

# Family life satisfaction of youth with behavioral problems: contribution of family protective factors in the satisfaction with family life of youth at risk

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## Introduction

This paper is a part of a pilot research of the project **Specific characteristics of families at risk: contribution to complex interventions planning (FamResPlan)** that is carried out by Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia and founded by Croatian Science Foundation (CSF IP-2014-09-9515).

### The overall objective of the FamResPlan project

- to identify characteristics of specific groups of families at risk, their resilience, readiness for change and life satisfaction, as a set of new, under-researched processes which could be of importance for complex family interventions planning

### Theoretical starting points of the FamResPlan project - concepts operationalization

**Families at risk** - families in which there is (at least) one member who is a beneficiary of interventions in the area of education, social welfare, mental health and/or judiciary due to specific risks/behavioral problems; family members are all individuals living in the same household that are family related.

**Family resilience** - effective process of negotiation, overcoming and adapting to the significant stress or trauma (risk); strengths and resources within the individual, the family and the environment (protective factors) that promote the capacity for adaptation and recovery (good outcome) in a situation of adversity; during life, family resilience will vary (Windle, 2011).

**Risk** - the overall level of family exposure to risk factors in different context; the level of risk may be low, medium or high.

**Risk factors** - biological, psychological, social, economic and other events/conditions/features that can significantly increase the likelihood of negative developmental outcomes (Roisman, 2005, according to Windle, 2011).

**Protective factors** - strengths and resources within and outside the family that promote the capacity to adapt and recover in a situation of adversity (adapted from Windle, 2011).

**Good outcome on family level** - satisfaction with the quality of life of each family member and family members satisfaction with family life

**Life satisfaction** - the degree to which people positively assess the overall quality of their life; one of the indicators of quality of life (adapted from Veenhoven, 1996)

**Satisfaction with family life** - the degree of family members satisfaction with family cohesion, adaptability and communication in the family

**Readiness for change** – ones' beliefs, attitudes, and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and the personal capacity to make those changes (Armenakis, 1993; Miller, Rollnick, 2002).

**Readiness to the intervention** - focuses on ones' motivation to seek help or readiness to include in intervention activities (Ward et al., 2004).

**Family readiness to change** - family ability to support one or more members in the process of behavior change towards personal and socially acceptable behavior; it consists of knowledge about acceptable behaviors, the ability of the family to change behavioral patterns in order to achieve changes in family relationships and communication

## Aim of the presentation

Families of youth with behavioural problems are often seen as an environment burdened with risk factors, rather than environment that can be source of protective factors. Therefore, **the aim** of this paper is **to determine the contribution of family protective factors in explaining family life satisfaction of youth with behavioural problems**.

### The Sample

- 109 youth (69.6% male) from 12 to 19 years old, that are, due to behavioural problems, beneficiary of social welfare interventions
- 4 cities in Croatia (Rijeka, Pula, Osijek, Čakovec)

### Instruments

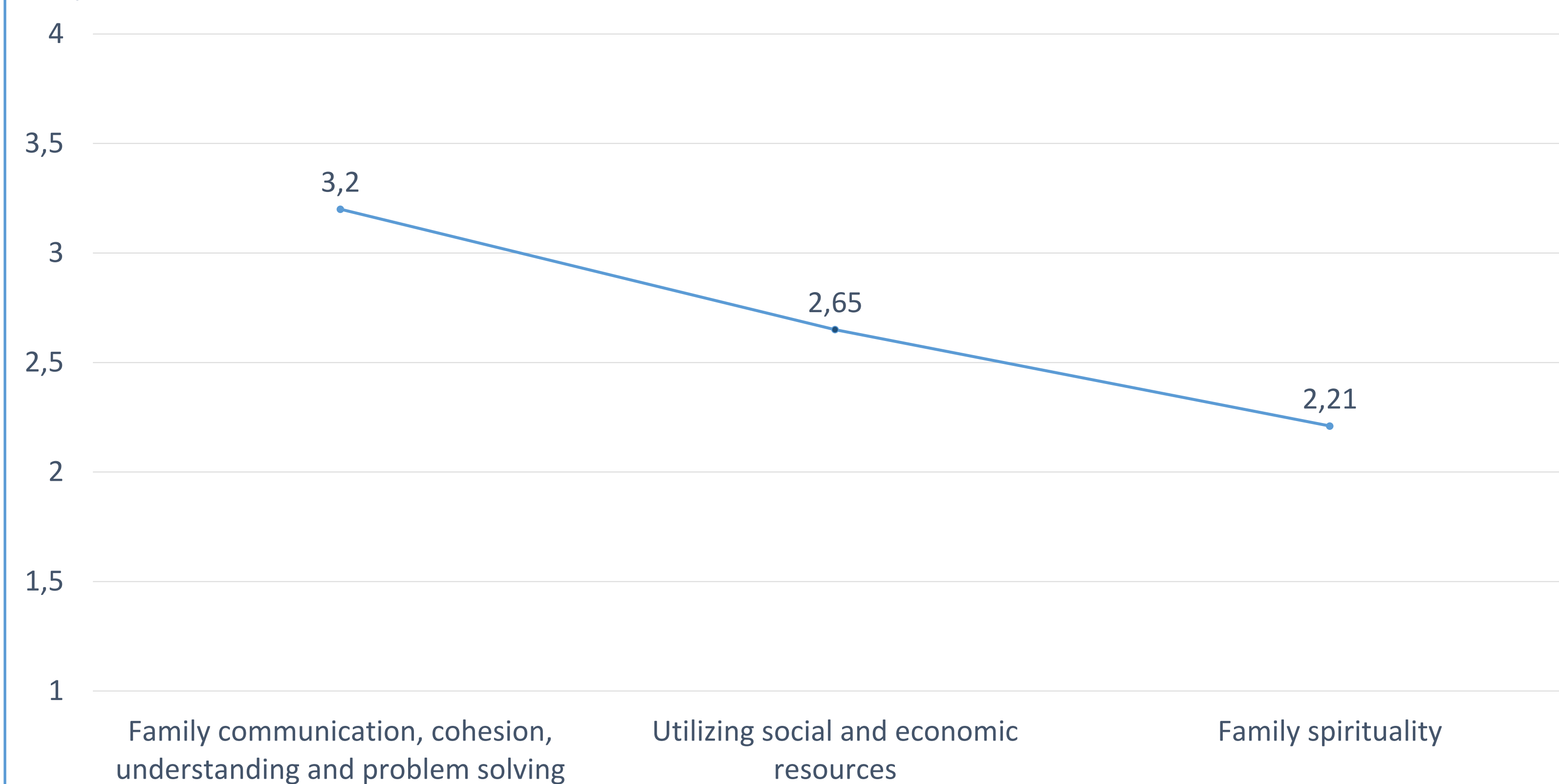
- General data survey (socio- demographic data)
- Family Resilience Assessment Scale, FRAS (Sixbey, 2005)
- Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scale, FACES IV - Family Satisfaction Scale, (Olson, 2010)

## Results

### Family Resilience Assessment Scale, FRAS

- oblimin rotation factor analysis
  - 3 factors
- Family communication, cohesion, understanding and problem solving  
(36 items, Cronbach alfa 0.96, mean 3.20, median 3.26, standard deviation .532)
  - Utilizing social and economic resources  
(16 items, Cronbach alfa 0.85, mean 2.65, median 2.75, standard deviation .720)
  - Family spirituality  
(4 items, Cronbach alfa 0.81, mean 2.21, median 2.25, standard deviation .084)

Graph 1. FRAS - Factor means

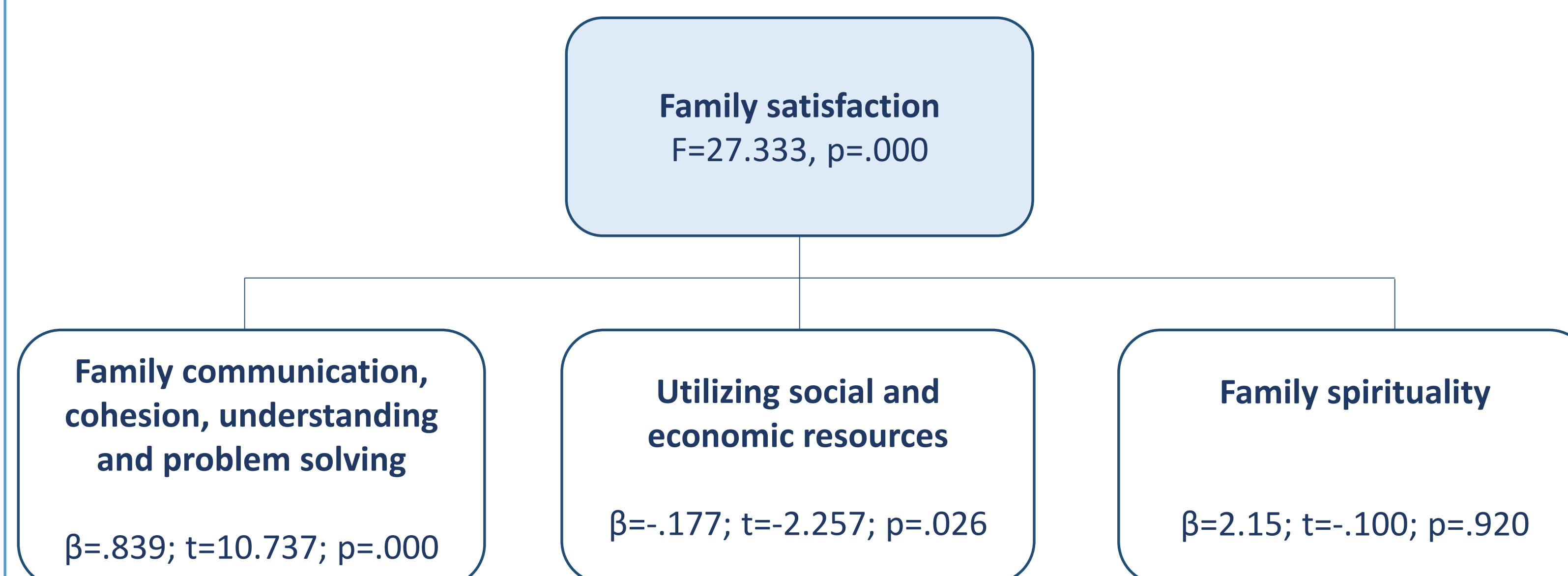


### Family Satisfaction Scale, FSS

- oblimin rotation factor analysis
- 1 factor (10 items, Cronbach alfa 0.93)
- mean 3.86, median 4.00, standard deviation .868

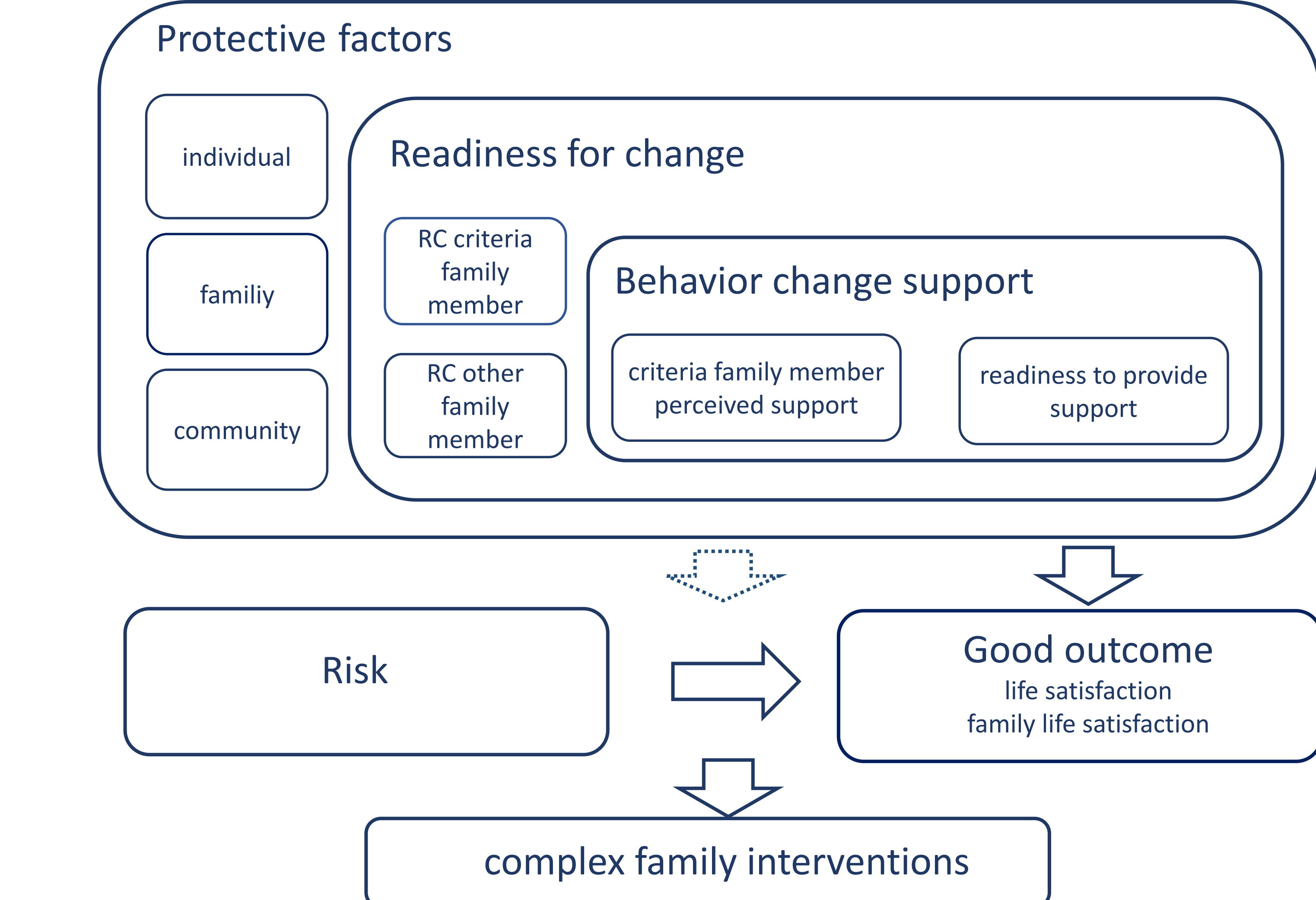
### Contribution of family protective factors to the satisfaction with family life

- hierarchical regression analysis



## Conclusion

- results indicate a relatively high level of satisfaction with a family life of youth with behavioral problems, as well as high level of assessed protective factors in family environment
- family communication, cohesion, understanding and problem solving and utilizing social and economic resources contribute to family life satisfaction while Family spirituality don't
- there is a need for further validation of FRAS in Croatian context and/or development of a new scale for family protective factors assessment



### FamResPlan project sample

- The sample will include families from the City of Zagreb and the Zagreb County area with at least one member being a beneficiary of some of the interventions in the area of education, health care, social welfare and the judiciary system
- Total of 200 families:
- Sub-sample #1: 100 families with a parent as the criterion member (CR)- parents being beneficiaries of the interventions in following domains: mental health, addictions and probation services
- Sub-sample #2: 100 families with children as the criterion member (CR)– children (aged from 12 to 18) being beneficiaries of the interventions in following domains: social services and mental health