

# The Role of Social Support and Sensation Seeking in Predicting Students' Attitude to Having Pre-marital Relations

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The aim of this study is to predict the attitudes to pre-marital relations due to social support and sensation seeking in undergraduate students of Islamic Azad University of Karaj in the 2015 academic year. **Methodology:** For this purpose, 150 students were selected by random sampling. Data was collected by using of social protection by Philips, Zuckerman's Sensation Seeking and Kordlo's attitude-orientation about having pre-marital relations questionnaires and were analyzed by using the multiple regressions. **Results:** The findings of this research showed that there is a significant negative correlation ( $r = -0.61$ ) between the attitudes to pre-marital relations and social support and a significant positive correlation ( $r = 0.63$ ) with sensation seeking. The attitudes to pre-marital relations has a significant positive correlation all components of social support (friends, others and family) and a significant negative correlation with all the components of sensation seeking (sensation seeking, experience seeking and adventure). **Conclusion:** Also, the predictive role of social support and sensation seeking was approved and among the components of social support, family factors and others and among the component of sensation seeking, experience and adventure-seeking could predict the attitudes to pre-marital relations ( $p < 0.05$ ).

## 1. Introduction

Students are individuals who, due to special circumstances, the transition from one stage to another stage, down the adaptability and coping with stressful situations, can have periods of emotional instability, concern for the future, amount of courses, low social support, or vice versa be in swinging conditions that can express new behaviors and emotional manifestations (Alexander and Harrison, 2013; quoted in Davarniya et al., 2014). On the other hand, changes in the value system and structural change in Iran, gradually pave the way for the emergence of new patterns of sexual behavior on the part of Iran's youth; the formation of new values and the emergence of new patterns of behavior that act as responses to their not satisfied of their internal needs; despite that emotional and sexual intercourse before marriage or outside of marriage is unlike the traditional, religious, cultural even legally norms in Iran (Khalajabadi Farahani et al., 2011); some evidence implies an increasing trend in recent years of such association among young people; more than half of female students experience courting friendship with the opposite sex before marriage in Tehran in the 2001 to 2011 and about a quarter of them experience a closer relationship includes sexual contact (Khalajabadi Farahani and Mehryar, 2010). Reviewing the research literature shows that since the mid 1970's increasing interest in the role of social support as an outer coping resource. Social support through an intermediary role between Stressors life and physical and mental problems as well as strengthening cognitive or decreasing experienced stress, improves mental and physical health and quality of life among the and help the management of mental stress and mental called corms, reduce the possibility of disease, accelerate recovery of sickness, reduce mortality and provide mental health (Aass et al., 1997). The influence variable of internal and external of person is sensation seeking; One of the most important factors that affect people's willingness to risk behaviors. Sensation seeking is a structure that Eysenck raised it as a feature of extraversion at first and

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then Mc-Daniel, Zuckerman, (2003) extended it. Studying the background of research showed that sensation seeking has a relationship with alcohol abuse promiscuous sexual activity (Williams et al., 1992), multiple sex partner impulsivity (Hurd and Bachard, 1997), excessive gambling (Mc-Daniel and Zuckerman, 2003), misconduct (Arnett, 1990), dangerous and eventful sports (Goma et al., 2012). In risky behavior, in addition to certain personality traits with range of not-so-wide such as sensation seeking we are faced with broad personality factors such as compatibility and conscientiousness as well, which are also derived from the theory of the big five personality factors. Miller, Zimmerman, Logan, Livekfeld and Clayton (Miller et al., 2004) found that two factors of openness to experience and extraversion of the five personality factors, significantly associated with sexual risk behaviors. Theakston, Stewart, Dawson, Knowlden-Loewen, Lehman, (2004) also showed that extraversion has inverse relationship with alcohol in order to cope with negative emotions and positive relationship with alcohol for pleasure (Salmani et al., 2014). According to the research conducted within and outside the country, this study aims to predict attitudes to pre-marital relations centered approach to social protection and sensation seeking, plan deals with several questions: Is there a relationship between social support and its components with attitudes to pre-marital relations? Is there relationship between sensation seeking and its components with attitudes to pre-marital relations? What amount of attitudes to pre-marital relations can be predicted and explained by social and emotional support by students?

## 2. Review of Literature

The phenomenon of socializing and being girlfriend or boyfriend and pre-marital relations and attitude toward it can be studied of various theoretical perspectives and in different areas. Social psychological perspective (the theory of absorption and attraction and attachment theory to explain how they relate to others and to explain to romantic relationships); Sociolinguistics (social disorganization theory and general deviations), the theory of cultural evolution and value of which seeks to understand how and why change the culture and values and attitudes of communities or because the object under study as one of the emerging consequences of our time; can be cited the Anthony Giddens' theory that the features of modern society and the modern problems of societies in various aspects and even can be cited to the attachment theory of Hittner and Swickert, (2006) the impact of mother-child relationship as the foundation knows secure attachment in childhood and create a lasting emotional bond that a person will have with someone else in the future established a secure link in the future. Given the above, the following hypotheses can be made:

- ✓ There is a significant relationship between social support and its components with pre-marital relations.
- ✓ There is a significant relationship between sensation seeking and its components with pre-marital relations.
- ✓ Social support and sensation seeking can predict attitudes to pre-marital relations.

## 2. Materials and methods

This study as methodology is among descriptive correlational research (no possibility-non experimental) because the research is to predict attitudes to pre-marital relationship as dependent variable with social support and sensation seeking as predictor of undergraduate students in Islamic Azad University of Karaj. In terms of target this research is among the applied research category because the results of research will be help to make new questions and new solutions to students, psychology and counseling centers, psychiatric centers, research centers in the field of student activity and service offer and all the people who have concern for young people so the students can manage their level of sensation seeking and social support (Family friends- society) to build their secure bases. The population in this study was all undergraduate students of Azad University of Karaj. Sample was selected by using the Plant's formula  $n > 50 + 8m$ ,  $n > 50 + 8(4 + 3 + 2) = 122$  (Plant, 2010); random sampling method was used; and taking into account the phenomenon of loss and decline subjects, 150 students were selected. The research according to three variables took place by social support questionnaire of Phillips, Zuckerman Sensation Seeking Scale, and a questionnaire on attitudes and trends to pre-marital relationship of Kordlo.

## 3. Discussion and results

Looking for the distribution and collection of research data through questionnaires extraction, coding and classifying them took place through software SPSS in order to survey and data distribution to achieve information

**Table 1. Frequency of subjects by age**

Age	Frequency	Percent
18	32	21.3
19	25	16.7
20	15	10
21	28	18.7
22	23	15.3
23	16	10.7
24	10	6.7
Not Declared	1	0.7

In table1, can be seen that More samples are (32 samples % 21.3) are 18 years old. However, only 10 of whom are 24 years old.

**Table 2. The frequency of subjects according their of study**

Field of Study	Frequency	Percent
English literature	60	40
Accounting	51	34
Industrial Management	36	24
Not Declared	3	2

In Table 2, the equivalent of 60 participants are enrolled in English literature, this is despite the fact that only 51 people in accounting and 36 students are studying in the field of industrial management.

**Table3. Frequency of subjects in terms of having a relationship with the opposite sex**

Relation	Frequency	Percent
Yes	115	76.7
No	34	22.7
Not Declared	1	0.7

Given that all participants are single results Table 3 shows that more subjects (n = 115 is equivalent to %76.6) subjects experienced an interface with the opposite sex.

**Table4. Frequency of subjects in terms of the number of non-heterosexual friends**

Number of friends	Frequency	Percent
No one	31	20.7
one	22	14.7
two	28	18.7
Three or more	68	45.3
Not Declared	1	0.7

In table 4 can be seen that more samples (n = 68 is equivalent to %45.3) have relation with more than 3-non-heterosexual friends, however, only 16 people have been calling.

In this section, research hypotheses were analyzed by using multivariate regression.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a significant relationship between social support and its components with pre-marital relations.

**Table5. Predictor variables in the regression analysis of the relationship between attitudes to pre-marital relations**

Variable	Beta	standard error	B	T	Significance level	Variance inflation factor	Tolerance
Family	-0.701	0.575	-7.131	-12.401	0.0001	1.127	0.887
Friends	-0.033	0.494	-0.293	-0.549	0.554	1.0604	0.94
Others	-0.145	0.542	-1.4	-2.582	0.011	0.1887.114	0.898

**R<sup>2</sup> =0.586(N=150, P<0.01)**

According to data from Table 5, the multicollinearity assumption of tolerance (all greater than 1.0) variance inflation factor (all under 10) is met. So, the result of regression is statistically significant. Family and others predictor variables significantly contribute to the prediction of attitudes to pre-marital relationship (P = 0.05 or less). Friends' variable with correlation of (-0.3) was not statistically significant to the prediction of attitudes to pre-marital relationship (significant level higher of 0.05). As was observed in the output data, the variable of attitudes to pre-marital relationship has an inverse significant correlation with subscales of friends and others (respectively -0.3 and -0.4) but had a strong inverse correlation with the scale of family (-0.76). So the result of regression was statistically significant. Family and others predictor variables significantly contributed to the prediction of attitudes to pre-marital relationship (P = 0.05 or less). Friends' variable with correlation of (-0.3) was not statistically significant to the prediction of attitudes to pre-marital relationship (significant level higher of 0.05). The similar results with the results of this research are: Khalajabadi Farahani and Mehryar (2010) emphasized in their study on the importance of good family atmosphere and parents' balanced control on the performance of adolescents and as well as the transmission of values and beliefs and express the expectations of young people about relationships before marriage by parents.

Moradi et al., (2010) in his study concluded that female students who have a relationship with the opposite sex have less attention and affection of family and intimate relations and less emotionally with their mother, female students who have a relationship with the opposite sex less comply with legal regulations. Thus, according to the results of this study and the results list edit can be seen that variable of social support and especially family support have an important role in pre-marital relationship.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a significant relationship between sensation seeking and its components with pre-marital relations.

**Table6. Predictor variables in the regression analysis of the relationship between attitudes to pre-marital relations**

Variable	Beta	standard	B	T	Significance	Variance	Tolerance
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		error			level	inflation factor	
sensation seeking	0.035	0.219	0.162	0.74	0.46	1.114	0.897
Experience seeking	0.529	0.39	3.567	9.15	0.0001	1.628	0.614
Adventure seeking	0.414	0.975	6.867	7.04	0.0001	1.684	0.594
Weariness	-0.035	0.792	-0.601	-0.759	0.449	1.04	0.962

**R2 =0.741(N=131, P<0.01)**

According to the data from Table 6, is met the assumptions of the multiple linear bearing (greater than 1.0) variance inflation factor (all under 10). So, the result of regression is statistically significant. Experience seeking and Adventure seeking predictor variables significantly contribute to the prediction of attitudes to pre-marital relationship ( $P=0.05$  or less). Sensation seeking variable with correlation of (0.3) with attitudes to pre-marital relationship and Weariness was not statistically significant to the prediction of attitudes to pre-marital relationship (significant level higher of 0.05).

As was observed in the output data, the variable of attitudes to pre-marital relationship has an average significant correlation with subscales of sensation seeking (0.3) and a strong significant correlation with experience seeking and adventure seeking (respectively 0.79 and -0.75) and no correlation with the scale of weariness. So the result of regression was statistically significant. Variables of experience seeking and adventure seeking are significant to the prediction of attitudes to pre-marital relationship (significant level of 0.05 or less). Variables of sensation seeking with correlation of (0.3) and weariness with correlation of (-0.3) with attitudes to pre-marital relationship were not statistically significant to the prediction of attitudes to pre-marital relationship (significant level higher of 0.05). The similar results with the results of this research are: Azad Armaki and Sharifi Sai (2011) have shown that, by difficulty of marriage and closing the legitimated way of sex, illicit and anomic behavior patterns in society has widened; Salmani et al., (2014) in their study reached the conclusion that there is a positive significant relationship between sensation seeking and risk-taking behaviors and a negative significant relationship between conscientiousness and risky behavior, as well as among the dimensions of sensation seeking the components of risky behaviors and experience seeking predict risky behaviors.

The main hypothesis: Social support and sensation seeking can predict attitudes to pre-marital relations.

**Table7. Predictor variables in the regression analysis of the relationship between attitudes to pre-marital relations**

Variable	Beta	standard error	B	T	Significance level	Variance inflation factor	Tolerance
Social support	-0.404	0.324	-1.902	-5.876	0.0001	1.29	0.775
Sensation seeking	0.445	0.207	1.342	6.468	0.0001	1.29	0.775

**R2 =0.531(N=131, P<0.01)**

According to the data from Table 7, is met the assumptions of the multiple linear bearing (greater than 1.0) variance inflation factor (all under 10). So, the result of regression is statistically significant. Social support and sensation seeking predictor variables significantly contribute to the prediction of attitudes to pre-marital relationship ( $P = 0.05$  or less). As was observed in the output data, the variable of attitudes to pre-marital relationship has a strong significant correlation with social support and sensation seeking (respectively -0.615 and 0.636). So the result of regression was statistically significant. Variables of social support and sensation seeking are significant to the prediction of attitudes to pre-marital relationship (significant level of 0.05 or less). The similar results with the results of this research are: Schwarzer and Knoll, (2007) in their study showed that there is a significant positive relationship between social support and psychological well-being. Langeland (2011) showed that perceived social support predicts 43 percent of life satisfaction (according to the Salmani et al., 2014).

#### 4. Conclusion

Pre-marital relationship between boys and girls is of one of the most important issues of religious, cultural, social and family which can greatly influence on the health of our young people in Iran. Today, this problem has been growing at universities; on the other hand, the arrival of facilities such as satellite and Internet (Viber, Line, Twitter, etc.) to houses put forward different styles of life of communities and different cultures to Iranian audience and they have new options. This may create social change in Iranian society and have changed people's values and behaviors. One of these changes is evident in the field of sexual relations before marriage and in relationships with the opposite sex. So, despite the emotional and sexual intercourse before marriage or outside of marriage is prohibited traditionally, religiously, culturally and even legally in Iran, but some evidence indicates an increasing trend in recent years of such association among young people. By the consolidation of the foundation of the family and strengthen the foundations of individual, family and social support can change the family environment to a safe and healthy environment to meet the physical and mental well-being of young people. Hence, this study also proves that social support and low grades of sensation seeking can be effective in preventing the high-risk behaviors during of this ages and era of being student. As it can be see good and wise friends, parents and powerful families can behave a tremendous impact in the institutionalization of a global ethic issues on today's children and men and women of tomorrow and reduce the scores of risk and vulnerability, family is also effective on the structure of sensation seeking and emotionality of the children. Hence, by citing the research and explaining the mentioned theories can conclude that social support can have an inverse significant relationship withered-marital relationship in each country's youth.

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