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## THE EFFECT OF FAMILY COHESIVENESS ON LIFE SATISFACTION

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**Abstract:** Family relations are key to overall life satisfaction hence the study was conducted on the topic of effect of family cohesiveness on life satisfaction. The sample included 58 males, 68 females and 2 non binary, making a total of 128 participants. The participants were given two self-report measures i.e., the FACES-IV Scale and the Life Satisfaction Scale 11. The findings suggested a significant positive correlation between overall cohesion and life satisfaction; a weak negative correlation between disengaged family attachment style and life satisfaction and a significant positive correlation between balanced cohesion and life satisfaction. The relationship between enmeshed attachment style and life satisfaction was found to be insignificant. The relationship between satisfaction with psychological health and family cohesion was found to be significant positive correlation. Univariate analysis of study suggested that the study has a high level of explanatory power, with an R-squared of .810 (adjusted R-squared of .425), indicating that 81% of the variance in Life Satisfaction can be explained by the model. The main effect of Cohesion is significant, indicating that individuals with higher levels of Balanced Cohesion tend to have higher Life Satisfaction scores. The implications and limitations of the study were also discussed. The results of the study were consistent with past researches and the implications and limitations of the same were also discussed.

**Index Terms – Family cohesiveness, life satisfaction, disengaged, enmeshed, psychological health.**

### Introduction

#### What is Family Cohesion?

The family sociologist Angell (1936) recognised coherence as a crucial factor for attempting to understand how families interact (or "family integration") as early as the 1930s. Cohesion is one of the two notions that Olson, Sprenkle, and Russell (1983), who examined the literature on families, found to be most frequently used to describe family behaviour. In fact, they employ coherence to create a "family systems" model with a focus on clinical use. "Family cohesion refers to the degree of individual autonomy a person experiences in the family system and the degree of emotional bonding members have with one another". (David H. Olson, Candyce S. Russell, & Douglas H. Sprenkle)

Family is a crucial setting for the healthy development of each person. The degree of autonomy that family members feel inside the system and the emotional ties that bind them together make up family cohesion. According to the family process model hypothesis, completing various tasks, especially crisis tasks, is the main objective in the family. According to several empirical investigations, family cohesion can help with the personal psychological issues that affect mental health. The main-effect model states that close family ties can support people going through stressful times and encourage a person's physical and mental growth. Stronger levels of family cohesion can be determined by the support and assistance an individual receives from other members of the family, which can aid them to experience less harmful impacts of stress. Zeng et al. (2021).

Family cohesion is strongly connected with stress-related symptoms like anxiety, sleeplessness, sadness, and learning burnout. Family cohesion could therefore be negatively associated with the effects of stress. Family unity is a crucial protective feature that is inversely correlated with negative emotion. Zeng et al. (2021)

According to research, family cohesion is crucial in fostering good outcomes for both people and families. According to Morgan, Mize, and Robertson (2017), families with high levels of cohesiveness experience less stress, have higher levels of life satisfaction, and have better mental health. Cohesive families also frequently exhibit improved communication styles, stronger parent-child bonds, and more efficient problem-solving techniques (DeFrain & Asay, 2007).

The societal and cultural background is important to consider when examining family dynamics, as families do not exist in isolation. The family structure, size, and form, as well as the ways in which family members interact and communicate, are shaped by cultural factors. Culture also plays a significant role in determining the roles of family members, particularly in relation to the family life cycle. Additionally, cultural factors influence how families identify and address problems within the family.

Factors such as divorce, parental conflict, and other forms of family stress can decrease family cohesiveness and lead to negative outcomes for family members

Another factor that effects the family cohesiveness includes the family's financial stability. Family's which have had adequate funds to live comfortably tend to be more in tune and also experience lower levels of stress, better mental health and children of these family's grow up to be financially responsible citizens as compared to children who grew up in families with financial instability and always had to anticipate where the money for their next meal or things they want will come from.

Family cohesiveness is one of the two important aspect of healthy family functioning and can contribute to positive development for both individuals and families.

### **Types of Family Cohesion**

Research has identified various types of family cohesiveness, which are characterized by different patterns of communication, decision-making, and conflict resolution. Understanding these types of family cohesiveness can help families and professionals in promoting positive family dynamics and addressing challenges that may arise. The four types of family cohesiveness that have been identified in the literature, including enmeshed, disengaged, separated, and connected families.

**Disengaged.** Disengaged family cohesion is a type of family functioning characterized by low levels of emotional closeness and involvement among family members, as well as rigid boundaries and a lack of emotional support and communication. Disengaged families may experience feelings of isolation, loneliness, and neglect among family members, and this type of family cohesion can result in negative outcomes for children.

According to research, family members may suffer as a result of a disengaged family unit. In contrast to adolescents from cohesive households, those from disengaged families were more likely to exhibit symptoms of despair and anxiety, according to a study by Tully and colleagues (2014). Additionally, a 1983 study by Sprenkle and colleagues indicated that disengaged families were more likely than cohesive families to face marriage and family issues.

It is crucial to keep in mind that disengagement can be a transient condition, and families may eventually be able to become more cohesive through therapies like family therapy. Families and professionals must understand the value of emotional intimacy and open communication in fostering healthy family dynamics and resolving potential problems.

**Enmeshed.** High levels of emotional dependence, intimacy and lack of boundaries among family members are characteristics of enmeshed family cohesion. Enmeshed families tend to be very involved in each other's lives and have blurred lines between family members. While being enmeshed in a family might provide one a sense of stability and support, it can also have unfavourable effects, like a lack of independence and the difficulty to forge good relationships outside the family.

Enmeshment can hurt a family's functioning and an individual's wellbeing, according to studies. For instance, high degrees of enmeshment were linked to a higher risk of family disintegration and unfavourable outcomes for children, according to research by Morgan, Mize, and Robertson (2017). The Family Cohesion Scale (FACES), which evaluates the degree to which family members share emotional experiences and activities, was employed by the authors of the study to quantify enmeshment.

Beyond the problems already mentioned, enmeshment can result in a variety of other problems, such as an excessive need for approval and a sense of worthlessness, anxiety, a lack of self-awareness and a lack of self-interest, carrying unwarranted guilt and responsibility, difficulty asserting oneself, involvement in co-dependent relationships, and an inability to calm oneself and deal with difficult emotions.

Enmeshment can have positive effects too. Enmeshed families, for instance, could be more attached and supportive than other kinds of families. Enmeshment can also provide people a sense of stability and belonging, which is advantageous for those who have gone through trauma or other trying times in their lives.

Families and professionals should endeavour to create healthy boundaries and encourage individual autonomy within the family system in order to avoid any potential negative effects of enmeshment. Enmeshment and other problems with family functioning can be effectively treated through family therapy.

**Separated.** In separated family types, each member of the family cherishes their own personal space and interests, so unless they share a special relationship with a parent or sibling, they might not be aware of each other's activities. Family gatherings are not required to be attended, and some members may choose not to do so out of boredom or other reasons. Despite sharing similar hobbies or a common religion, the family members accept each other's right to form their own opinions and pursue their own objectives in life. The family accepts the people who marry outside their religion and encourage kids to pursue their own goals. Personal objects like diaries are treasured for their privacy, and sharing is optional. The family considers it crucial to foster everyone's functional growth. Families who live apart may see themselves as typical and may consider enmeshed or attached families to be excessive.

**Connected.** Connected families respect personal privacy and have a moderate amount of knowledge about one another's lives. They might have important family gatherings that call for everyone's attendance, especially if there has been prior dispute. Unless there are reservations about their influence on the family member, friends are typically welcomed. If they are introverted, they may prefer to remain quiet but are usually open to new experiences.

While parents decide what their children should study, children are encouraged to pursue their career interests with supervision. Even while there may be common values and interests inside the family, everyone is free to form their own interests. People who keep diaries might assume their privacy, although sharing might be encouraged. The primary message of the family is that it is crucial to helping kids grow up to be healthy, responsible individuals. Families that are connected see themselves as typical, somewhat close, or close and may perceive very integrated families to be excessive.

## Balanced Cohesion

Family functioning is best at moderate degrees of family cohesion (separated and connected). Extreme degrees of cohesiveness, whether they are enmeshed or disengaged, are seen to be detrimental to long-term partnerships. People can maintain their ties to their family while balancing their need for independence in the domain of balanced cohesiveness. Therapy-seeking families frequently exhibit high levels of cohesion. Enmeshed systems have little room for independence because there is too much consensus and agreement inside the family. Family members function individually in disengaged systems with little attachment to or dedication to the family. Families with a healthy balance of separation and attachment tend to perform better throughout the course of their lifetime. This indicates that they are emotionally separated to some extent, but not to the point of being wholly detached system.

## Family Cohesion in the Indian Context

Generalisations about Indian families may be oversimplified in relation to their complexity given the diversity of Indian culture. However, Asian, and Indian cultures have joint families with three or more generations as well as extended family members which are often referred to as traditional, patriarchal, and collectivistic in sociological research. One of the oldest still-existing social structures, joint families have a profound impact on the lives of those who belong to them. Indian joint families are renowned for their power, steadiness, and intimate bonds. Individuality, personal independence, privacy, and personal space are sacrificed in favour of family integrity, loyalty, and unity.

## Life Satisfaction

An individual's total assessment of their life is referred to as life satisfaction, which is a multifaceted and subjective concept. It is a comprehensive evaluation of life quality that considers a number of areas, including health, employment, interpersonal connections, and overall well-being.

Life satisfaction is fundamentally an individualised, subjective experience. Numerous variables, such as personality, social support, socioeconomic status, and cultural values, have an impact on it. Typically, self-report measures used in questionnaires or surveys that allow respondents to rate their overall level of life satisfaction are used to measure life satisfaction.

## Family Cohesion and Life Satisfaction

According to research, family cohesion plays a significant role on an individual's happiness and sense of well-being. Numerous researchers have discovered a link between life satisfaction and family cohesion. One study that looked at the connection between family cohesion and life happiness among Chinese university students was conducted by Chen and colleagues in 2015. They discovered that emotional intelligence acted as a mediator in the relationship between family cohesion and life happiness, which was found to be positively correlated.

Another study by Kim and colleagues (2020) examined the relationship between family cohesion, resilience, and life satisfaction among Korean older adults. They found that family cohesion was positively related to life satisfaction and that this relationship was partially mediated by resilience.

These studies and others suggest that family cohesiveness is an important factor in individual well-being and life satisfaction. When family members feel emotionally connected and supportive of one another, they are more likely to experience positive emotions, have better mental health, and feel a greater sense of purpose in life.

It is essential to remember the differences and variations in the relationship between life happiness & family cohesion. Certain studies postulate that familial cohesion might be harmful to a person's wellbeing. For instance, a study conducted in 2013 by Gallant and colleagues indicated that life satisfaction among carers of people with dementia was inversely correlated with family closeness. They hypothesised that this might be the case because too much family closeness can result in burdensome feelings and a lack of personal freedom.

According to these studies, there exists a complex relationship between family cohesion and life happiness that depends on both personal and environmental factors. While having a connected family is typically a good thing, having too much of it can be bad for people's health.

## Review of Literature

In a study conducted by Adams, King, and King (1996), “the relationship between work-family conflict, family support, job and family involvement, and job and life satisfaction were examined”. The study revealed that the extent of involvement a worker has in their work and family roles is linked to their job and life satisfaction. The findings also showed that increased work interference with family led to decreased amounts of emotional and instrumental support in the family, while increased emotional and instrumental assistance in the family was linked to decreased levels of family interference with work. These findings suggest that the association between family & work can impact job and life satisfaction and can involve both conflict and support simultaneously.

Lin and Yi (2019), conducted a study “to check the effects family cohesion and life satisfaction during adolescence on internalising (depression and low self-esteem) and externalising (deviance) and its consequences in later adolescence”. The study, used data from the “Taiwan Youth Project”, discovered that life satisfaction and family cohesion deteriorated with time, which had a negative impact on outcomes such as depression and deviance levels, as well as self-esteem levels. The study also showed that changes in life satisfaction have indirect effects on depression and self-esteem, while changes in family cohesion had indirect effects on beginning life contentment on subsequent deviance.

Szczeniak and Tuecka (2020) used polish adults as the subjects of a study “to look at the relationship between family functioning and life satisfaction”. The study sought to determine the impact of emotional intelligence on the relationship between successful family operations & overall well-being. 204 people made up the sample, and 86% of them were women. Based on participant availability and willingness to reply, convenience sampling was used by the researchers to gather data from online forums. The results revealed that unity, adaptability, correspondence, and family pleasure connected with life satisfaction and emotional intelligence, positively and significantly. While emotional intelligence was only adversely and substantially connected with chaotic and disengaged functioning, life satisfaction was negatively and significantly correlated with entangled, disengaged, and chaotic functioning. The association between the six family functioning dimensions— life satisfaction flexibility, communication, cohesion, family satisfaction, disengagement, and chaos was partially mediated by emotional intelligence. According to the study's findings, people are more likely to process their own emotions and report feeling more satisfied with their lives when they perceive their family to be cohesive, adaptable, communicative, and fulfilled. It was concluded that, impaired life satisfaction can be a result of an individual's inability to control emotions which further may decline when family is perceived as chaotic and disconnected, which will impair life satisfaction. Overall, the study shows that the role of emotional intelligence is one of a mediating role in terms of the association connecting family functioning and life satisfaction.

Vandeleur, Jeanpretre, Perrez, and Schoebi(2009) looked at “the relationship between family cohesion, satisfaction with family ties, and emotional health in households with adolescent children”. Data were gathered daily over the course of a week using self-report instruments and a diary approach, and the sample consisted of 95 school-age teenagers and their parents. Higher cohesion was linked to increased well-being in dads and adolescents, but not in mothers, according to the results of multilevel studies. While adolescents who scored higher on satisfaction with bonds reported poorer well-being when with classmates or siblings than when alone, fathers who scored higher on cohesion reported higher well-being levels when with family members than when alone. When parents were with friends or co-workers as opposed to being alone, they reported feeling better.

Lehto, X. Y., Lin, Y.-C., Chen, Y., & Choi, S. (2012) conducted a study on Family vacation activities and family cohesion. By examining the holiday activity patterns of four different types of family vacationers—“bonded and nature seeking”; “attached and enthusiastic”; “self-directed and recreation oriented”; and “sociable but static”—this study explored the relationship between family vacation activities and family cohesion. According to the study, family holiday activities can help families stay together, and knowing these patterns can assist create top-notch family vacation programmes and increase family life satisfaction.

Among practising psychologists, Stevanovic and Rupert (2009) investigated “the connection between work-to-family spill over, life satisfaction, and family support”. Data from 485 psychologists who replied to a survey about work and family life were analysed for the study. The findings indicated that positive spill over, or family enhancers, occurred more frequently than negative spill over, or family stressors. According

to the survey, professional stress did not frequently affect professionals' family lives. The link between the work and family domains was, however, significantly mediated by both positive and negative spill over. enhanced family enhancers were linked to higher levels of personal success at work, which in turn enhanced family support and life satisfaction. On the other side, emotional weariness at work was linked to increased family pressures, which resulted in lower family support and a lower quality of life. The study comes to the conclusion that professional psychologists' life happiness is significantly influenced by work-family spill over.

## Methodology

### Aim

To assess the effect of family cohesiveness on life satisfaction.

### Objectives

- To study the effect of cohesion on life satisfaction
- To study the effect of disengaged family attachment style on life satisfaction
- To study the effect of enmeshed family attachment style of life satisfaction
- To study the effect of balanced family cohesion on life satisfaction
- To study the effect of family cohesion on psychological well-being
- To study the effect of gender and cohesion on life satisfaction

### Hypothesis

**Null hypothesis.** There will be no significant relationship between levels of family cohesiveness and levels of life satisfaction. There will be a significant relationship between levels of family cohesiveness and levels of life satisfaction.

**Alternative hypothesis.** There will be a significant relationship between levels of family cohesiveness and levels of life satisfaction.

### Sample

The sample consisted of 128 young adults in the age group of 18-26 years. 58 males, 68 females, and 2 people who were non binary participated in the survey. These young adults were distributed across India pursuing different occupations. The participants were selected through convenience sampling, probability sampling and snowball sampling.

### Tools Used

The participants filled out a self-administered Google form, containing self-report measure questions for which the following scales were used

1. Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scale IV (FACES-IV) by David H. Olson, D.M. Gorall, J.W. Tiesel (1985). Only the cohesion dimension of the FACES-IV scale was used i.e., the questions under balanced cohesion, disengaged, enmeshed subsets were used. The questions in the FACES-IV Scale are assessed on a 5-point Likert scale with the following rating: (1) Strongly Disagree (2) Generally Disagree (3) Undecided (4) Generally Agree (5) Strongly Agree.  
All six scales in FACES-IV were found to be valid and reliable. Significantly high levels of construct, concurrent, and discriminant validity were found and new ratio scores measure the balanced and unbalanced level of cohesion and flexibility.
2. Life-Satisfaction Questionnaire -11 (LISAT-11) by Fugl-Maeyer et al. (1991)  
The Life-Satisfaction Questionnaire -11 is assessed on 6-point Likert scale where 1 = very dissatisfying, 2 = dissatisfying, 3 = rather dissatisfying, 4 = rather satisfying, 5 = satisfying and 6 = very satisfying.

## Design

In the present study, quantitative analysis was carried out. For the survey, Google form was used to increase efficiency. Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scale IV (FACES-IV) by David H. Olson, D.M. Gorall, J.W. Tiesel (1985) and Life-Satisfaction Questionnaire -11 (LISAT-11) by Fugl-Maeyer et al. (1991), were used. Before the final data collection, to assess the feasibility of the tools and detect problems, if any, in the research study, a pilot study was conducted and feedback was received. After the survey conduction, the data was analysed and results were interpreted keeping in mind the aim of the study.

## Procedure

A survey was conducted to understand the effect of family cohesiveness on life satisfaction. A Google form was created which contained all the questions. A pilot study was conducted to assess the feasibility of the study. Rapport was formed with the respondents using social media (WhatsApp and Instagram) and in person to make them feel comfortable and at ease before beginning with the study. They were asked to respond to the statements that were presented to them in the Google form. The participants were not compensated in any way. Their consent was taken, they also had the option to leave the study any time they felt uncomfortable and they were asked to give their honest responses. It was made sure that the respondents were well-informed about the confidentiality of their responses. In order to maintain anonymity, email addresses of the participants were not sought. Data was compiled and relevant statistical tools and descriptive techniques were used for the same.

## Statistical Analysis

**Research design.** Quantitative Research Design - To gather, evaluate, and interpret numerical data in order to test research hypotheses or respond to research questions is known as quantitative research design. This kind of research strategy frequently uses statistical approaches to collect and examine data utilising impartial methodologies.

**Statistical methods. Correlation analysis.** A statistical method for determining the link between two or more variables is correlation analysis. Calculating the correlation coefficient, which has a value between -1 and +1, is required. A perfect negative correlation, where one variable falls as the other rises, has a coefficient of -1. A perfect positive correlation, when both variables rise or fall together, is indicated by a coefficient of +1. No correlation is present when the coefficient is 0. Correlation analysis is used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between variables, such as cohesion and life satisfaction in the present research.

**Univariate ANOVA.** The statistical technique called univariate ANOVA is used to look for differences between the means of two or more groups in a single dependent variable. It enables scientists to ascertain whether the observed variation in the dependent variable is brought on by variations between the groups or just random variation. In the context of this study, Univariate ANOVA has been used to compare the cohesion and role of gender in the perception of life satisfaction.

## Sample Design

Convenience, probability, and snowball sampling

## Inclusion Criteria

Young adults of the age 18-26 years.

## Results

**Table 1**

The correlation table represents the correlation between two variables: Life Satisfaction (LS) and Cohesion.

		Cohesion	Life Satisfaction
Cohesion	Pearson Correlation	1	.486**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	128	128
Life Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.486**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	128	128

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to table 1, there is a significant and positive association between Family Cohesion and Life Satisfaction (LS) based on the results of the correlation study between these two variables. Family Cohesion and life satisfaction had a Pearson correlation coefficient of .486\*\* (p .001). This shows a significant correlation between the two variables, proving that changing one causes a change in the other.

**Table 2**

The correlation table shows the correlation coefficients between two variables, Life Satisfaction and Enmeshed, and their corresponding p-values.

		Life Satisfaction	Enmeshed
Life Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.125
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.160
	N	128	128
Enmeshed	Pearson Correlation	.125	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.160	
	N	128	128

According to the correlation table, participants' life satisfaction and enmeshment have a positive relationship. The p-value (0.160) is higher than 0.01, hence this correlation is not statistically significant at the two-tailed 0.01 level.



**Table 3**

The correlation table shows the correlation coefficients between two variables, Life Satisfaction and disengaged, and their corresponding p-values.

		Life Satisfaction	Disengaged
Life Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	-.103
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.250
	N	128	128
Disengaged	Pearson Correlation	-.103	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.250	
	N	128	128

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 demonstrates that the correlation between life satisfaction and the disengaged familial attachment style. The findings showed that there exists a substantial negative correlation ( $r = -.103$ ,  $p = .250$ ) between the two variables. It was significant at the two-tailed 0.01 level.

**Table 4**

The correlation table represents the correlation between two variables: Life Satisfaction and Balanced Cohesion.

		Life Satisfaction	Balanced Cohesion
Life Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.500*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	128	128
Balanced Cohesion	Pearson Correlation	.500**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	128	128

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to table 4 the correlation between life satisfaction and balanced cohesion is statistically significant at 0.01 level (two tailed). The correlation coefficient was .500, indicating a strong positive relationship between the two variables. This means that as balanced cohesion i.e., the balance between separateness and connectedness increases, so does the life satisfaction of the individual and vice versa.

**Table 5**

The correlation table represents the correlation between two variables: Cohesion and Satisfaction with psychological health.

		Life Satisfaction	LS 11
Life Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.432*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	128	128
LS 11	Pearson Correlation	.432**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	128	128

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings of a correlation analysis between family cohesion and satisfaction with psychological health are displayed in the above table. The analysis used Pearson's correlation coefficient and a sample size of 128 for both variables. The findings show that family cohesion and psychological health satisfaction are positively correlated, with a correlation value of .432 that is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 6**

This table depicts the results of tests of between-subjects effects on the dependent variable Life Satisfaction. The main effects of Cohesion and Gender, as well as the interaction effect of Cohesion & Gender, are examined.

Tests of Between Subjects Effects							
Dependent Variable: Life Satisfaction							
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	
Corrected Model	67.954 <sup>a</sup>	85	.799	2.104	.005	.810	
Intercept	432.052	1	432.052	1137.123	<.001	.964	
Cohesion	54.642	58	.942	2.480	.001	.774	
Gender	.536	1	.536	1.412	.241	.033	
Cohesion & Gender	11.251	24	.469	1.234	.270	.413	
Error	15.958	42	.380				
Total	2463.628	128					
Corrected Total	83.912	127					

a. R Squared = .810 (Adjusted R Squared = .425)

The corrected model source shows the effect of both independent variables on the dependent variable. The results indicate a statistically significant effect ( $F = 2.104$ ,  $P < .005$ ), with an effect size of .810. This means that the model explains 81% of the variance in life satisfaction scores. Additionally, the adjusted R-squared value of .425 indicates that the model provides a good fit for data.

The intercept, representing the mean life satisfaction score, was highly significant ( $p < .001$ ) with a value of 432.052. This indicates that participants in the study generally reported high levels of life satisfaction.

The cohesion source represents the effect of family cohesion on life satisfaction. The results indicated a statistically significant effect ( $F = 2.480$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), with an effect size of .774. This indicates that family cohesion has a significant positive impact on life satisfaction.

The gender source represents the effect of gender on life satisfaction. The results indicate that gender does not have a statistically significant effect on life satisfaction ( $F = 1.412$ ,  $p = .241$ ).

The cohesion and gender source represents the effect interaction between family cohesion and gender on life satisfaction. The results indicate that this interaction does not have a statistically significant effect on life satisfaction ( $F = 1.234$ ,  $p = .270$ ). However, the effect size of .413 indicates that this interaction may still have a meaningful impact on life satisfaction.

## Discussion

The current study aimed at assessing the effect of family cohesiveness on life satisfaction. The null hypothesis of the present study was that there exists a significant relationship between family cohesiveness and life satisfaction which is accepted as the result according to table 1 shows that there is a significant and positive association between Family Cohesion and Life Satisfaction (LS) based on the results of the correlation study between these two variables. Family Cohesion and LS had a Pearson correlation coefficient of .486\*\* ( $p .001$ ). This shows a significant correlation between the two variables, proving that changing one causes a change in the other.

The positive correlation between family cohesiveness and life satisfaction indicates that people who experience increased amounts of family cohesiveness are more inclined to experience higher levels of life satisfaction. This finding is consistent with previous research done by Szczeniak and Tuecka (2020), who investigated the relationship between Polish people's life satisfaction and their families' functioning. The findings demonstrated that unity, adaptability, correspondence, and family pleasure displayed a positive and significant association with life satisfaction and emotional intelligence.

Family cohesion can give people a sense of identity, emotional support, and a sense of being loved. These elements are crucial to psychological health and could account for the link between family cohesion and life satisfaction.

There may also exist a bidirectional causality, in which improved family relationships and better levels of life satisfaction are mutually reinforcing.

The current study discovered a substantial positive relationship between life satisfaction and family cohesion. The results imply that family cohesion may guard against low levels of life satisfaction, and that family cohesion-promoting treatments may have a favourable impact on people's wellbeing.

Table 2 shows the correlation coefficient between life satisfaction and enmeshment was found to be positive, with a value of 0.125 but it can be said that the correlation is statistically insignificant as (0.160) is higher than 0.01.

In family psychology, the term "enmeshment" refers to a particular kind of family relationship characterised by excessive intimacy, lack of boundaries, and over-involvement. As their sense of self is frequently shaped by their familial interactions, people in intertwined households frequently struggle to demonstrate their individuality and identity.

The subjective indicator of someone's general sense of wellbeing and contentment with their existence is called "life satisfaction." It is influenced by a variety of elements, such as one's own values, social support, financial security, and general health.

The positive correlation between life satisfaction and enmeshment suggests that people who feel more entwined with their families may also have higher levels of life satisfaction. Close family ties may provide emotional support and a sense of belonging, or cultural norms and expectations, such as those in India, may place a higher value on family cohesion than on individual autonomy.

Overall, this study's association between enmeshment and life satisfaction offers some understanding of the intricate relationship between subjective life satisfaction and family dynamics.

Table 3 demonstrates that the correlation between life satisfaction and the disengaged familial attachment style. The findings showed that there exists a substantial negative correlation ( $r = -.103$ ,  $p = .250$ ) between the two variables. It was significant at the two-tailed 0.01 level.

The negative correlation between life satisfaction and disengaged family attachment suggests that individuals who have a disengaged family attachment style tend to report lower levels of life satisfaction. According to earlier research by Tepeli Temiz and Tara Cömert from 2018, the attachment sub-dimensions of anxiety and avoidance were inversely correlated with overall life satisfaction. The study found a substantial correlation between lower levels of life satisfaction and a rise in scores for anxious and avoidant attachment.

Lack of emotional participation and connection with family members are characteristics of the disengaged attachment type. This attachment type is characterised by a tendency to avoid emotional intimacy and a dislike of depending on others for emotional support. A person's overall level of life satisfaction may be significantly impacted by the alienation from family members, which may result in feelings of loneliness and isolation.

In conclusion, from the results, it can be inferred that there is a weak and negative correlation between life satisfaction and disengaged family attachment style.

Table 4 shows that the correlation analysis between life satisfaction and balanced cohesion was found to be statistically significant at 0.01 level (two tailed). The correlation coefficient was .500, indicating a strong positive relationship between the two variables. This means that as balanced cohesion i.e., the balance between separateness and connectedness increases, so does the life satisfaction of the individual and vice versa.

Balanced cohesion refers to the family's ability to balance separateness and connectedness. The positive correlation between balanced cohesion and life satisfaction implies that when families strike a healthy balance between separateness and connectedness, individuals within the family are more likely to experience higher levels of life satisfaction. A balanced cohesion in a family provides individuals with a sense of emotional security, support and togetherness, which are important predictors of life satisfaction.

On the other hand, a low level of balanced cohesion may indicate that the family is either too enmeshed or disengaged. An enmeshed family is one in which there are few boundaries between individuals, and members may feel overly dependent on each other. A disengaged family, on the other hand, is one in which individuals are emotionally distant and have little interaction with each other. Both extremes can lead to negative outcomes, including low levels of life satisfaction.

The strong correlation between life satisfaction and balanced cohesion suggests that families should strive to find a balance between separateness and togetherness. By doing so, they may create an environment that fosters higher levels of life satisfaction among individuals within the family. This could involve promoting independence and self-expression while also maintaining close relationships and emotional support.

In conclusion, the study suggests that families should strive to create an environment that promotes both independence and emotional support in order to enhance life satisfaction and growth among individual members of the family

Table 5 shows that satisfaction with psychological health and family cohesion are significantly correlated. The positive correlation suggests that satisfaction with psychological health tends to rise along with family togetherness. This association makes sense given that social support from families is known to have a good effect on a person's psychological well-being. Family members' social support can help people deal with stress, lessen anxiety, and generally improve their mental health.

A study on the impact of family cohesion on reducing the effects of stress during the COVID-19 epidemic among Chinese college students was undertaken by Zeng, Ye, Zhang, and Yang in 2021. In their article, the authors stress the value of family support in fostering mental health amid emergencies like the COVID-19 epidemic. They contend that by offering emotional support, a sense of belonging, and a secure environment for people to vent their worries and emotions, family cohesion can play a crucial part in decreasing the negative effects of stress.

Further, Univariate ANOVA was applied to confirm the results found after applying correlation and check the effect of gender and family cohesion as an independent variable on the dependant variable of life satisfaction.

Table 6, shows the results of tests of between subjects' effects which presents an analysis examining the effects of two independent variables, Family cohesion and Gender, on the dependent variable of Life satisfaction. The table presents five sources of variations, including corrected model, intercept, cohesion, gender, and cohesion & gender.

The corrected model source shows the effect of both independent variables on the dependent variable. The results indicate a statistically significant effect ( $F= 2.104, P < .005$ ), with an effect size of .810. This means that the model explains 81% of the variance in life satisfaction scores. Additionally, the adjusted R-squared value of .425 indicates that the model provides a good fit for data.

The intercept, representing the mean life satisfaction score, was highly significant ( $p < .001$ ) with a value of 432.052. This indicates that participants in the study generally reported high levels of life satisfaction

The cohesion source represents the effect of family cohesion on life satisfaction. The results indicated a statistically significant effect ( $F = 2.480, p < 0.01$ ), with an effect size of .774. this indicates that family cohesion has a significant positive impact on life satisfaction.

The gender source represents the effect of gender on life satisfaction. The results indicate that gender does not have a statistically significant effect on life satisfaction ( $F = 1.412, p = .241$ ).

The cohesion and gender source represents the effect interaction between family cohesion and gender on life satisfaction. The results indicate that this interaction does not have a statistically significant effect on life satisfaction ( $F = 1.234, p = .270$ ). However, the effect size of .413 indicates that this interaction may still have a meaningful impact on life satisfaction. Therefore, future studies can focus on a greater sample size to assess the impact of this interaction.

In conclusion, the findings imply that family cohesion has a significant role in predicting life satisfaction. The findings also imply that gender does not significantly affect life satisfaction, while it is crucial to point out that this could be because of the study's small sample size. Although it was not shown to be statistically significant, the gender-family cohesion interaction may nevertheless have a substantial effect on life satisfaction.

## Conclusion

Family Cohesion can provide individuals with a sense of belongingness, emotional support, and a feeling of being cared for. These factors are essential components of psychological well-being. Close family ties may provide emotional support and a sense of belonging, or cultural norms and expectations, such as those in India, may place a higher value on family cohesion than on individual autonomy.

The study found suggest that family cohesion is an important predictor of life satisfaction and there exists a significant positive correlation between Family Cohesion and life satisfaction. The findings suggest that Family Cohesion may serve as a protective factor against low life satisfaction, and interventions that promote family cohesion may have positive effects on individuals' well-being.

## Implications

The findings imply that family cohesion has a significant role in predicting life satisfaction. The findings also imply that gender does not significantly affect life satisfaction, while it is crucial to point out that this could be because of the study's small sample size. Although it was not shown to be statistically significant, the gender-family cohesion interaction may nevertheless have a substantial effect on life satisfaction.

The strong correlation between life satisfaction and balanced cohesion suggests that families should strive to find a balance between separateness and togetherness. By doing so, they may create an environment that fosters higher levels of life satisfaction among individuals within the family. This could involve promoting independence and self-expression while also maintaining close relationships and emotional support.

The negative correlation between life satisfaction and disengaged family attachment suggests that individuals who have a disengaged family attachment style tend to report lower levels of life satisfaction and might benefit from family therapy to work on their family attachment style.

For healthcare professionals and policymakers, the considerable positive association between family cohesion and satisfaction with psychological health has significant ramifications. It implies that efforts to strengthen families can have a good effect on someone's psychological health as well. Providers of healthcare can collaborate with families to foster communication, strengthen bonds, and offer resources to assist families get through difficulties. Family support is crucial during stressful or ill times, so this can be very significant.

### Limitations

Since the study's sample size of 128 was relatively small, future research can seek to use a bigger sample size. The study also used self-report measures, which can be biased due to factors like social desirability, memory recall bias and current state of mind. To reduce the impact of these biases, future research should measure family cohesion and life satisfaction using a variety of techniques and informants. Personality qualities, cultural background, and life events are additional variables that were not measured in this study but may have an impact on the association between cohesion and life satisfaction. These results need to be replicated and expanded upon by more study in order to pinpoint the relationship's underlying processes and boundary conditions.

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## Appendix A

### The FACES- IV Questionnaire

#### FACES IV: Questionnaire

##### Directions to Family Members:

1. All family members over the age 12 can complete FACES IV.
2. Family members should complete the instrument independently, not consulting or discussing their responses until they have been completed.
3. Fill in the corresponding **number** in the space on the provided answer sheet.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Generally Disagree	Undecided	Generally Agree	Strongly Agree

1. Family members are involved in each others lives.
2. Our family tries new ways of dealing with problems.
3. We get along better with people outside our family than inside.
4. We spend too much time together.
5. There are strict consequences for breaking the rules in our family.
6. We never seem to get organized in our family.
  
7. Family members feel very close to each other.
8. Parents equally share leadership in our family.
9. Family members seem to avoid contact with each other when at home.
10. Family members feel pressured to spend most free time together.
11. There are clear consequences when a family member does something wrong.
12. It is hard to know who the leader is in our family.
  
13. Family members are supportive of each other during difficult times.
14. Discipline is fair in our family.
15. Family members know very little about the friends of other family members.
16. Family members are too dependent on each other.
17. Our family has a rule for almost every possible situation.
18. Things do not get done in our family.
  
19. Family members consult other family members on important decisions.
20. My family is able to adjust to change when necessary.
21. Family members are on their own when there is a problem to be solved.
22. Family members have little need for friends outside the family.
23. Our family is highly organized.
24. It is unclear who is responsible for things (chores, activities) in our family.
  
25. Family members like to spend some of their free time with each other.
26. We shift household responsibilities from person to person.
27. Our family seldom does things together.
28. We feel too connected to each other.
29. Our family becomes frustrated when there is a change in our plans or routines.
30. There is no leadership in our family.



1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Generally Disagree	Undecided	Generally Agree	Strongly Agree

31. Although family members have individual interests, they still participant in family activities.
32. We have clear rules and roles in our family.
33. Family members seldom depend on each other.
34. We resent family members doing things outside the family.
35. It is important to follow the rules in our family.
36. Our family has a hard time keeping track of who does various household tasks.
  
37. Our family has a good balance of separateness and closeness.
38. When problems arise, we compromise.
39. Family members mainly operate independently.
40. Family members feel guilty if they want to spend time away from the family.
41. Once a decision is made, it is very difficult to modify that decision.
42. Our family feels hectic and disorganized.

### FACES IV: Answer Sheet

Subject ID (4 digit) \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_ Sex: M: \_\_ F: \_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Generally Disagree	Undecided	Generally Agree	Strongly Agree

- |         |          |          |          |          |          |          |                |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|
| 1. ____ | 7. ____  | 13. ____ | 19. ____ | 25. ____ | 31. ____ | 37. ____ | <b>A.</b> ____ |
| 2. ____ | 8. ____  | 14. ____ | 20. ____ | 26. ____ | 32. ____ | 38. ____ | <b>B.</b> ____ |
| 3. ____ | 9. ____  | 15. ____ | 21. ____ | 27. ____ | 33. ____ | 39. ____ | <b>C.</b> ____ |
| 4. ____ | 10. ____ | 16. ____ | 22. ____ | 28. ____ | 34. ____ | 40. ____ | <b>D.</b> ____ |
| 5. ____ | 11. ____ | 17. ____ | 23. ____ | 29. ____ | 35. ____ | 41. ____ | <b>E.</b> ____ |
| 6. ____ | 12. ____ | 18. ____ | 24. ____ | 30. ____ | 36. ____ | 42. ____ | <b>F.</b> ____ |

Questions for Balanced Cohesion (A), Disengaged (C) & Enmeshed (D) were used for the current study to check the level of Family Cohesion in participants.

**Appendix B**

**Life-Satisfaction Questionnaire -11 (LISAT-11)**

Adapted from Fugl-Meyer AR, Branholm IB, and Fugl-Meyer KS, Life Satisfaction in 18- to 64-year old Swedes: In Relation to Gender, Age, Partner and Immigrant Status, J Rehabil Med, 34: 239-46, 2002; Appendix A. Used with permission from Taylor & Francis.

Life-Satisfaction Questionnaire-11 (LISAT-11) Worksheet:

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

How satisfactory are these different aspects of your life? Indicate the number which best suits your situation for each of these statements.

1 = very dissatisfying	4 = rather satisfying
2 = dissatisfying	5 = satisfying

Score: (1-6)

Life as a whole is \_\_\_\_\_

My vocational situation is \_\_\_\_\_

My financial situation is \_\_\_\_\_

My leisure situation is \_\_\_\_\_

My contacts with friends and acquaintances are \_\_\_\_\_

My sexual life is \_\_\_\_\_

My ability to manage my self-care (dressing, hygiene, transfers, etc.) is \_\_\_\_\_

My family life is  have no family \_\_\_\_\_

My partnership relation is  have no steady partner relationship \_\_\_\_\_

My physical health is \_\_\_\_\_

My psychological health is \_\_\_\_\_

Sum: \_\_\_\_\_