Investigate the Role of the Gap between Goals and Aspirations and the Perceived Chance to Achieve Them in Life Satisfaction

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Abstract

Aim: Life satisfaction is so important that taken as the goal of life. The aim of our research was to investigate the role of the gap between goals and aspirations and the perceived chance to achieve them in life satisfaction among a sample of Iranian students. **Method:** The population included all students studying at Allameh Tabatabaei University (ATU), from which 250 students were selected using the available sampling method. The scales for assessment used in the study were Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), and Aspiration Index (AI). **Finding:** Pearson correlation results demonstrated that the gap between the importance of hedonism, community contribution, self-acceptance, self-image and financial success and the chance to achieve them with life satisfaction were negatively significant (P<0.01). Results of stepwise regression analysis indicated that 6% of variance of the dependent variable can be explained by the gap between the importance of goals and the chance to achieve them in the goal of financial success (P<0.01). Multivariate test results indicated that there is a no significant difference between the male and female students in terms of the gap between the importance of goals and aspirations and the chance to achieve them (P>0.05). T-test results showed that male and female students have significant difference in their life satisfaction (P<0.05). **Result:** Considering the role of the gap between the importance of financial success and the chance of achieving it in predicting life satisfaction, it is suggested that managers reduce this gap by creating jobs.

Keywords: Life Satisfaction, Goals and Aspirations, Financial Success, Students.

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Introduction

Life satisfaction commonly denotes a judgmental process in which individuals holistically evaluate the condition of their lives based on their own distinct and unique set of criteria (Pavot & Diener, 2008); a global assessment of life satisfaction refers to subjective happiness (Diener, Pressman, Hunter & Delgadillo-Chase, 2017) and can be considered, along with subjective well-being and quality of life, facets of global well-being. Life satisfaction is formed by reducing stress and satisfaction with biological and psychological goals and needs of people. Various studies have shown that life satisfaction stems from a person's general optimistic attitude and evaluation of his or her life as a whole or some aspects of life such as family, work, leisure, income, and high self-esteem (Zhang& et al., 2018). People with high life satisfaction are less likely to experience problems such as drug addiction or substance abuse (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2011) and are more inclined to seek health and health promoting behaviors (Grant et al., 2011). In addition, one of the factors affecting the satisfaction with life is the quality, quantity and types of goals that individuals choose for themselves. Having goal in life can procure happiness and prosperity in human being. The position and importance of goals for a good and happy life is undeniable and impossible to conceal (King et al., 2006). Some authors claim that the existence and sense of alignment in life is like a key that can unlock and open the knots of problems and cause positive actions in individuals. Thus, many researchers consider the goal-based life as an important factor of psychological health (Feldman & Schneider, 2002). Generally, there are other theorists who state that the way to happiness and psychological prosperity is the result of considering the values, goals, basic needs, meaningfulness and life orientation (Kazemiyan-Moghadam et al., 2009).

The study of how goals, aims, life projects and similar constructs have taken an important plateau on the psychological research in recent years (Bundick, 2011; Sheldon et al., 2019). These studies have used different theoretical bases to approach the main subject; that is: how, why, when, and for how long do humans actively plan their actions? According to a recent critical review (Ramos et al., 2013), previous studies have elaborated on mainly three aspects regarding goals: (1) the temporality aspects of the goals, considering the cognitive processes involved in planning and engaging in new goals (Ko et al., 2014); (2) the intrinsic or extrinsic components of the motivation to engage in a goal, the causes and its costs or benefits in the well-being of the person (Dittmar et al., 2014); and (3) the cognitive and neurologic aspects related to the establishment of goals in a near or a distant future (D'Argembeau et al., 2010).

To address this issue, we will use the theoretical approach of Self Determination Theory (SDT) and its differentiation of intrinsic and extrinsic goals (Luyckx et al., 2017). As it is well established in the SDT literature, not all types of goals are beneficial for a positive development in life; some goals may contribute to increasing well-being, while others may diminish it. We intend to shed light on how the choice of different types of goals could affect the life satisfaction during emerging adulthood in different developmental stages.

Among recent studies based on the SDT, goals are defined as different things that a person intends to achieve in order to have a better life or build a better world, with benefits for themselves and/or for others (Kasser, 2011). This theory refers to two basic types of goals, defined based on what drives the impulse to fulfill it. Some are more directly driven to fulfill basic psychological needs (i.e., autonomy, competence and relatedness), and are named "intrinsic goals"; whereas others are more distant, and driven to satisfy these needs only indirectly, known as extrinsic goals.

Thus, the intrinsic goals are defined as those which are valuable or satisfactory in themselves, and which satisfaction does not depend on the evaluation or approval of others (Kasser & Ryan, 1993, 1996). The four types of intrinsic goals evaluated here are: (1) Self-acceptance: goals referring to personal growth and a better knowledge and acceptance of oneself. (2) Affiliation: goals directed to relationships and social support. (3) Community contribution: goals with a purpose to help others and be an active member of a community. And (4) Health: goals to maintain physical and mental fitness.

On the other hand, the "extrinsic goals" are those in which value is associated with receiving some reward or gaining recognition from others. These types of goals do not provide satisfaction by themselves, but it is assumed that if the goal is achieved it would generate admiration, a sense of power, or boost self-esteem (Kasser & Ryan, 1996). As extrinsic goals, we consider: (1) Financial success, or the search for money, possessions, or a high economic status. (2) Popularity, goals related to social recognition or fame. (3) Appearance, goals associated with the search to have an attractive image according to societal parameters.

However, further studies on motivation theory led to the inclusion of four other factors to the initial Aspirational Index (AI) structure (Grouzet et al., 2005). These factors include compliance goals (referring to fitting in and following the societal established values); security goals (suggesting that people are motivated to feel safe and secure); hedonic goals (that is, to guide behavior based on sensory pleasures), and, finally, spirituality goals (which evoke the search for something greater than oneself). The items that make up these factors include both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects, but reflect a second dimension of the instrument, reflecting self-transcendence goals on the one side (such as spirituality and conformity), and physical pursuits (such as security goals and hedonic) on the other.

Most of the psychological problems originate from the disorder in motivation; it means ineffective methods based on which people pursue goals. Goals play a key role in human behavior and doing anything in life requires choosing and pursuing a goal; therefore, an appropriate goal to achieve psychological health is of particular importance (Cox & Klinger, 2011). In psychology, the processes that enable the effort to reach the goal are called motivation. Cox & Klinger (2002) define motivation as follows: motivation means the internal states of living beings that lead to the arousal, continuation and direction of behavior towards the goal. The methods that people use to pursue their goals depend on various factors such as the avoidance or orientation of the goal, the time frame of the action, the prediction of details, the problems in the way of pursuing the goals, the commitment and the degree of conflict of one goal with another goal, which in they make up the total motivational structure of a person (Elliot et al., 2001; Elliot & Church, 2002). Also, the level of objectivity of the goals and attention to how to reach the goals is an

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important factor that increases the level of achieving and reaching the goals. This makes people aware of the obstacles that stand in the way of reaching their goals (Cox & Klinger, 2011).

   The research literature shows that life satisfaction is related to people's perception of having important goals in life and satisfactory progress in achieving them. For example, most people place a high value on establishing and maintaining intimate and close relationships, and achieving these interpersonal goals has a strong relationship with life satisfaction (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Longitudinal studies by Halisch & Geppert (1998) showed that the feeling of well-being and life satisfaction depends on having achievable goals, especially in people who feel more committed to their goals. Also, people who choose achievable and objective goals have a high level of life satisfaction, feel satisfied with their social relationships, and control most stressful sources (Compton, 2000; Bollini & et al., 2004). On the other hand, achieving all goals does not play an equal role in life satisfaction and well-being. For example, progress in the goals that are imposed on the individual by others or under social pressures, cause less well-being than the goals that the individual himself has chosen (Sheldon, 2004).

   Gibson et al (2004) describe the characteristics of goals affecting people's motivation as follows: First, the goals should be acceptable and not conflict with the person's values. If people are allowed to interfere and express opinions in determining their goals and objectives, it often leads to the expansion of goals and acceptance and fulfillment by the individual. Second, accepted goals can create motivation if they are challenging but achievable. In other words, high-level goals motivate better performance than goals that are impossible to achieve. Third, goals should be specific, objective and measurable. Seijts et al (2004) also state that having challenging and specific goals will result in higher performance than vague goals. According to Cox & Klinger (2011), the relationship between goals and cognition, excitement, imagination and behavior are also important from the point of view of therapeutic interventions. They believe that cognitive, emotional and behavioral injuries are closely related to problems related to goal pursuit; That is, the more problems and damages there are on the way to pursue the goal, the more cognitive, emotional and behavioral damages appear. Also, people's satisfaction with life to a large extent originates from their belief in achieving their desired goals (Kaplan & Maddux, 2002). Kareshkiet al (2012) in research revealed that except correlation between the spirituality importance gap and its achievement with happiness, the gap of importance of goals, aspirations and Possibilities to achieve them; other components have a significant negative correlation with happiness. Results of stepwise regression analysis indicated that 15% of variable variance of happiness through the gap between the goals and the chance to achieve them can be illustrated which is statistically significant. Multivariate test results indicated that there is a significant difference between the male and female students in terms of the gap between the importance of goals and aspirations and the chance to achieve them in sub-goals of pleasure and financial success. Nevertheless there is no significant difference in other sub-goals. T-test results showed that male and female students have no significant difference in their happiness. Rodriguez et al (2020) in research showed that the most important characteristic to be considered an adult was to

be financially independent and to be responsible for oneself, while the least important were to be married and to have children. There was a significant difference in the importance participants gave to intrinsic goals based on sex and age. Giving greater importance to intrinsic goals had a positive and significant effect on life satisfaction.

Various studies have addressed the role of different variables in life satisfaction. There is not, however, any research addressing the gap between the perceived important goals and perceived chance to achieve them in life satisfaction. While an individual's aims in life determine his/her wants and desires for the future, the goals in the current study were considered as equivalent for aspirations and wishes. While selecting their more important goals, participants in this study determined status or access to specific targets based on their judgments on their situation. These goals included safety, hedonism, spirituality, health, community, dependence, self-acceptance, conformity, popularity, their own body image and financial success. As improved life level and quality of individuals need to identify factors affecting their satisfaction with life, this study aimed to investigate the role of the gap between perceived importance of goals and aspirations and the perceived chance to achieve them in life satisfaction among the students of ATU.

Methods

The research method was descriptive and correlational, and the statistical population in this study included all students of Allameh Tabatabaei University in Tehran. To select the sample group, according to (Loehlin & Beaujean 2016), 15 sample people (250 people in total) were considered for each variable, which was selected using the available sampling method and research tools on They ran. After initial data analysis and removal of distorted and violated samples, including missing data, 216 people were finally analyzed; therefore, the completion rate is 86%. Inclusion criteria in the present study were: 1- Willingness to participate in the study and exclusion criteria was a defect in completing the research questionnaires. Necessary explanations were given to the participants before completing the questionnaires about observing ethical principles of research, including informed consent, discretion to withdraw from the research and confidentiality of the information provided. Data analysis was performed using Pearson's correlation coefficient, multiple regression, independent sample t-test and multivariate analysis of variance and by the SPSS-22 software.

Research instruments: Two questionnaires were used for data collection: "Goals and Aspirations Questionnaire" and "Life Satisfaction Scale".

Goals and Aspirations Questionnaire: This version of Goals and Aspirations Questionnaire was based on the previous version (Kasser & Ryan, 1993, 1996, 2001), which consists of 11 fields of diverse goals. This questionnaire contains 57 goals which people may select for them to achieve. Respondents answer each question of the questionnaire based on two criteria: firstly, how much important each goal is and secondly, how much is the chance for them to achieve each goal. For the importance of each goal in life, subjects answered the related questions from 1 (not important at all) to

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9 (very important) and continuingly for the perceived chance to achieve them, they answered the related questions from 1 (I'm not lucky to achieve at all) to 9 (I'm extremely lucky to achieve). Eight of the subscales were consistent with those of previous studies (Kasser, 1996, Kasser & Ryan, 1993, 1996) which include following dimensions: economic success (4 questions), body image (5 questions), popularity (4 questions), self-acceptance (7 questions), affiliation (6 questions), community contribution (4 questions), physical health (5 questions), and spirituality (7 questions). Three additional subscales were developed for this study which include: conformity (5 questions), hedonism (5 questions), and security (5 questions). Grouzet et al. (2005) have used Cronbach's alpha to calculate the internal consistency of the questions across different cultures and to increase the internal consistency of the questions, they decided to eliminate one question of each following subscales: popularity, conformity, dependency, community contribution, security and health, in order to increase the value of Cronbach's alpha of each subscales and total scales. they eliminated two questions of spirituality and hedonism subscales as well; internal consistency of each subtests for the importance of goals and the chance to achieve them reported respectively, economic success,0.84 and 0.83, body image, 0.76 and 0.74, conformity, 0.67 and 0.62, popularity, 0.73 and 0.71,self-acceptance, 0.79 and 0.73, dependency, 0.81 and 0.75, community contribution, 0.75 and 0.71, physical health, 0.72 and 0.74, hedonism, 0.70 and 0.72, security, 0.71 and 0.70 and spirituality, 0.90 and 0.89. Conformity factors analysis was used to calculate the validity, which most derived parameters, suggested that the validity of this scale is appropriate. SB X^2 (979, N= 1854) = 4646/93, P< 0/001, CFI= 0/87, SRMR= 0/050, RMSEA= 0/045 (90% CI: 0/044, 0/046).In the study of SabzehAra Langroudiet al (2014), in addition to examining the factor structure and convergent and divergent index validity in Iranian culture, the internal consistency of importance, probability of achieving and achieving intrinsic desires 0.86, 0.87 and 0.88, respectively, and the importance, probability of achieving and the extent of achieving external aspirations were reported as 0.87, 0.84 and 0.84, respectively. Also, Kareshki et al (2012) conducted the questionnaire after translating and verifying the content and cultural, linguistic, and psychological appropriateness. They reported the reliability of the questions using Cronbach's alpha method and used confirmatory factor analysis for the validity of the structure. The mentioned indicators indicate the validity of the appropriate factor structure of the instrument (RMSEA= 0/09, GFI= 0/92, AGFI= 0/90, CFI= 0/93, NFI= 0/94, X2= 1850/92, DF=815).In the present study, for the construct validity of the goals and aspirations Scale, confirmatory factor analysis was used. The mentioned indicators indicate the validity of the appropriate factor construct (RMSEA= 0/081, GFI= 0/92, AGFI= 0/91, CFI= 0/94, NFI= 0/92).Also, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the whole questionnaire was 0.94 and for sub-components between 0.71 and 0.89.

The Life Satisfaction Questionnaire (SWLS): The Scale of Life Satisfaction (SWLS, Diener et al., 1985) evaluates the subjects' cognitive judgment about their own lives. The

instrument consists of five items, rated from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). In Brazil, the instrument was validated by Gouveia et al. (2009) in a sample of 2180 participants. It presented a single factor structure with a satisfactory internal consistency (0.80) and excellent adjustment fit (c2[5]= 44.78; GFI = 0.99; NNFI = 0.98; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.021). Sheikhi et al, (2010) translated and prepared a version of this questionnaire in Iran, its validity In the Iranian society, and reported Cronbach's alpha equal to 0.85. The exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis results showed that the life satisfaction scale is a single factor. In the present study, for the construct validity of the life satisfaction Scale, confirmatory factor analysis was used. The mentioned indicators indicate the validity of the appropriate factor construct (RMSEA= 0/001, GFI= 0/96, AGFI= 0/99, CFI= 1/00, NFI= 0/99). Also, Cronbach's alpha for the total score of life satisfaction was 0.91.

Results

In the present study, 216 students completed the research questionnaires and the completion/response rate was 86 percent. There were 96 male (44%) and 120 female (56%) in total, which consist of 110 (51%) undergraduate students (37 males, 73 females) and 58 (28%) graduate students (59 males, 47 females).
    At first, the assumptions of statistical tests were checked using the elongation and skewness tests, box plots, and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which confirmed the normality of the data. The measurement model of the two research variables was also investigated**.** Table 1 presents descriptive indicators of research variables.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of the life goals and aspirations in all students

variables	importance of goals and aspirations		the chance to achieve of goals and aspirations		the gap between importance of hedonism and the chance to achieve it	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	**SD**
hedonism	7.15	1.61	6.05	1.90	1.10	**1.69**
spirituality	6.81	1.89	5.65	1.97	1.16	**1.65**
health	7.72	1.31	6.24	1.80	1.48	**1.73**
community contribution	7.83	1.14	6.24	1.79	1.59	**1.72**
affiliation	6.55	.93	5.59	1.40	.95	**1.34**
self-acceptance	7.98	.98	6.34	1.67	1.64	**1.66**
conformity	6.54	1.37	5.79	1.61	.76	**1.42**
popularity	6.51	1.45	5.56	1.56	.96	**1.35**
self-image	6.78	1.61	5.85	1.72	.93	**1.73**
financial success	7.52	1.39	6.08	1.90	1.44	**1.93**

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The correlation coefficients between the research variables have been presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The mean and standard deviation and correlation between subscales of the gap of importance of goals and aspirations and the chance to achieve them and life satisfaction

variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. the gap between importance of hedonism and the chance to achieve it	1										
2.the gap between importance of spirituality and the chance to achieve it	.64**	1									
3. the gap between importance of health and the chance to achieve it	.73**	.69**	1								
4. the gap between importance of community and the chance to achieve it	.75**	.63**	.72**	1							
5.the gap between importance of relatedness or affiliation and the chance to achieve it	.72**	.69**	.77**	.63**	1						
6.the gap between importance of self-acceptance and the chance to achieve it	.82**	.73**	.78**	.84**	.75**	1					
7. the gap between importance of conformity and the chance to achieve it	.66**	.63**	.65**	.62**	.71**	.67**	1				
8. the gap between importance of popularity and the chance to achieve it	.63**	.49**	.54**	.59**	.56**	.64**	.52**	1			
9. the gap between importance of self-image and the chance to achieve it	.64**	.57**	0.59**	.59**	.60**	.68**	.58**	.73**	1		

10.the gap between importance of financial success and the chance to achieve it	.79**	.59**	.71**	.75**	.64**	.80**	.65**	.68**	.64**	1
11. life satisfaction	-. 17*	-.09	-.07	-.16*	-.02	-.18**	-.06	-.12	-.14*	-.25**	1

To investigate the relationship between the gap of the perceived importance of the goals and aspirations and the perceived chance to achieve them with life satisfaction, Pearson Correlation and Stepwise Regression analysis were used. Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation and correlation between the components of the gap between the perceived importance of the goals and aspirations and the perceived chance to achieve them with life satisfaction. According to the table, the correlation between the gap of the importance of spirituality, health, relatedness or affiliation, conformity and popularity and chance to achieve them with life satisfaction was negatively significant. However, all possible correlations between the gap of importance of goals and aspirations with the chance to achieve them were positively significant.

To examine the hypothesis that the gap between the perceived importance of goals and aspirations and the perceived chance to achieve them can predict the students' life satisfaction, multiple regression and stepwise regression were used, respectively (Table 3 and Table 4).

Table 3. Results of multiple regression analysis for predicting subjects' life satisfaction based on importance of their goals and aspirations

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F	significance value
regression	1256.41	10	125.64	3.04	.001
error	7929.97	192	41.30		
total	9186.39	202			

The multiple correlation coefficient was R=.37. This coefficient represents a moderate relationship between dependent variable and the independent variables. Adjusted R^2 value was .09 which indicates that 9% of the variance in dependent variable (life satisfaction) can be explained by the perceived gap between the importance of the goals and the perceived chance to achieve them in sub-goals of hedonism, spirituality, health, community contribution, dependency, self-acceptance, conformity, popularity, self-image and financial success.

Table 4. The results of multiple regression analysis for predicting students' life satisfaction based on the importance of goals and aspirations

Variable	Non-standard coefficients	standard coefficients	t	p value

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	B	Standard error	Beta		
Fixed number	20.16	.64		31.40	.000
The gap between the importance of hedonism and the chance to achieve it	-.05	.18	-.04	-.31	.76
The gap between the importance of spirituality and the chance to achieve it	.02	.09	.02	.19	.85
The gap between the importance of health and the chance to achieve it	.16	.12	.17	1.33	.18
The gap between the importance of community and the chance to achieve it	.06	.16	.05	.40	.69
The gap between the importance of relatedness or affiliation and the chance to achieve it	.22	.12	.23	1.80	.07
The gap between the importance of self-acceptance and the chance to achieve it	-.15	.10	-.26	-1.54	.12
The gap between the importance of conformity and the chance to achieve it	.10	.12	.09	0.85	.40
The gap between the importance of popularity and the chance to achieve it	.20	.13	.16	1.51	.13
The gap between the importance of self-image and the chance to achieve it	-.23	.13	-.19	-1.75	.08
The gap between the importance of financial success and the chance to achieve it	-.34	.12	-.38	-2.91	.002

Also given that the regression analysis of variance table, F values is significant $p < 0.001$, $F_{(10, 192)} = 3.04$. Therefore it can be articulated that life satisfaction can be predicted through the gap between the importance of goals and aspirations in the mentioned sub-goals. According to the beta weights in Table 3, financial success has more important role in the level of life satisfaction score (Beta= -.38).

When there are too many independent variables, it is better to use stepwise regression to find the regression equation. In this method, variables one after another enter into the regression equation one after another based on the order in which the researcher determines. The most important factor of regression which increases R^2 enters the regression equation, at the first step and then other next variables are determined (Mansoorfar, 2009).

Table 5. The results of stepwise regression analysis to predict life satisfaction based on the importance of goals and aspirations

step	variable	Sample	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F	p value
1	The gap between the importance of financial success and the chance to achieve it.	Regression	594.87	1	594.87	13.91	.000
		Error	8591.52	201	42.74		
		Total	9186.39	202			

The multiple correlation coefficient was R=.28 which represents a moderate relationship between dependent variable and independent variables. Adjusted R square value was .06 which indicates that 6% of variance of the dependent variable can be explained by the

gap between the importance of goals and the chance to achieve them in the goal of financial success. Correspondingly, considering that in the table of regression variance analysis, F value is significant, it can be concluded that life satisfaction is predictable through the gap between the importance of goals and aspirations in the sub-goal of financial success.

Table 6. The results of multiple regression analysis for predicting students' life satisfaction.

Variable	t	Standard coefficients	Non-standardized coefficients		p value
		beta	Standard error	B	
Fixed number	35.97		.57	20.18	.000
The gap between the importance of financial success and the chance to achieve it	3.73-	-.25	0.06	.22-	.000

According to Table 5, predicting life satisfaction equation based on the standard scores is presented in this form:

The gap between the importance of financial success and the chance to achieve it
(-.25) +35.97 = life satisfaction

To find whether there is significant difference between male and female students as to perceived importance of goals and aspirations and the perceived chance to achieve them. MANOVA test was conducted.

Table 7. Mean and standard deviation of the life goals and aspirations of male and female students

Variables	gender	the gap between importance of hedonism and the chance to achieve it		the chance to achieve of goals and aspirations		importance of goals and aspirations	
		SD	Mean	SD	Mean	Mean	SD
hedonism	male	6.85	1.73	5.69	1.77	1.16	1.71
	female	7.38	1.47	6.33	1.94	1.04	1.67
spirituality	male	6.47	2.17	5.42	2.11	1.04	1.70
	female	7.08	1.59	5.83	1.83	1.25	1.60
health	male	7.33	1.51	5.84	1.72	1.49	1.73
	female	8.02	1.03	6.56	1.8	1.46	1.72
community contribution	male	7.66	1.34	5.99	1.75	1.67	1.75
	female	7.96	0.935	6.34	1.8	1.53	1.70
affiliation	male	6.39	0.962	5.38	1.32	1.01	1.28
	female	6.66	0.885	5.75	1.44	0.908	1.39
self-acceptance	male	7.83	1.05	6.08	1.59	1.74	1.54
	female	8.09	0.909	6.54	1.71	1.55	1.74
conformity	male	6.3	1.47	5.59	1.56	0.713	1.34
	female	6.73	1.24	5.93	1.63	0.794	1.49
popularity	male	6.06	1.49	5.16	1.39	0.893	1.30
	female	6.87	1.3	5.88	1.61	1	1.38
self-image	male	6.27	1.78	5.85	1.65	0.694	1.90
	female	7.18	1.34	6.05	1.74	1.12	1.55
	male	7.17	1.6	5.61	1.73	1.55	1.97

financial success	female	7.79	1.12	6.45	1.94	1.34	1.89

Before conducting the analysis, its assumptions were tested. The results of Box's test of equality of covariance matricesa showed that the assumption of equality of the covariance matrices was confirmed (sig= 0.16, F= 1.25, Box's M = 32.7). Also Levene's test showed that the assumption of equality of variance error in the aspirations variable was confirmed (p >0.05).

Pillai's Trace Test (.09) was not significant and (p=0.057, $F_{(10,199)} = 1.97$) indicated that the hypothesis of similarity in the means of the society based on the dependent variables for male and female students was verified, we can conclude that there is no significant difference between male and female students in terms of the importance of goals and aspiration and the chance to achieve them.

Table 8. MANOVA results for comparing male and female students for the perceived importance of goals and aspirations and the perceived chance to achieve them.

source	Dependent variables	Sum of square	df	Mean of squares	f	p
	The gap between the importance of hedonism and the chance to achieve it	4.81	1	4.81	.19	0.66
	The gap between the importance of spirituality and the chance to achieve it	69.10	1	69.10	.99	0.31
	The gap between the importance of health and the chance to achieve it	.67	1	.67	.01	0.90
	The gap between the importance of community and the chance to achieve it	8.40	1	8.40	.28	0.59
	The gap between importance of relatedness or affiliation and the chance to achieve it	16.80	1	16.80	.35	0.55
	The gap between the importance of self-acceptance and the chance to achieve it	75.25	1	75.25	.52	0.46
Gender	The gap between the importance of conformity and the chance to achieve it	.06	1	0.06	.002	0.96
	The gap between the importance of popularity and the chance to achieve it	79.54	1	79.54	2.86	0.09
	The gap between the importance of self-image and the chance to achieve it	43.48	1	43.48	1.51	0.22
	The gap between the importance of financial success and the chance to achieve it	52.09	1	52.09	.88	0.35
	The gap between importance of hedonism and the chance to achieve it	5168.30	208	24.84		
	The gap between the importance of spirituality and the chance to achieve it	14383.21	208	69.15		
	The gap between the importance of health and the chance to achieve it	10023.93	208	48.19		
	The gap between the importance of community and the chance to achieve it	6070.65	208	29.18		
Error	The gap between the importance of relatedness or affiliation and the chance to achieve it	9938.77	208	47.78		
	The gap between the importance of self-acceptance and the chance to achieve it	29807.07	208	143.30		
	The gap between the importance of conformity and the chance to achieve it	7310.13	208	14.35		
	The gap between the importance of popularity and the chance to achieve it	5784.44	208	27.812		
	The gap between the importance of self-image and the chance to achieve it	5976.50	208	28.73		
	The gap between the importance of financial success and the chance to achieve it	12358.40	208	59.41		
	The gap between the importance of hedonism and the chance to achieve it	5173.12	209			
	The gap between the importance of spirituality and the chance to achieve it	14452.32	209			

	The gap between the importance of health and the chance to achieve it	10024.45	209
	The gap between the importance of community and the chance to achieve it	6078.42	209
	The gap between the importance of relatedness or affiliation and the chance to achieve it	9955.56	209
Total	The gap between the importance of self-acceptance and the chance to achieve it	22882.32	209
	The gap between the importance of conformity and the chance to achieve it	7310.19	209
	The gap between the importance of popularity and the chance to achieve it	5863.98	209
	The gap between importance of self-image and the chance to achieve it	6019.98	209
	The gap between the importance of financial success and the chance to achieve it	12410.49	209

MANOVA results in table (8) indicate that there is a no significant difference between the male and female students in terms of the gap between the importance of goals and aspirations and the chance to achieve them.

Independent sample t-test was used to compare the means of life satisfaction in female and male students. Primarily, Levine test revealed that two groups have equal variances (F=.03, p=.85) .Results showed that there was a significant difference between male and female students as to their satisfaction with life (t=-1.99, p= .047); that the average life satisfaction of female students is higher than that of male students.

Discussion

The main aim of this study was to investigate the role of the gap between the perceived importance of goals and aspirations and the perceived chance to achieve them in life satisfaction among students. Pearson Correlation results demonstrated that correlations of the gap between the importance of spirituality, health, dependence, conformity and popularity and the chance to achieve them with life satisfaction were not significant , but correlations between the gap of the importance of hedonism, community contribution, self-acceptance, self-image and financial success were negatively significant, and also possible correlations between the gap of the importance of goals and aspiration and the chance to achieve them has a positive and significant relationship with life satisfaction. In this way, it can be said that the greater the gap between the importance of goals and aspirations and the chance of achieving them, the less satisfaction with life. This finding is in line with the research results of Kareshki et al. (2012) and Rodriguez et al. (2021). To explain this finding, referring to the statements of Friedman (1987) and Sheldon & Elliot (1999) can be key and open the way. Friedman believes that if people feel that their lives are meaningful and oriented and are confident about the values that give direction to their lives, they will be more satisfied with life. Also, Sheldon & Elliot (1999) believe that if people choose "self-consistent goals", that is, choose goals that fit their conditions, abilities and situations, it leads to more effort, achieving goals and increasing life satisfaction. Since in this research, students have attached great importance to goals and dreams, but they have underestimated the chances of achieving these goals, according to

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Investigate the Role of the Gap between Goals and Aspirations and the Perceived Chance to Achieve Them in Life Satisfaction

the experts' statements, it is natural that this gap between the importance of goals and dreams with the chance of achieving them, it has a negative effect on the satisfaction of students' lives. In general, multiple regression analysis results showed that there was a moderate multiple correlation between predictive variables and criteria variable. In the review of literature, there was not a research that examined the multiple correlations of these variables. However, this finding can be explained such that life satisfaction is a variable that is correlated with various factors. The combination of predictive variables used in this study showed a moderate correlation with life satisfaction (0.37) and this coefficient was higher than the obtained correlation coefficients with the relationship of each variables. Obviously, when a person has more selective goals and the necessary facilities to achieve them, life satisfaction will be in a high level. The results of multiple regression analysis showed that 9% of life satisfaction variance can be explained by the gap between the importance of goals and aspirations and the chance to achieve them in sub-goals of hedonism, spirituality, health, community contribution, dependency, self-acceptance, conformity popularity, body-image and financial success .The results of stepwise regression analysis showed that 6% of life satisfaction variance can be explained to by the gap between the importance of goals and aspirations and the chance to achieve them in sub-goal of financial success and by considering the beta weights, financial success has the most important role in life satisfaction scores (-0.25). This finding is important in this aspect that previous research did not bring it up very much. Obtained results as well as pointing to the partial contribution of acquisition of financial success as important goals in anticipating life satisfaction correlated to some extent with the result of Murphy & Athanasoud (1999) and Oswald (1997).

The results of the MANOVA test showed that there is no significant difference between male and female students in terms of the gap between the importance of goals and aspirations and the chance of achieving them in the sub-goals of goals and aspirations. This finding is inconsistent with the research results of Kareshki et al. (2012). Today, gender differences have faded so much that this point of view can lead to the equality of the two sexes in terms of many variables, especially psychological variables.

The results of the t-test of independent groups showed that the average life satisfaction of female students is higher than that of male students. This finding is inconsistent with the research results of Porbrat et al. (2021). In explaining this finding, it can be said that the situation that prevails in terms of unemployment on the educated part of the society (especially boys) has caused boys to be less satisfied with life.

Conclusion

As in this study the gap between the importance of financial success and the chance of achieving it has got the most share in predicting life satisfaction, it is suggested that the administrators reduce this gap by providing jobs according to students' educational field

and university type and so on, so that the youth can access a high level of happiness and life satisfaction because life satisfaction is one of the most important needs of human beings and has a considerable influence on our life quality. Our study sample was limited to young Iranian students, and this limitation reduced the generalization of the results to various age groups and across different cultures. Therefore, it can be suggested that future researches should be conducted on the relationship of the gap between the importance of goals and aspirations and the chances of achieving them with life satisfaction among different age groups and other cultural contexts.

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