

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIFE SATISFACTION, PARENTING STYLE AND RISKY BEHAVIORS AMONG ADOLESCENT: SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Issues related to adolescent risky behaviors are common in Malaysia. There are many factors that resulted to these phenomena. It can be related to the internal and external factors such as adolescent biological changes, parenting style, adolescent's life satisfaction, the community of the adolescent being brought up, the culture of the society and so on. The adolescent is a development period where they are in between childhood and adulthood, experiencing changes physically, psychologically and also socially. During this period, adolescent spent more time with their friends, and their emotional re activity increased, which also results in the increases of conflicts with parents. The aims of this study are to evaluate the relationship between students' life satisfaction, parenting style and risky behaviors among the secondary students around Selangor area. The population size for this research is secondary students. There are three questionnaires being administered to the students at two phases. Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT) will be administered during the first phase while Parenting Style Inventory-II (PSI-II) and Multidimensional Student's Life Satisfactory Scale (MSLSS) will be administered at the second phase. The present study intends to explore and examine the relationship between life satisfaction, parenting style and risky behaviors among adolescent. This study expected to that the present study results can provide information regarding the parent-adolescent relationship, adolescent life satisfaction during the school day, and the involvement in the risky behavior among adolescent.*

*Keywords: life satisfaction, parenting style, risky behaviors, adolescents*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Issues related to adolescent risky behaviors are common in Malaysia. It is obvious that adolescents are prone to risky behaviors which cause harm to themselves as well as others around them. However, there are many factors that resulted to these phenomena. It can be related to the internal factors such as adolescent biological changes such as surrounding and parenting style, the degree of adolescent's overall life satisfaction, the community of the adolescent being brought up, the culture of the society and so on.

In a survey done by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2016), for the year of 2015, there are a total of 4,569 cases of juvenile offenders with first offense cases are 4,152 and repeated offense cases are 417. The highest crime types involved are property-related crimes (36.0%), followed by drug abuse (29.7%), people-related crimes which include rape, physical abuse and so on (13.4%) and other crimes such as traffic offense, minor offense act, gamble, weapon or fire arm, infringement of supervision and escape from school.

The adolescent is a development period where they are in between childhood and adulthood, experiencing changes physically, psychologically and also socially (Casey, Jones, and Somerville, 2008). Adolescence is also well-known among parents as one of the toughest periods of human development to deal with and prone to involve in risky behaviors. According to Professor David Tin, this behavior is called "Rebel without cause" (Tin Win D., & Kywe T., 2004), adolescents sometimes just want to be against of everything and everyone, leaving parents to feel so confused towards their children behavior.

During this period, adolescent spent more time with their friends, and their emotional re activity increased, which also results in the increases of conflicts with parents (Casey, 2008). Many adolescents tend to have personality changes as they seemed to be rebellious, act impulsively and have risky behaviors (Konrad, Nat., Firk, & Uhlhaas, 2013). They appear to be different from the adorable children as they used to be with various degrees. Physically, the adolescent is transitioning period between children and adult (Ernst, Pine, Hardin, 2006), and psychologically they are also changing. Research has shown that adolescent's brain is in the process of remodeling which can affect their behaviors (Choudhury et al, 2006).

Despite what the adolescents are struggling with their physical and emotional changes, the life satisfaction of the adolescents should be emphasized. Most of the time, instead of focusing the overall life satisfaction of the adolescents, parents will focus more on their studies with all the major examinations that come along which can determine which university or college they are eligible to enroll. Currently, there are very few researches done in Malaysia to examine the life satisfaction among adolescents. One of the researches was done by Chiong, Siti, Rozumah & Tan, (2016) in 3 selected schools in Selangor with 412 secondary students, shown that their life satisfaction decreases when their age increases. The high number of cases where adolescents involved in risky behaviors is alarming and this issue should be looked thoroughly from various aspects including education, family relationships and social relationship. This group of adolescents is sending signals which depict that they need help and guidance.

To examine the root cause of adolescents' risky behaviors, family structure is one of the most important components to be examined. According to a recent qualitative study done by Haja, Noraida, Nor, Intan and Azman (2016), almost all of the twelve respondents from juvenile rehabilitation centers in Penang and in Kedah are from broken families, lack of parental monitoring and parental control. These adolescents feel unsatisfied with their parents and stressed over their lives. They have poor academic performance. Overall in which we could observe that these adolescents with risky behaviors are unsatisfied with their life as well.

Based on the issues and challenges faced by the adolescents nowadays, this research is to further examine the effect of parenting style and life satisfaction on risky behaviors among adolescents. With the results obtained, it can bring awareness and knowledge for new parents or even parents who are currently struggling with their adolescents' behaviors, to further review and improve on their parenting style. Besides that, this can help the community and the social to emphasize on the well-being of the adolescents in order to improve their life satisfaction. If the adolescents are brought up well and there is a good support system to journey them during this difficult transition period into adulthood, many unnecessary tragedies can be avoided.

The objectives of this study are to:

- Identify the influence of the life satisfaction towards the risky behaviors among the adolescents
- Identify the influence of parenting style towards the risky behaviors among the adolescents.
- Identify the relationship between life satisfaction, parenting style and adolescents' risky behaviors among the adolescents.

The hypothesis of the study:

- Life satisfaction influences the risky behaviors among the adolescents.
- Parenting style influences the risky behaviors among the adolescents.
- There is a relationship between life satisfaction, parenting style and risky behaviors among the adolescents.

## **1.1 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this research is very much related to Erik Erikson's psycho-social theory. According to this theory, the whole lifespan of human development is divided into different stages where every individual needs to master certain skills in order to progress. If certain skills are not achieved, the individual may regress and it will affect the future development (Corey, 2013). Thus, during the identity versus role confusion stage which occurs from the age of 12 to 18, adolescents suffer from seeking their identity, the meaning of life, their life goals and so on. Conflicts happen when adolescents try to test the limits, release their dependency from the parents or caregivers. If adolescents failed to seek their identity, will cause role confusion. Role confusion could mean the adolescents are unsure about their role in the society and the pressure to fit into the society may cause adolescents into risky behaviors and lead to an upset lifestyle (McLeod, 2017).

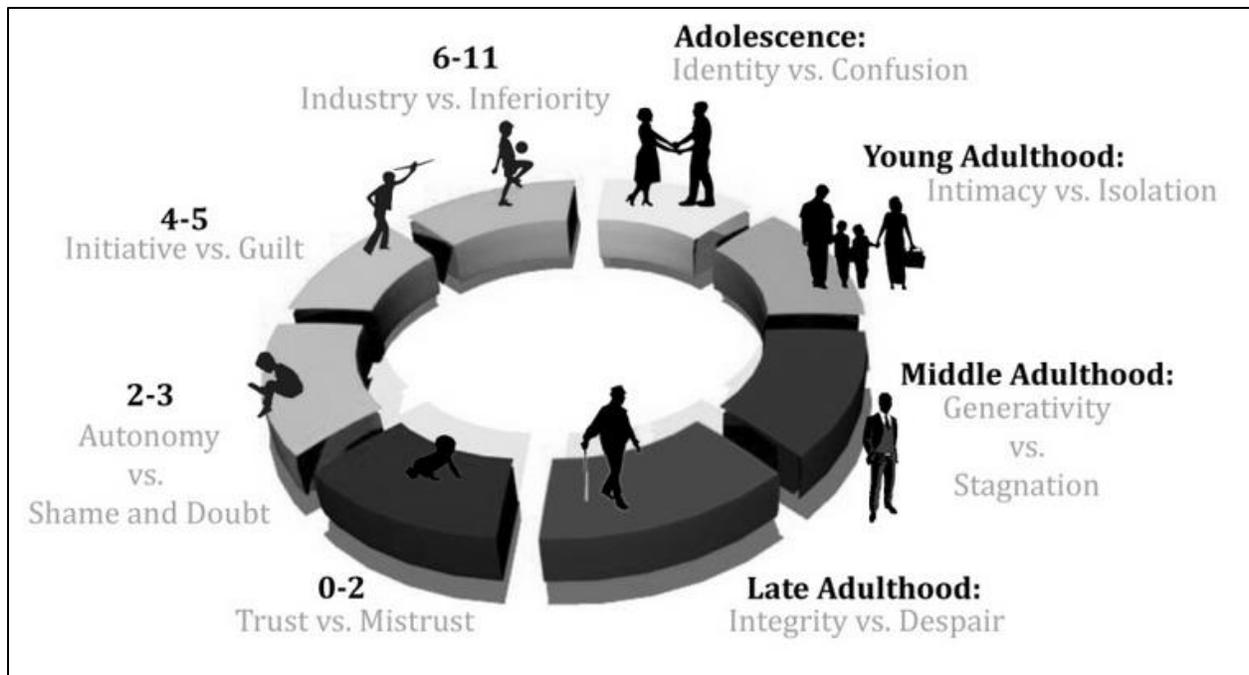


Figure 1: Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

The second theory that is being referred to is the Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow suggested that the basic needs have to be fulfilled first before the higher need can be achieved; with the highest need is self-actualization. Self-actualization is where the individual has reached his full potential and ability to find self-fulfillment (Ciccarelli & Meyer, 2006), which in other words can be referred as achieving life satisfaction.

The lowest need is physiological needs, where a person basic needs such as hunger, thirst, rest need to be met. Then only the person sought for the safety needs, which a person needs to feel safe with a shelter. The subsequent needs are belongingness and love as the person needs to be feeling belonged, loved, accepted and etc. After this, a person then will need to gain achievement and approval from other people, who this is called esteem needs. Finally it is the top of the pyramid, which is a self-actualization need.

For adolescents, it is very common that while seeking their identity, they are also seeking to fit in with their peers in order to feel belonged and accepted. If adolescents are belongingness and esteem needs are not fulfilled, they might not proceed to the highest need which is self-actualization.

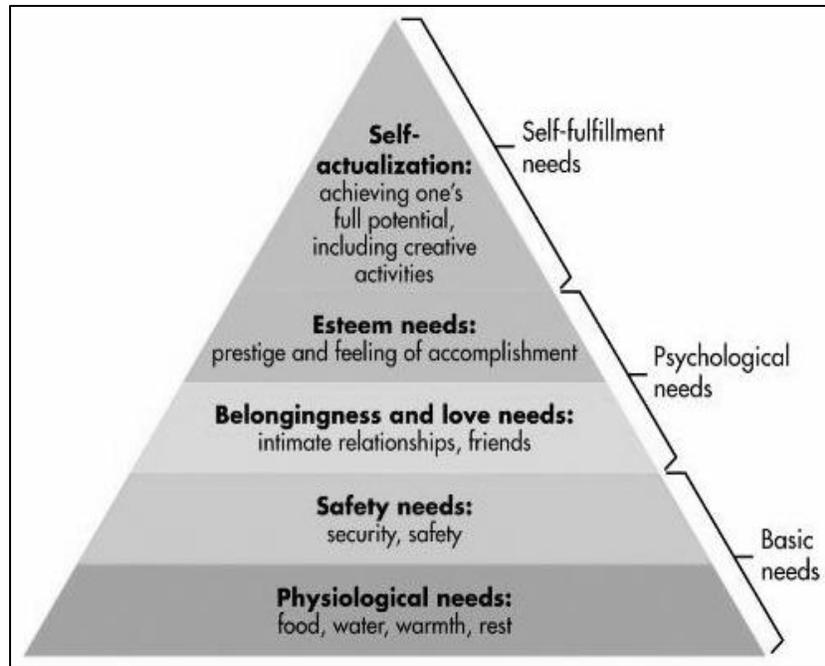


Figure 2: Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

### 1.2 The Research Framework

The proposed research framework based on the scope of the study and theories related to this research as presented in Figure 3 below.

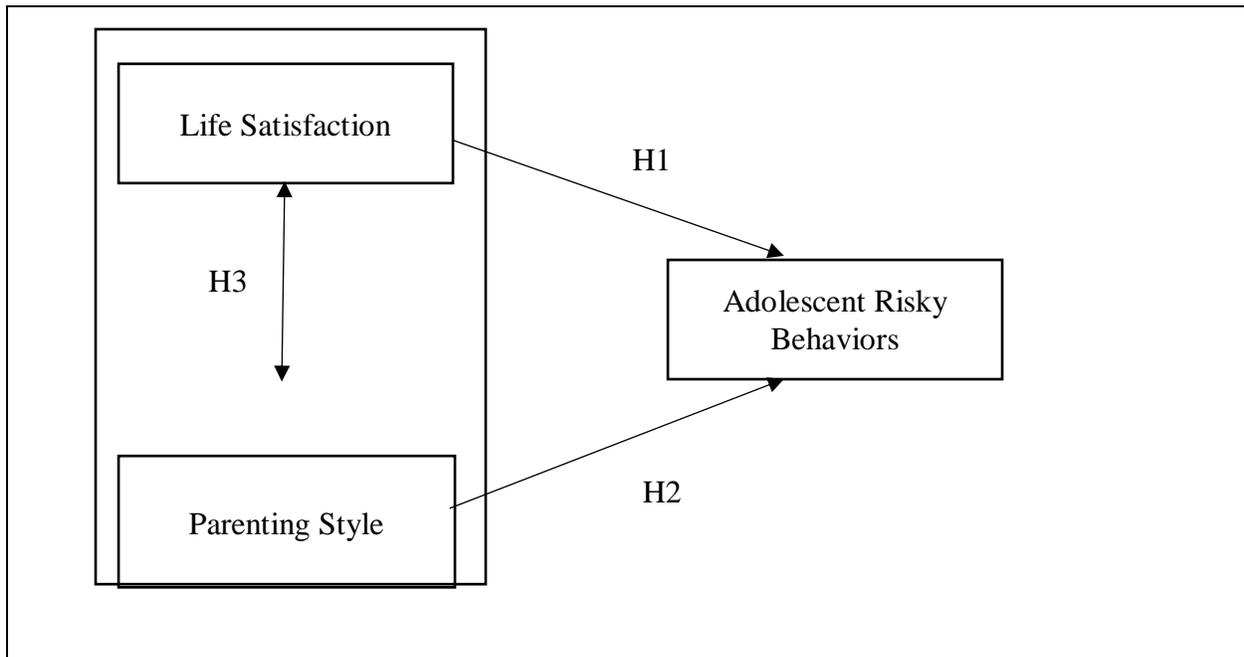


Figure 3: The research framework

In this study the researchers would like to know whether life satisfaction influences the risky behaviors among the adolescents, whether parenting style influences the risky behaviors among the adolescents and also to test whether there is a relationship between life satisfaction, parenting style and risky behaviors among the adolescents.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Life Satisfaction**

A study was done by Haja, Noraida, Nor, Intan, and Azman, (2016) which conducted in depth interviews with 12 juveniles in a rehabilitation center in Penang and Kedah, found that adolescents are unhappy and unsatisfied with their life and feel stressed mainly because of a broken family and poor relationship with their parents. These adolescents have poor academic performance and only 50% of the respondents have completed form 5 or SPM. This group of adolescents starts seeking happiness and satisfaction from peers which unfortunately these peers are also involved in risky behaviors.

Another recent research was done by Chiong, Siti, Rozumah & Tan, (2016) examined the life satisfaction among the adolescents in Selangor. The result from this research showed that 47.8% of the adolescents scored high overall life satisfaction. Life satisfaction with the family is the highest scored compared with others. Family structure was categorized into intact and non-intact and it has shown that family structure has a significant difference between adolescents living in which type of family structure. Adolescents who live with their biological parents have higher life satisfaction compared to adolescents who live with their non-intact families such as single family, step-parent or no parents. This situation has higher possibilities of developed into low life satisfaction. Besides, it shows that male adolescents have higher satisfaction in school construct, while female adolescents score higher in living environment construct.

A study done by Onder & Yilmaz (2012) found that if the adolescents experience life satisfaction from school, they will have less risky behaviors. Life satisfaction has been measured with receiving support from teachers and peers, feeling of belonging to the school, and mixing with peers who have positive life style. Besides that, life satisfaction also can be perceived from a family where adolescents receive support and effective communication with the family will help them to feel valued and finding their own identities. Another study found that there is a significant relationship with adolescents' life satisfaction and coping tactics of conciliation. Conciliation is when adolescents communicate patiently with their parents during the parental-adolescent conflict rather than other coping tactics such as assertion, avoidance and third party intervention. It clearly shows that if there is effective communication during the conflict, adolescents tend to have higher life satisfaction (Zhao, Xu, Wang, Jiang, Zhang & Wang, 2015).

Thus overall it is clearly indicated from various studies around the world that adolescents' life satisfactions greatly influence their involvement in risky behaviors. If they are satisfied with their life in general, they would not need to engage in behaviors that can hurt the people around them whom they loved and cared for.

## 2.2 Parenting Style

There are many researches done regarding the relationship between parenting style and adolescents risky behaviors. A study done by Ming (2012) found that low parenting control towards the adolescents is associated with high level of risky behaviors among the adolescents. The parenting style in this research mainly is focusing on the parental control which is either constant monitoring or loose parental control. This study also mentioned that parenting control can be used as a tool to predict the adolescents' risky behaviors.

Another longitudinal study was done by Kahn, Holmes, Farley, and Kim-Spoon (2015) which examine parenting style, based on the quality of the relationship between parents and adolescents such as the level of intimacy, open communication, trust, and security. Findings from this study show that parent-adolescent relationship does have a significant relationship with the adolescents' involvement in risky sexual behaviors. This is only significant for adolescents who have low self-control and thus have higher delay discounting on risky sexual behaviors.

As mentioned earlier, the qualitative study done in Malaysia by Haja *et al.*, (2016) concluded that most of the adolescents have a poor relationship with their families and they do not share intimacy with their parents. Some parents do not even realize their child has stayed overnight outside which shows loose parental control over their children. Some parents either give too much freedom to the children or go to the other extreme which constantly beat and scold them. These adolescents couldn't receive enough attention and love from their parents and they opt for risky behaviors which at least can fit in among their friends.

## 2.3 Risky Behaviors among Adolescents

Adolescents are facing tremendous changes during the transition period from childhood and yet to entering into adulthood. During this period, adolescents are having changes in biologically, emotionally and also psychologically. From the biological aspects, it does greatly impact as for how adolescents tend to engage in risky behaviors.

Study done by Casey, Jones, and Somerville (2011), found that the prefrontal cortex of the brain which functions in rational decision making, emotional regulation and other higher cognitive abilities are developed much slower than the sub-cortical areas in the brain which are a reward prone decision making and prone to follow the emotions instead. In other words, sub cortical areas are more mature than prefrontal cortex in the brain of adolescents, which may cause them more prone to engage in risky behaviors than rationalizing the whole situation and make an appropriate decision. This is different from children and adult where both the prefrontal cortex and sub cortical areas are developed at the same pace.

Besides the unique development of the brain in the adolescents, hormones production affected adolescents as well. Testosterone and oestrogen reach their peak from the day of delivery until the first three months, and then they drop rapidly. At the stage of adolescence, they rise again until they reach the levels same as an adult at a late stage of adolescence (Sinclair et al., 2014). For girls, estrogen and progesterone affect the breast development, pubic hair and monthly menses cycle. It

is normal when these hormones are largely produced to ensure the complete the secondary sexual development. A study was done by Konrad, Nat, Firk, Uhlhaas. (2013), concluded that there are a lot of steroid receptors in the brain of adolescents, which can accept these growth hormones of testosterone and estrogen. With the overproduction of the growth hormones, the amygdala is over stimulated, thus also stimulate the negative emotions such as fear and anger in adolescents too.

Other than the biological factors that may result in the adolescents engage in more risky behaviors, there are many studies show that adolescents are prone to these impulsive behaviors. Another research done in Hong Kong for 3328 secondary one Chinese students found that over 60% of the students engaged in cheating and speaking the foul language. From this research, a significant number of students responded that they have the tendency to engage in other risky behaviors such as drinking and gambling in the coming 2 years. Males and females reacted differently towards the risky behaviors with a male are more engaged in the externalized risky behaviors such as gambling, fighting whereas the female is more internalized such as suicidal thoughts (Shek, Ma, and Tang, 2012).

## **2.4 Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Theory**

A study was done by Abrihem (2014) related to the effect of parenting style on the adolescents' psycho-social behavior based on Erik Erikson's psycho-social theory, found that authoritative parents provide the best psycho-social development for the adolescents. Especially during this identity versus role confusion stage of the adolescents, according to Erikson, if the parents able to provide support and guide the adolescents to explore themselves, these adolescents are able to grow into the next psycho-social development. In other words, if adolescents able to find their identity during this stage with the help and support from their parents, they will have more self-esteem, possess autonomy over their emotions and able to establish a healthy relationship with people around them. Contrary, if the parents could not provide what is needed or being over-control towards the adolescents, they might seek support and acceptance from another party.

For authoritarian parents, they are more likely to influence adolescents' psycho-social behavior by showing their psychological and behavior control over the adolescents. Parents use psychological control by manipulating the thoughts and feelings of the adolescents; whereas they use behavior control to structure adolescents' behaviors. This will cause the adolescents to be more obedient and submissive when there were children and later may develop into risky behaviors adolescents' stage as they reject such control from their parents.

For permissive parenting style, adolescents are more likely to act aggressively, not keen to take up responsibilities and more prone to some risky behaviors such as drug abuse, especially when influenced by their peers. These adolescents usually dropout from school because they know parents have no expectation of their education. It gives tremendous negative impact on the psychosocial development for the adolescents.

## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

The research design for this research is descriptive research which it is administered via questionnaires with the purpose to evaluate the relationship between students' life satisfaction, parenting style and risky behaviors among the secondary students. This is a quantitative approach as the study solely depends on the questionnaire.

### **3.2 Population and Sample Size**

The population size for this research is secondary students, from the age of 13 years old to 17 years old which is from Form One to Form Five in a secondary school. The population size of this research is considerably high. The total of students participated of these three secondary schools has reached up to 3,835 students, with 47% (n=1,803) of the total are male students and 58% (n=2,032) are female students. It is regardless of ethnic, race, religion and family background. The age groups of students are further narrow down and selected because it is during this period that adolescents are prone to risky behaviors and easily being affected by peer pressure in involving juvenile acts.

The survey will be conducted in the secondary schools around Selangor area. The schools are randomly selected and also obtained the support and approval from the principals of the schools. The schools that involve in this research are Sekolah Menengah USJ 13 (SMK USJ 13); Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Damansara Jaya (SMKDJ) and Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Puchong Utama 1 (SMKPU1). The sample size for this research will be based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample size which is for 3,500 population the sample size is 346 respondents will be participate in this research.

### **3.3 Instrumentation**

For this research, there are three questionnaires being administered to the students at two phases. Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT) will be administered during the first phase while Parenting Style Inventory-II (PSI-II) and Multidimensional Student's Life Satisfactory Scale (MSLSS) will be administered at the second phase. Questionnaires will be distributed to all the students from age 13 to age 15 to obtain the results. It will be done during one session of the class with the assistance of the teacher to monitor the class. Using questionnaires for this research has some advantages which are we able to approach a large number of students in different schools with less time and human effort needed. Besides that, it is a cost effective method with just printing cost and other minor miscellaneous expenses. Furthermore, for secondary school students, they are more willing to take part in this research because it does not need their long term commitment and also less invasive especially to those students who are not willing to open up in a qualitative interview.

### 3.3.1 Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT)-Rahdert (1991)

The instruments used in this research contain three surveys and will be conducted in two phases. During the first phase, POSIT will be administered to the students. POSIT is developed by Dr. Rahdert in 1991 and is used to identify and referral of the high and low delinquency or aggressive behavior, substance use of abuse and another area of the students. This assessment tool is developed by the National Institute on Drug Abuse of National Institutes of Health.

It measures the 10 scales or problem areas, which are substance use and abuse, physical health, mental health, family relations, peer relations, education status (eg: learning disabilities or disorders), vocational status, social skills, leisure and recreation and the last construct is aggressive behavior or delinquency. The administration time is approximately 20 to 30 minutes. It is two scoring systems and with very straightforward 139 items. It is a Yes-No scoring system from the original module, but to accommodate to this research, the modification has been made on the scoring systems to a 6-point Likert scale. According to European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (2008), POSIT is a useful assess adolescents in drug abuse, with the accuracy of 84% and positive results in internal validity. Kappa coefficients for all scales is .42 to .73, indicates good reproducibility. The alpha scores are  $>.70$  for substance use and abuse, mental health status, educational status and aggressive behavior; whereas it has lower alpha scores for others construct (Knight, Goodman, Pulerwitz, & DuRant, 2001).

Particular questions that are associated with the type of construct are also listed in Table 1 below with the example of questions shown in the table below.

Table 1: Questions those are associated with the type of construct with an example of questions.

No	Type of Construct	Number of Questions
1	Substance use and abuse	3,10,37,45,58,67,81,82,83,95,97,99,100,104,108,112 Eg: Have you had a car accident while high on alcohol or drugs?
2	Physical health	9,11,12,18,22,32,35,70,73,102,136, Eg: Have you recently either lost or gained more than 10 pounds?
3	Mental health	8,13,19,38,42,56,75,76,77,96,113,119,123,130,64 Eg: Do you easily get frightened?
4	Family relations	6,7,25,27,36,40,53,57,59,68,80,88,89,114,115,127,132 Eg: Do your parents or guardians argue a lot?
5	Peer relations	2,4,14,17,21,34,54,62,74,85,90,94,111,118,125,129 Eg: Do people your own age like and respect you?

6	Education status	33,41,46,48,93,103,107,117,120,121,131,133 Eg: Do you plan to get a diploma (or already have one)?
7	Vocational status	16,29,39,49,63,66,72,78,79,87,92,98,106,134 Eg: Do you know how to get a job if you want one?
8	Social skills	5,24,44,50,60,61,84,91,101,110,116,122,124,128,137 Eg: Are you a good listener?
9	Leisure and recreation	1,30,47,51,52,126,135 Eg: Do you have a hobby you are really interested in?
10	Aggressive behavior or delinquency	15,20,23,26,28,31,43,55,65,69,86,105,109,138,139 Eg: Do you threaten or hurt people?

### 3.3.2 Parenting Style Inventory-II (PSI-II)

During the second phase, the students will be administered PSI-II assessment tool. PSI-II is modified by Nancy Darling in 1997 based on the PSI-I with the purpose of assessing the three aspects of mother's parenting style which are demandingness, responsiveness emotionally towards the children and autonomy-granting. PSI-II is a revised version of PSI-I, mainly is to increase the internal consistency and variability of the items. PSI-II has the acceptable reliability of demandingness = .72, responsiveness = .74 and autonomy-granting = .75. PSI-II has a five-response format (Darling N. & Toyokawa T., 1997). Example of the questions for responsiveness, autonomy-granting and demandingness subscale are such as "My mother hardly ever praises me for doing well", "My mother gives me a lot of freedom" and "If I don't behave myself, my mother will punish me" accordingly are also mentioned.

### 3.3.3 Multidimensional Student's Life Satisfactory Scale (MSLSS)

MSLSS used in this research is the 2001 version developed by Scott Huebner from Department of Psychology, University of South Carolina. It is an assessment helps to provide a general overview of adolescent's overall life satisfaction from five aspects which are family, friends, school, living environment and self. It has 40-items with very short sentences and straightforward 6-point agreement format. It can be completed within 15 minutes. MSLSS has shown different reliability from various studies but it is range from .70s to .90s. Test-retest coefficients also range from .70 to .90 for two and four week periods of time. Thus, this test is reliable and valid to be administered.

The example question for family construct is "My parents and I doing fun things together"; for friends is "My friends treat me well"; for school is "I wish I didn't have to go to school"; for living environment is "I like my neighborhood"; and finally for self is "I like myself".

### **3.4 Data Collection Procedures**

For data collection, the procedure of cluster sampling is being used. All the Form One to Form five students participated in this research are regardless race, ethnic, religious and gender. With this large population, using cluster sampling is appropriate to gain a large amount of data.

The researchers will need to communicate with the principals and explained in details the purpose of this study. Upon mutual agreement, with the help of the assigned teachers, the classes to participate will be identified. The teachers involved will be briefed on the purpose and method of this research, and then the teachers will inform the class about the questionnaire beforehand. The researcher should conduct the survey on the agreed dates on each respective class. Questionnaires are distributed and the whole process took approximately 45 minutes with 5 minutes break between phase 1 and phase 2. Students should be going back to their same desk to complete the phase 2 questionnaire because the questionnaire in phase 1 and phase 2 are related. The data will be then collected and processed via “Statistical Package for Social Science” (SPSS).

### **4.0 DISCUSSION**

A systematic review of the literature was conducted utilizing keywords such as life satisfaction, parenting style, risky behaviors, and adolescents. Databases utilized included Google Scholar, Digital Dissertations, and ProQuest Direct. The search leads to in various refereed articles, books, and online resources. As sources were reviewed, additional citations were found and explored. The paper through a different search engine as it methodology has systematically reviewed the life satisfaction, parenting style and risky behaviors among adolescent.

### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The present study intends to explore and examine the relationship between life satisfaction, parenting style and risky behaviors among adolescent. This study expected to that the present study results can provide information regarding the parent-adolescent relationship, adolescent life satisfaction during the school day, and the involvement in the risky behavior among adolescent. The family and community institution also can get benefit from this study in order to pretend the adolescent from risky behavior

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