engels et al. (2001) and Ross and Fuertes (2010) revealed anxiety to perform social skills as a mediator in the relationship between parental attachment and adolescent's well being. They emphasize that central aspect of adolescent's lives is relationship with other people. The source of the most intense emotions in people's live depending on maintenance, development and closure of interpersonal relationships. When things go badly one's feel a great source of distress and grief (Bowlby, 1982) and when things go well one's feel a great source of happiness and joy. These feeling have direct and indirect affect on one's self-efficacy. Davis (2009) found that those who were anxious to perform in social had significantly more negative self-referent cognitions than those who were not. Hassanzadeh, Ebrahimi and Mahdinejad's (2012) revealed that student's anxiety during exam decreased their performance and length of time can add more anxiety which reduce their belief in ability and reduce academic success. Turner, Beidel, and Larkin (1986) found a similar pattern of results in both a clinical and nonclinical adult sample. In their study, people who are anxious to perform in social situation also exhibited more negative self-referent cognitions than those who were not. Leary and Atherton (1986) made a specific connection between self-efficacy and anxiety to perform in social among adults by proposing the concept of "self presentation efficacy expectancy" (p.257). They describe this concept as the probability of behaving in a certain intended manner in order to convey an intended impression. They suggest that the less the anxiety to perform in social situation the more positive the beliefs or expectancies one will experience. In other words, if a person does not have anxiety to perform in social she or he can correctly perform a social situation, high anxiety levels will decrease the probability of competently handling the situation which will reduce the self-efficacy to repeat the same action. Smari et al (2001) examined 184 adolescents between the ages of 14 and 15 years to determine the relationship between perceived social competence and social anxiety. They found that anxiety to perform in social is negatively correlated with beliefs in social competence, or beliefs in one's ability to competently perform in a social situation. Nelson and Knight's (2010) study showed that students can avoid negative outcomes of anxiety by thinking of past achievements, which will build courage and endurance, and in turn will increase their self-efficacy.

Some studies examined anxiety to perform social skills in Iranian student and have found relation between parenting and anxiety to perform social skills in adolescent especially among high risk students (Irvine et al., 1999; Nabors et al., 2004; Tehrani Doost et al., 2007), but fewer investigation have been conducted on normal population (Arabgol et al., 2005; O'Hearn et al., 2002; Rahimi et at., 1999; Derakhshani et al., 2006). Khodarahimi (2010) indicates negative relationship between general self-efficacy and anxiety in Iranian adolescent. He revealed that adolescent with high levels of sense of self-efficacy experience less worry and anxiety to perform in social situation.

Youth are the largest group in Iranian history (Statistical Center of Iran, 2010). More than 35 percent of Iran's populations are between 15-29 years old (Egel & Salehi-Isfahani, 2010; Ghafari & Ghasemi, 2007). In Iran, 22% of students are suffering from personal (e.g., low self-efficacy), social, economical, and family problem (Ghasemi, 2010; Houshmand & Morshedian, 2013). In the nationwide project within medical universities in Iran (Jahani-Hashemi et al 2004; Sadeghian & Heidarian-Pour, 2009; Shariati et al., 2002), Hamadan Medical Sciences University have shown the second largest amount (33.8%) of students with low and moderate mental, social and adjustment problem after medical students of Iran University of Medical Sciences (42.6%) in Iran (Sadeghian & Heidarian-Pour, 2009). Anxiety, depression and stress are few factors that effects on student's performance and reduce their selfesteem and self-efficacy which may cause maladjustment in University (Jahani-Hashemi et al., 2004; Sadeghian & Heidarian-Pour, 2009; Shariati et al., 2002). According to previous studies (Kenny, 1987; Ross & Fuertes) leaving home to university is the one of the stressful situation for students. Medical student have shown more problems compared to other student because of their training, material of study, work with patients and job insecurity (Backovic et al., 2012). Increasing number of students admitted to counseling center, indicates their social and cultural development (ask for help is the sign of maturity) on the other hands indicate increasing of problems which will effects on adolescent self-efficacy and their academic performance. Hamadan is the capital and largest city in Hamadan state which is province in West –Iran.

In summary, many factors are associated with adolescents' self-efficacy such as parental attachment, inter-parental conflict, and anxiety to performance. The fact of low self-efficacy is a main concern in educational domain. Thus, issues determining self-efficacy should be identified for prevention and intervention actions related to self-efficacy among adolescents in Iran. Therefore, this study examined the relationships between parental attachment, inter-parental conflict, anxiety to perform social skills and self-efficacy among adolescents in Hamadan, Iran.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Adolescents with low self-efficacy seem to experience greater adjustment problem in University (Zarafshani, 2008). Increasing rate of abnormal behaviors and low academic orientation seems to signify a cry off in quality of low self-efficacy among college students in Iran (Mazaheri et al., 2011; Sorkhabi, 2005). Enter to university brings a significant change in adolescent's social, family, economic status and contribute to self-efficacy Ghasemi (2010) and Neghabi and Rafiee (2013) indicated that 22% of students in Iran suffer personal (e.g., low self-efficacy) and family

problem. Previous study (Sadeghian & Heidarian, 2009) found a growing number of psychological problems among college students compared to those who do not pursue college education. Sadeghian and Heidarian (2009) revealed that stress and anxiety among medical student in Hamadan University reduce student ability to learn which cause low self-belief and poor academic achievement Thus, it is important to examine factors that may affect self-efficacy among late adolescent in Iran. Separated from family, live with strangers, increase courses and material to study, competition, family economic and income problems, peer and relationship problems, rule and regulation are some of the problem students are facing with. These problems become a serious concern for many families and government (Houshmand & Morshedian, 2013). Parenting and personal factors such as low self-efficacy are two factors that effect on low achievement (Fallon & Illinois, 2010; Speight, 2009). According to Evans et al. (2005) about one-third of adolescent suffer from psychological problems and 70% to 80% of them do not received appropriate treatments. Factors such as family, peer, social, economic and educational system have been found to affect adolescents' low self-efficacy (Gharaei et al., 2003).

Low self-efficacy has been associated with low academic achievement, depression, anxiety, helplessness and linked to negative effects in social, emotional relationships (Bandura, 1997; Langendorfer et al., 2006; Mazaheri et al., 2011; Moura et al., 2010; Scholz et al., 2002). Adolescent effectiveness in the social world is largely dependent upon experiences in personal relationships and belief in self (Ellefsen & Beran, 2007; Fallon & Illinois, 2010; Speight, 2009). In the study by Zarafshani (2008) on the perceived self-efficacy of Iranian student of agriculture has shown different level of self-efficacy among different genders. Female student have less efficacious than male. Further he revealed that female student have less hope to fine a job after graduation than male peers this might be caused by personal epistemologies, educational practices, or cultural expectations (Zekeri, 2004; Zeldin & Pajares, 2000).

For late adolescents, leaving home is stressful situation (Ainsworth et al., 1978) and followed by many changes in family and social expectation, social relationships, job seeking, peer and romantic relationship and so on. In the study by Sadeghian and Heidarian-pour (2009) in stressor factors and mental health status among students of Hamadan University of medical sciences, claimed that medical student are more likely to be under the stress and anxiety which affects their study, physical and mental health as well as low self-efficacy. To compare with other medical schools in Iran, Hamadan medical students' claimed that most of their problems are because of living status and being away from family (Sadeghian & Heidarian-pour, 2009). Family health, job insecurity, work at the hospital and no motivation, peer and romantic relational problems, religious activities, sexual problems, rule and regulations, family and marital status were the other stressor factor among student in other Universities (Esfandiari, 2001; Ashkani, 1995).

Families and home environments are the main source of competence and self-efficacy beliefs in children and adolescents (Abdi et al., 2012). Adolescent constructs his/her internal working models of what he or she can expect about self based on their relationships with first caregiver especially parents (Bowlby, 1982). Insecure parental attachment and inter-parental conflict are related to parents' withdrawal, reduced parental physical and psychological availability and negative response of their children and adolescent needs (Cummings & Davies, 1994). A certain level of

emotional stimulation can create an energizing feeling that can contribute to strong performances while anxiety can undermine it. To promote self-efficacy, it is important to reduce stressful situations and lower anxiety surrounding events like examinations or presentations. Research by Abdi et al. (2012) showed that anxiety about the test reduce their belief of performing and decrease in test performance in college students.

As mentioned above, Sadeghian and Heidarian-pour (2009), Mazaheri et al. (2011) and Zarafshani (2008) identified the variables relating to mental and psychological problems and low self-efficacy. The present researcher could not locate any available research n Iran that first, analyzed mother attachment, father attachment, interparental conflict and anxiety to perform social skills as determinants of self-efficacy. Second, past research did not look at anxiety to perform social skills as the mediator in self-efficacy. Self-efficacy determine how people think, behave and feel bout themselves (Bandura, 1994). In addition, it has impact on various health outcomes (Bandura, 1997). Abdi et al. (2012) and Barrows et al. (2013) revealed that a student's level of self-efficacy directly impacts their academic achievement. Thus, it is important to study the factors that impacts on late adolescent's self-efficacy, which contribute to success and health outcomes. This study fills the gap in literature in area and provides empirical evidence on the role of anxiety to perform social skills between independents variable of parental attachment and inter-parental conflict with dependent variable of self-efficacy among adolescent in Hamadan. Based on the problem discussed, the study addressed the following questions:

- 1. To what extent parental attachment (mother attachment & father attachment), inter-parental conflicts, and anxiety to perform social skills influence self-efficacy in late adolescents?
- 2. To what extent parental attachment, inter-parental conflicts, anxiety to perform social skills are related to self-efficacy in late adolescents?
- 3. What are the unique predictors of self-efficacy?
- 4. To what extent anxiety to perform social skills mediate the relationships between parental attachment, inter-parental conflict and self-efficacy among adolescents?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study aimed to examine the relationships between parental attachment, interparental conflict, anxiety to perform social skills and self-efficacy among late adolescents in Hamadan-Iran. This study will provide useful information for parents, educators, counselors, and psychologist. It would benefit future research and policymakers in this area.

The findings of this study are significant to researchers due to new information to the body of existing knowledge in this field. This study is based on scientific research and gives helpful information for family consultants, educational planning and development, based on that educators can help student to boost up their self-efficacy and succeed in their study, job and future relationships. Educators could consider self-efficacy while planning essential skills, such as problem solving, interpersonal and communication. People with high self-efficacy are more mutually independent and function successfully in the society. Improve self-efficacy can help student's

adjustment and do well in many diverse situations. With the result of this study educators can help children to raise up their self-efficacy by use peer model, plan affordable challenging tasks, teach specific learning strategies, reinforce effort and correct strategy.

This study is also important to practitioners in order to help clients. If family experiences a lot of conflict, it will increase negative social skills. It is important that parents educate the possible effects of these conflicts on their adolescents.

This study is significant for counselor at school, by not only concentrate on the problem (lack of social skills or the anxiety to perform social skills) but treat the roots such as attachment to parents, there is many element that involve in the adolescent-parent relationships such as understanding, trust counselor can help the adolescent and parents to improve attachment and develop the social skills.

As reviewed previous research, the subjects of parental attachment, inter-parental conflict with mediating of anxiety to perform social skills and their outcomes on adolescent's self-efficacy has never been studied together which makes this study unique to fill the gap in this area. However, several studies have viewed these variables in different perspective and most of them in Western countries (Bilgin, 2011; Engles et al., 2001; Ross & Fuertes, 2011; Ribadeneira, 2006; Shaw, 2008). As Sadeghian and Heidarian-pour (2009) stated that due to Iranian culture express emotion, admit psychological problem and ask for help is still scarce. Therefore, it is important to investigate this issue in the Iranian perspective to provide more in-depth understanding on low self-efficacy among late adolescents especially on who to deal with inter-parental conflict within families.

The result of this study expected to help policy planner by using this information to make proper planning and programs to help enhance self-efficacy among late adolescents who will take position in society through forming their own family. The result of this research is helpful for future study to extend new scheme and find other factors that may be related to adolescent's self-efficacy. Also the finding of this study can be used in future research to compare self-efficacy in different age group such as early or middle adolescents in Iran. The outcome can contribute to understanding the importance of self-efficacy among adolescent for having healthier population and developing the country. It would help to fill the gap in existing research in Iran.

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 Main Objective

The main objective of this study is to explore the relationships between parental attachments, inter-parental conflict, anxiety to perform social skills and self-efficacy among late adolescent in Hamadan-Iran.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1. To describe personal (age, gender, ethnicity, birth order, child number, educational level, residential status) and family (parents' age, marital status, education, employment and income) backgrounds, parental attachment (mother

- attachment & father attachment), inter-parental conflict, anxiety to perform social skills and self-efficacy of the respondents.
- 2. To determine the relationships between parental attachment (mother attachment & father attachment), inter-parental conflict, anxiety to perform social skills and self-efficacy among late adolescents.
- 3. To determine unique predictors of self-efficacy among late adolescents.
- 4. To determine the mediation role of anxiety to perform social skills on the relationships between parental attachment (mother attachment & father attachment), and inter-parental conflict with self-efficacy among late adolescents.

1.5 Hypothesis of the Study

- H_a1: There is a significant relationship between mother attachment and self-efficacy among respondents.
- H_a2: There is a significant relationship between father attachment and self-efficacy among respondents.
- H_a3: There is a significant relationship between inter-parental conflict and self-efficacy among respondents.
- H_a4: There is a significant relationship between anxiety to perform social skills and self-efficacy among respondents.
- H_a5: The regression coefficients for all the selected independent variables are significant when regressed against adolescents' self-efficacy.
- H_a6: Anxiety to perform social skills mediates the relationship between mother attachment and self-efficacy among respondents.
- H_a7: Anxiety to perform social skills mediates the relationship between father attachment and self-efficacy among respondents
- H_a8: Anxiety to perform social skills mediates the relationship between interparental conflict and self-efficacy among respondents.

1.6 Theoretical Perspective

This study focuses on the relationship of parental attachment, inter-parental conflict, anxiety to perform social skills and self-efficacy among late adolescents. This study used three theories to explain the relationships between the main variables in the research. The main theory used to explain self-efficacy is the Social Cognitive Theory. The other theories that support the theoretical framework are attachment theory and Erikson psychosocial development theory.

1.6.1 Social Cognitive Theory

Self-efficacy is an important component of Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT) that hypothesizes the role of observational learning and social system in the development of personality and observe individuals are seen as their own personal agents of change (Bandura, 1986). The central part of this theory is personal efficacy beliefs, defined as the judgments of one's capabilities to arrange and perform path of action to a level of performance that over time affect individuals' lives (Bandura, 1977b, 1994).

According to Bandura (1989) three factors affects behavior development, namely, personal, environment and behavior. In Bandura's (1989) model of triadic reciprocal

determinism, all these factors have bidirectional affects and affected on each other. The personal-behavior factors (P-B) referred to relationships between thought, influence and action. Personal and cognitive such as, characteristics, expectations, and beliefs plays significant rule on person behaviors. In turn, behavior has an effect on thought pattern.

Environment-personal factor (E-P) refers to relationships between one's individuality with environment. Through social modeling and education one's belief, expectations and cognitive competencies is built. In addition, depending on one's physical qualities (race, age, gender, and pleasant appearance) one's received different responses. One's role and status also draw different social reactions. For example, adolescent who have aggressive behavior will draw different reactions from their peers.

Lastly, behavior-environment (B-E) refers to two way interaction between behavior and environment. One's behavior changes environment and in turn, different conditions aspect person to behave as desired. In the other word, individual in the certain situation must do the desired behavior to achieve the goals. Environment affects on frequency and intensity of the behavior, behavior also has an influence on the environment. However, environment can not influence till they active by proper behavior. For example, parents do not admire their adolescent until they do something worthy. Anxiety to perform as an interpersonal behavior factor (Engles et al., 2001; Ross & Fuertes 2010) may effects on self-efficacy. The degree of discomfort (felt anxiety or distress) associated with challenges at self-assertion in specific social situations (Arrindell & Van der End, 1985). Earlier studies have shown that the anxiety and performance in social skills have correlated with adolescents' social acceptance, global self-worth, coping behavior, psychosocial health (Arrindell et al., 1984). According to SCT people with anxiety arousal cannot manage threats experience. They see many parts of their environment as full of danger and they magnify the severity of possible threats and worry about things that rarely happen. Through this inefficacious thinking they distress themselves and impair their level of functioning. Anxiety arousal cause avoidance behavior as well as low perceives coping self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994).

Early personal efficacy or self-efficacy beliefs develop in the early experiences at home with one's parents (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura (1997), parents make the development of self-efficacy in their children by being receptive to communicative behavior and providing right moment for successful actions by creating better physical environment, varied mastery experiences and liberty for examination. These strategies continue to success in cognitive, social and linguistic growth.

Bandura (1994) proposed that there are four principal factors that influence self-efficacy: performance accomplishment, vicarious experience, symbolic experience, and emotional arousal. According to social cognitive theory mastery experiences is a powerful vehicle in people whose functioning is seriously damaged by intense anxiety and phobic self-protective reactions for instilling a robust sense of coping efficacy.

Parents who provide opportunities can gain mastery experiences in their children which contained of a person's efforts to achieve a goal. Self-efficacy can grow through vicarious experiences by role-modeling and observation parents, sibling and peer (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy also can grow or damage through symbolic experiences such as verbal support or disdain. Emotional arousal can decrease or increase self-efficacy. Bandura (1994) claimed that within four sources of self-efficacy performance accomplishment is the most powerful source and the development of mastery begins at the home with one's parents.

Parent's reaction to children's experiences construct positive or negative self-efficacy and parents who are not responsive to their children's needs could damage children's sense of self belief (Bandura, 1994). Thus, adolescent with high stage of inter-parental conflict in the family may develop lower sense of confidence and mastery experience, sequentially, may boost adolescent possibility for negative psychological health (Banyard & Cross, 2008; Cui et al., 2005). According to SCT, children learn behaviors and attitude through both vicarious and mastery experience. Adolescents within these social contexts have vicarious experience with parental conflict through their parent's relationship. In parental modeling, they observe and learn a number of attitudes and behaviors concerning social relations. Inter-parental conflict is one of the negative predictor of adolescent's low self-efficacy and general outcomes in adolescent (Burns & Dunlop, 2002; Segrin et al., 2005).

Intense parental conflict in the presence of children and poorly resolved parental conflict patterns are generally associated with more problematic intimate communication for young adults. Social cognitive theory explain that observing parental conflict have the same harmful to social and cognitive outcomes on adolescent as parental divorce. Theoretical research suggests that the role of self-efficacy and parent-adolescent interactions becomes more substantial when it operates in aversive environments (Usher & Pajares, 2008; Zimmerman, 2008).

Moreover, Bandura (1977) revealed that there is an equal relationship between behavioral, environmental, and cognitive influences. One's who observe others achieve desired results as a consequence of a specific action are probable to copy the action and do it again later. These responses from environment influence in one's expectances, behavior, belief and motivation to display certain behaviors. In the other hands, if behavior does not bring a desired result, one's are less probable to repeat this behavior again. Due to perceive failure in these situations the self-efficacy will reduce. In this situation, reciprocal system would build and perceived self-efficacy find a causal role in shaping behavior (Bandura, 1997).

As one's start relation with others, this process begins to clarify and they expand beliefs on own ability to achieve desire result from social relationships. Adolescent may experience different levels of anxiety that affect their performance, when connect with other people (Baker & Edelmann, 2002; Cartwright-Hatton et al., 2003). Anxiety will reduce their success in desired result and may receive negative response from others. This result may cause avoidance to interaction in similar situation which may increase anxiety and reduce their self-efficacy in the future (Bandura, 1997; Bandura et al., 2001. Therefore reciprocal cycle would put in the place.

In SCT mastery experience is prescribed as the principal means of personality change. Mastery experiences are structured in ways to build coping skills and instill beliefs that one can exercise control over potential threats. A low sense of efficacy to exercise control produces anxiety. Therefore, perceived self-efficacy has an effect to promote health. People choice of lifestyle can improve or impair health.

1.6.2 Attachment Theory

Attachment is an emotional connection with a person that provides a source of security to discover environment (Bowlby, 1979). According to Bowlby (1973) children, based upon first relationship with caregivers create interior working forms of what is the self and what he/she can anticipate from parents and later from other interactions. As literature shows, adolescents with good parent-adolescent attachments have better psychosocial well being (e.g. self-efficacy) and more knowledgeable in social domain than unsecure adolescents (Allen et al., 1998; Smetana et al., 2006). It is believed that first experience of close friendships and later on romantic relationships came from cognitive image of the parent-child interactions (Furman et al., 2002), which in general related to social and emotional well being (Engels et al., 2001).

Bowlby's theory suggests the influence of early parent-child experiences would be seen in diverse domains of adjustment that include self-reliance, efficacy, dependency, anxiety, empathy, anger and interpersonal competence because they are linked to the affect regulation, behavioral reciprocity, and beliefs and expectations of the self and others that emerge from early attachment relationships (Weinfeld et al., 2004). During adolescents, parent's commitment is still remains crucial. Secured parent-child relationship build trust, positive communication and relation and mutual respect with parents which is important due to adolescent cope with the conflict during independence from parents and in the process of identity formation.

As mentioned earlier, attachment theory explained the effect of inter-parental conflicts on children. According to attachment theory, goal of secure parent-child relationship is building emotional security in children however, this become more important in the family with high inter-parental conflicts. The level of parent-child interactions determines improvement or damaging children's security. Adolescent's working model of relationships affected from their perception of parental conflict and parent-adolescent relationships. Unsolved parental conflict may destroy adolescent's confidence in parent's ability to provide security and support in complex situations.

Attachment theory explains how unresponsive and absent parent to children's need may cause anxiety and distress in future intimacy and dependency. In other word, children who do not experience secure attachment may expand sensitivity to negative response in later relationships. Adolescents with anxious attachment, look for high intimacy and approval from partners, worry and irresistible in their interactions (Hazan and Shaver, 1987). For example, adolescent with an anxious attachment style have been found to view others more negatively overall, low confidence and high anxiety to perform and experience more conflict in their relations (Pietromonaco & Barrett, 1997).

1.6.3 ial Development Theory

Erikson's theory (1968) is one of the best theories to addresses development across the lifespan. One of the main factors in Erikson's theory (1968) is Ego identity. Ego identity is the aware sense of self that develop over social interaction and it changes over new information and experiences (Feldman, 2008). Identity refers to values, ideals and beliefs that form and guide individual behavior. The identity development start form infant through old age but it becomes important during adolescence. Erikson's theory, explain eight stage of development for individual through life span.

Erikson's theory, explain eight stage of development for individual through life span. In each stage individual face with crisis that must be solved. During adolescence, environment such as, parents, peers and school have different expectation and requires from children (Bergman & Scott, 2001). They must complete the developmental tasks required for this stage such as development of independence from parents. Therefore new identity must be shaped and new level of knowledge acquired (Louw et al., 1998). These all ends in the most significant developmental task, that called, the development of identity. During development of identity, adolescents experience a lot of anxiety and frustration which named identity crisis. If individual successfully resolve the crisis, their development will be healthier (Kroger et al., 2010).

According to Erikson's identity theory, adolescent need to effectively strength the task of identity against identity crisis (confusion) (Louw et al., 1998). This needs for adolescents to know who they are, what is important to them and what kind of life they want. To get this, they need more freedom and control over their life to make their own choice, than before. By expert on these tasks, adolescents gain more unified sense of self, self-control, and better independence from parents (Willemse, 2008).

Through experiences, adolescents who received encouragement and support form parents will get strong feel of independent and sense of self. During establishing the sense of identity adolescent need close parent-adolescent relationship. On the other hands, adolescents who do not receive positive feedback from parents and environment will produce the feel of anxiety to perform social skills and stay undecided and confused about their desires and beliefs. They will feel dependent and insecure about self and the future (Marcia, 1991).

Within insecure family with unsolved parental conflict, this process of establishing individual identity and independency from parents may produce more conflicts between parents and parent-adolescent conflicts (Bartle-Haring et al., 2002). Therefore, it is important for parents and adolescent to establish close relationships with communication and trust. This is a challenge for family with high frequently of inter-parental conflict to be emotional available of one or both parents during adolescent individuation process and adolescent's ability to cope with inter-parental conflict may disrupted. Consequently, adolescent with high inter-parental conflict at home and poor parent-adolescent relationships may build low sense of self-efficacy and more adjustment problem in further. There is a positive relation between adolescent attachment and identity (Bartle-Haring et al., 2002).

According to Bandura (1994), during adolescent which is transitional period, the sense of mastery experiences, strength on the personal self-efficacy beliefs. This

sense of self-efficacy belief in turn, affect on the result of developmental stage. Therefore perceived self-efficacy plays important role in developmental results and it challenge adolescent's coping capacity (Caprara et al., 2003).

1.6.4 Integration of Theories

In general, there is no single theoretical approach that can explain the association between parental attachment, inter-parental conflict, and anxiety to perform social skills with self-efficacy. Thus, the present study integrate construct from three theories to comprehensively explore self-efficacy. The integration of the three in understanding self-efficacy is presented in Figure 1.1. The factors taken from social cognitive theory are source of self-efficacy which define by Bandura (1994), as family or caregiver, anxiety to perform social skills as a behavior factor that contribute to the level of one's self-efficacy. One of the factors that can enhance selfefficacy is the home environment that includes parent-adolescent relationship and parental effect of adolescent's self-efficacy. However, social cognitive theory does not explicitly mention parental attachment and inter-parental conflict. Therefore, the element of parental attachment and inter-parental conflict was adopted by attachment theory to complement social cognitive theory on self-efficacy. In the present study family environment and parent-adolescent relationship is considered environmental factor. For individual factor, social cognitive theory highlighted how personal beliefs about capability to arrange and perform path of action to a level of performance, over time affect individuals' lives (Bandura, 1994). Moreover, Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory was adopted to complement social cognitive theory in explaining the link between individual factors and development stage of adolescent. Developmental psychology study the changes that occur in human beings over the course of their life also examines issues such as the extent of development through steady growth of knowledge versus stage. Each stage builds upon the successful completion of earlier stages.

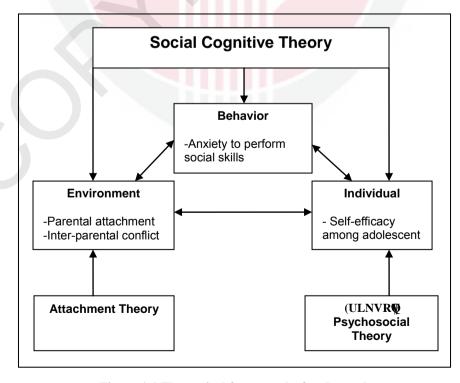


Figure 1.1 Theoretical frameworks for the study

1.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study (Figure 1.2) has been developed based on the theoretical background (Figure 1.1). This conceptual framework demonstrates the path of relationships between parental attachment, inter-parental conflict, anxiety to perform social skills, with the outcome variable (self-efficacy).

Social cognitive theory explains how reciprocal relationship between cognitive (personal), environmental and behavior bidirectional related to each other (Bandura, 1989). Adolescent who observe parent achieved desired results of certain action, will likely to imitate the action and if they get a good result of it more likely repeat it later, this increased the sense of self-efficacy (Caprara et al., 2001). Adolescents who perceived secure attachment with their parent, and parents who are available in case of adolescents needed have raised their self-efficacy, as well as parents who have problem resolution skills can help their children to solve their problem in case of conflict in their relationships (Bandura, 1989, 1997). On the other hand, if adolescent does not received desired result from their action, may received negative reaction form their environment (e.g. parent), that may affect their anxiety to perform social skills and decrease sense of self-efficacy. Parents who do not let children to experience variety of environment also, unresponsive parents who's not interested in child activities and disapproved their work may cause anxiety to perform social skills that may damage children's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994, 1997).

The social cognitive theory emphasizes4 the role of parents as social models in the development of self-efficacy. Moreover, it is through exploratory experiences in varied environments that children develop a sense of self-efficacy through the recognition that their actions can produce a result. There is a positive relationship between parental attachment and negative relationships between inter-parental conflict and anxiety to perform social skills with self-efficacy (Bilgin, 2011; Caster et al., 1999; Chen et al., 2004; DeBoard-Lucas et al., 2010; Frank et al., 2010; Schunk et al., 2005; Fosco, Caruthers, & Dishion, 2012), Parents who ensure that their children experience success in controlling their environment to produce desired outcomes through their actions, their children become more competent in learning successful responses and increased self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, parents considered as an important predictor of self-efficacy among adolescents.

In contrast, family with more frequency of parental conflict may damage children's self-efficacy (Fosco & Grych, 2008). Parent with low parenting knowledge may convert inter-parental conflict into parent-adolescent conflict that may result feels of threaten in their children (Fosco & Grych, 2010). Through the social modeling adolescent within this family avoid social interaction because they are afraid to get negative feedback form peers or society which reduce their sense of self-efficacy and increase anxiety to perform social skills.

Based on attachment theory, positive parent-adolescent relationships operating in environments that acknowledge, support and encourage their children's skills are more likely to foster efficacy beliefs in adolescent and overall adjustment development (Schunk & Meece, 2005). This positive child-parent relationship becomes more substantial in aversive environments (Usher & Pajares, 2008; Zimmerman, 2008). Bowlby (1973, 1982) stated parents prepares their children with

knowledge of how to start and maintain positive relationships with others by display and being role models for them to have better social skills. Therefore, parents by prepare their children with more skills, retreating feeling of anxiety to perform social skills and helps to increase adolescent's self-efficacy.

According to Erikson (1968), adolescents need to effectively resolve the task of identity against identity crisis in development stage. This will help adolescents to develop the sense of self-efficacy. To achieve this, they need more freedom from parents to control over their life to make their own choice. By achieving these tasks, adolescents gain more mastery experiences and increased the sense of self (Bandura, 1994). Adolescent-parent relationships play significant role in this identity development. In contrast, inter-parental conflict may reduce adolescent-parent relationships, support and encouragement toward individual identity development by absent of one or two parents in emotionally available for adolescent during establishing of autonomy and individual identity.

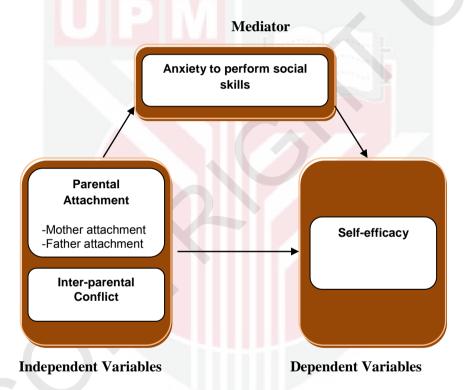


Figure 1.2 Conceptual frameworks for the study on Relationships between Parental Attachment, Inter-parental Conflict, Anxiety to perform social skills and Self-Efficacy among Late Adolescents in Hamadan, Iran".

1.8 Definition of Concepts

Self-Efficacy

Conceptual Definition: Self-efficacy is conceptualized as level of a person's self-perception of capability to perform or learn specific tasks to achieved desire goal (Bandura, 1994; Pajares, 2002; Zimmerman & Cleary, 2006).

Operational Definition: Self-efficacy refers to respondent's score on Generalized Self-Efficacy (GSE) Scale by Jerusalem and Schwarzer (1995). High score indicates high self-efficacy while low score indicates low self-efficacy.

Parental Attachment

Conceptual Definition: Parental attachment is conceptualized as the emotional cognitive experiences linked with internalized depiction of attachment to each parent (Bowlby, 1969, 1982).

Operational Definition: In this study parental attachment operationalized by the aggregate scores for attachment to maternal and paternal as assessed by respondent's score on Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment by Armsden and Greenberg (1989). High score means high level of attachment to mother and father.

Inter-parental Conflict

Conceptual definition: Inter-parental conflict is conceptualized as oppositional behavior between parental figures that acts as a stressor leading to an attempt by the child or adolescent within the family system to understand and cope with the conflict (Grych & Fincham, 1990).

Operational Definition: Inter-parental conflict refers to respondent's scores on the Children's Perception of Inter-parental Conflict Scale by Grych et al. (1992). High score indicates high level of inter-parental conflict.

Anxiety to perform social skills

Conceptual Definition: The specific behaviors that adolescents use to develop and maintain a social relationship is related to anxiety that they feel in the situation (Miell & Duck. 1986).

Operational Definition: Anxiety to perform social skills refers to respondents score on the scale of Interpersonal Behavior by Arrindell et al (1984). High score means high level of anxiety to perform social skills.

1.9 Limitation of the Study

This study contains of few limitations. First, the information conducted from first semester collage students aged 17-19 years old from University of Medical Sciences in Hamadan, Iran. Therefore, the result of this study can not to be generalized within the population. Second, there was lack of literature in Iran to support the result of this study and the researcher was unable to locate similar studies in any way to the present research in Iran. Third, this is a correlation study and can not control unpredictable variables. Forth, the result of this study was bases on self-reporting data which could result in some kind of bias. To avoid this, alternative methods required such as interview. Fifth, the present study was conducted on parental attachment, inter-parental conflict. The other limitation related to the generalizability of the finding of the present study. The present study focused on only a specific number of factors concurrently occurring as it is beyond the scope of this study to

include every factor related to self-efficacy. In fact the nature of self-efficacy is complex, and it must be acknowledged that the other variables are likely to be related to adolescent' self-efficacy. Future research should consider other factors such as adolescents' motivations, peer, lastly, this study is one of the studies that investigate the self-efficacy belief among late adolescent in Middle Eastern Country. Thus, it seems that more studies in this area are deemed necessary.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the background of the study, problem statement, objectives, hypothesis, significant and highlights the importance of investigating the relationships between parental attachment, inter-parental conflicts, and anxiety to perform social skills among adolescent's self-efficacy in Medicine University in Hamadan, Iran. The Theoretical and conceptual framework of the study also discussed in this chapter. Next chapter reviews past research related to study.

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