



# The relationship between social support and quality of working life with self-efficacy of high school principals in Izeh city, Iran

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explain the relationship between social support and quality of working life with self-efficacy of Izeh high school principals. In terms of nature and objectives, this study was a field study with correlational design. The statistical population of this study was the principals of Izeh secondary schools. In this study, a statistical sample of 250 people (125 men and 125 women who were selected by using random sampling method) was used to collect data from Phillips social support questionnaires, Shirer's self-efficacy, and Walton's quality of life, and its reliability was confirmed. To analyze the information obtained from the questionnaires, Pearson's regression and simple correlation coefficient were used. The results showed that the relationship between social support and quality of working life with self-efficacy of high school principals Izeh have been significant.

## Original Article

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## ■ INTRODUCTION

The estimate of the return on investment in education is the third millennium is the age of management. Every group activity requires leadership and management to organize and lead the group's efforts to achieve specific goals. The success of different organizations, especially educational institutions, depends on efficient and effective managers. Today, the lack of financial funding to cover the current training costs has made educational managers one of the most vulnerable to pressure. The pressure of the educational environment, especially the psychological pressure on the principals, affect not only the principal himself, but also the whole function of the educational system, so the principals' health and the efficiency of the schools cannot be separated from each other. As a result, it is necessary to pay attention to recognizing the pressure of this group in the form of maintaining human resources in the field of human resource management and provide an

environment where managers can work with more desire and comfort, to achieve organizational goals through using their maximum power (Kamalian et al., 2010). One of the influencing factors on managers, which attracted the attention of many researchers, is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is one of the variables that by increasing the stressful effects of work on people in the workplace, increases happiness, and indirectly increases the level of satisfaction with people's lives (Diener et al., 1986).

Perceived self-efficacy is not a measure of personal skills, but means that one has come to believe that one can perform tasks well in different situations with whatever skill one has. Self-reported ideas determine how people feel, how they think, how they motivate themselves, and how they behave (Abdullahi and Nave Ibrahim, 2006).

Bandura (1997) argues that self-efficacy is a constructive ability by which a person's cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral skills are effectively organized to achieve different goals (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (2000) has defined self-efficacy as people's

beliefs in their ability to perform tasks successfully. Gates et al., (1999) also defined self-efficacy beliefs as a consequence of the process of comparing, combining, and evaluating information about an individual's abilities that affect his or her choice and level of effort to perform tasks (Abdullahi and Nave Ibrahim, 2006). Bandura (2000) argues that perceived self-efficacy affects analytical strategies and subsequently the organizational performance of managers in an organizational environment.

Although there is little practical research on the self-efficacy of school principals, the results are interesting. Research by Zimmerman (1995) has shown that self-efficacy beliefs are good predictors of managers' behaviors. Rather, they control their personal expectations to meet the conditions and requirements (Nosrati Seraidashti, 2009). One of the variables associated with self-efficacy is the quality of working life. Robbins described the quality of working life as a process by which an organization responds to the needs of employees by expanding mechanisms to allow them to fully participate in the decisions that shape their lives at work. Quality of working life is a multidimensional structure and may not be a universal and immortal structure (Love and May, 1998). In this regard, a high-quality work environment is known as a basic condition and background for automation and the empowerment of human resources.

Among the mechanisms of employers and managers, none is more influential than people's beliefs about their ability to control performance when faced with important life events. Self-efficacy beliefs affect how people feel, think, how they motivate themselves, and how they behave (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1997) defines self-efficacy as a person's belief that he or she can successfully perform certain tasks and achieve reliable results.

According to Bandura, special expectations of efficiency play a more vital role in human motivation and action than other expectations. In the context of Bandura's self-efficacy theory, it is stated that people with strong beliefs about their abilities show more effort and perseverance in performing their duties than those who are skeptical about them (Biabangard, 2007). Today, self-efficacy beliefs are considered as one of the most important and main factors in explaining human behaviors (Bandura 1997).

It has been observed in most researches that people's self-efficacy beliefs can be more predictable than other motivational variables such as self-concept or self-esteem, and even in some cases more than variables such as talent, achievement, major and job selection, successful completion of a profession and participating in activities (Pajares 1996; Schunk et al., 1987). Self-efficacy beliefs affect people's thinking patterns and emotional responses. As a result of these effects, self-efficacy beliefs are strong determinants and predictors of performance. For these reasons, Bandura argues that self-efficacy beliefs play a key role in people's lives (Bandura, 1986). Research has shown that beliefs about ability have a positive effect on the use of performance, and people with high self-efficacy use more strategies than those who are self-doubt (Biabangard, 2007).

According to the above, examining the relationship between social support and quality of life with self-efficacy of managers is of special importance and necessity and its results will help to recognize the relationship between social support and quality of life and self-efficacy and provide appropriate solutions. Also, despite the fact that the literature on job self-efficacy is expanding, according to the available information, the self-efficacy of high school principals has received less attention from researchers and the factors predicting job self-efficacy of principals have not been identified.

The results of this study help planners, designers and teachers, policy makers, and programmers to design and develop more credible and secure programs for students to use in cyberspace by knowing more about their audience, as well as identifying the impact of influential factors on managers' self-efficacy.

### **Social support and self-efficacy**

The results of determining the relationship between social support, academic motivation, and self-efficacy of high school students in Tabriz and Azarshahr did show that there is a relationship between social support and academic motivation with self-efficacy (Yar Mohammadzadeh and Feizollahi, 2016).

The results of the role of mediating self-efficacy in the relationship between social support and participation in physical activity of students of

Tehran University of Science and Research declared a positive and significant relationship between social support and self-efficacy with participation in physical activity (Agha Khan Babaei et al., 2016).

Also, in a study of the relationship between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence and perceived social support among students of Tehran University, self-efficacy was directly and significantly associated with all components of perceived emotional intelligence and perceived social support (Rostami et al., 2015). In another study, the relationship between perceived social support and academic self-efficacy with adaptation presented a significant relationship between perceived social support and self-efficacy with social adjustment. In a regression analysis using simultaneous input, the predictor variables explained 34% of social adjustment (Alipour Birgani et al., 2015).

A study of the relationship between social support and self-efficacy among employees of military organizations perfectly expressed a relationship between social support and self-efficacy among employees of military organizations (Zamani et al., 2015). The study entitled "The Relationship between Perceived Social Support and Student Self-Efficacy", Tamanaifar and Leith (2013) stated that there is a significant relationship between perceived social support and self-efficacy. The results of the regression analysis showed that family-perceived support predicts self-efficacy. The results of a study of the relationship between self-efficacy, social support, and optimism in predicting mental well-being to develop a structural model in students, demonstrated an increase in self-efficacy, social support, and students' optimism, a sense of well-being and mindfulness in them (Shabani et al., 2012). The relationship between social support and self-efficacy in female nurses of the psychiatric group in China illustrated that there is a significant relationship between social support and self-efficacy in nurses (Wang et al., 2015).

Yusliza (2012) in a study entitled "Self-efficacy, Perceived Social Support and Psychological Adjustment in International Undergraduate Students in a Public Higher Education Institution in Malaysia" found that self-efficacy and social support increase students' adjustment. Additionally, Chu (2010) in a study entitled "Tangible family support and self-efficacy" showed that tangible family support for children is related to their self-efficacy in the use of

the internet. Haslam et al. (2006) stated a meaningful relationship between the variables of self-efficacy and social support.

### **Quality of working life and self-efficacy**

There is a body of investigations regarding the quality of working life and self-efficacy. In a study entitled "Relationship between Motivation to Progress and Quality of Work Life with Self-efficacy of Employees of Selected Hospitals in Mazandaran Province with Multidisciplinary Analysis and Role of Adjustment of Organizational Ownership", there is a relationship between work quality of life and self-efficacy of selected hospital staff of Mazandaran province (Hosseinian et al., 2016). Ghanbari and Hemmati (2015) in a study entitled "Investigating the relationship between quality of working life and self-efficacy of primary school teachers in Hamadan", tried to show that there is a relationship between the quality of working life and the self-efficacy of primary school teachers in Hamadan. Ahmadi and Egtesadi (2014) in a study of the relationship between emotional intelligence and quality of working life with self-efficacy of Shiraz education staff presented the results between emotional intelligence and quality of working life with self-efficacy of Shiraz education staff. The results also showed that there was a relationship between all components of work quality of life and self-efficacy of Shiraz education staff. Nobakht (2011) in his study on the relationship between quality of working life and self-efficacy of primary school teachers in Golpayegan city demonstrated a positive and significant relationship between quality of working life and self-efficacy of teachers. The study of "The relationship between self-efficacy with emotional intelligence and perceived social support in Tehran University students", we can track down the fact that the components of social support family support together 15% of Variance explained self-efficacy, and family support had the highest correlation coefficient with self-efficacy (Rostami et al., 2010).

### **Hypotheses**

Accordingly, the present study is an investigation for the following hypotheses:

1- There is a relationship between social support and quality of life and self-efficacy of high school principals in Izeh city.

2- There is a relationship between social support and self-efficacy of high school principals in Izeh city.

3- There is a relationship between the quality of life and self-efficacy of high school principals in Izeh city.

## ■ METHODOLOGY

In terms of collecting data, the researcher used a correlational research method. The statistical population of this study includes all primary school principals in Izeh. The sample in this study includes 250 managers (125 women and 125 men) in Izeh. This number of sample individuals will be selected by a simple random sampling method from Izeh secondary school principals. In addition, in this study, the following questionnaires have been used to collect information:

In the present study, the self-efficacy assessment of Shirer's questionnaire will be used. This questionnaire has 17 questions and its purpose is to measure the level of self-efficacy in people. The reliability of this questionnaire has been reported in a study conducted by Moghimi Fam et al. (2003)  $\alpha = 82\%$  and the obtained alpha is satisfactory. In Barati and Ahmadi (2006) research, the reliability coefficient of this test was obtained through the Spearman-Brown method at 0.76 and with an unequal length at 0.76 and by using the method of halving Guttman equal to 0.76. The 27-question questionnaire was also used to measure the quality of working life, in which Walton's questionnaire was used to measure the quality of life of eight components and the Additionally, Phillips questionnaire (1977) was used to measure social support. The Phillips questionnaire has 23 questions and its purpose is to measure the level of social support in people. In this research, in order to analyze the data, descriptive statistics methods such as mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, and frequency table are used, and to test the hypotheses, Pearson's simple correlation coefficient and regression are used.

## ■ RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The table 1 shows the frequency, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores obtained in the variable of social support among high school

principals in Izeh city. As can be seen in Table 1, the total average of social support variable for high school principals in Izeh is 19.30 and its standard deviation is 3.09. These results show that the level of social support of high school principals in Izeh is higher than average. The average of social support variable of male principals of Izeh secondary schools is 17.89 and its standard deviation is 2.90, and the average of social support variable of female principals of Izeh secondary schools is 20.52 and its standard deviation is 2.70. According to these results, the total average of social support among female principals is higher than that of male principals of Izeh secondary schools.

**Table1.** Statistics of Social Support Variable among High School Principals

Variables	Groups	Frequency	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
Total Social Support	Men	125	17.89	2.90	12	22
	Women	125	20.52	2.70	14	30
	Total	250	19.20	3.09	12	30

The table 2 shows the frequency, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores obtained in the quality of working life variable among the principals of Izeh secondary schools. As can be seen in Table 2, the total mean of working quality of life variable of high school principals in Izeh is 19.92 and its standard deviation is 15.56. These results show that the quality of the working life of high school principals in Izeh city is average. The mean quality of working life variable of male principals of Izeh secondary schools is 86.54 and its standard deviation is 13.40, and the mean quality of working life variable of female principals of Izeh secondary schools is 97.84 and its standard deviation is 15.57.

The table 3 shows the frequency, mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum scores obtained in the self-efficacy variable among Izeh secondary school principals. As can be seen in Table 3, the total mean of the self-efficacy variable of Izeh secondary school principals is 64.84 and its standard deviation is 8.66. These results show that the self-efficacy rate of Izeh secondary school principals is moderate. Also, the mean of self-efficacy variable of male principals of Izeh secondary schools is 63.04 and

its standard deviation is 7.88 and the mean of self-efficacy variable of female principals of Izeh secondary schools is 66.65 and its standard deviation is 9.05. These results show that the self-efficacy of female principals is higher than that of male principals of Izeh secondary schools. Accordingly, hypothesis 1 focusing on the relationship between social support and quality of working life with the self-efficacy of school principals is attested.

**Table 2.** Statistics of Quality of Working Life Variable among School Principals

Variables	Groups	Frequency	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
Total Quality of Working Life	Men	125	86.54	13.40	64	114
	women	125	97.84	15.57	66	127
	Total	250	92.19	15.56	64	127

**Table 3.** Statistics of Self- Efficacy Variable among School Principals

Variables	Groups	Frequency	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
Self-efficacy	Men	125	63.04	7.88	49	79
	Women	125	66.65	9.05	45	83
	Total	250	64.84	8.66	45	83

Table 4 shows the coefficients of multivariate correlation between social support and quality of working life with self-efficacy of Izeh secondary school principals in the inter method. As can be seen in Table 4, the analysis of regression by the inter method shows the multiple correlations between social support and quality of working life with the self-efficacy of Izeh school principals MR = 0.545 and  $p < 0.001$  at  $p < 0.05$  is significant. These results show that there is a significant relationship between social support and quality of working life and self-efficacy of Izeh school principals. In other words, through the variables between social support and quality of working life, it is possible to predict 30% variance of the self-efficacy criteria of Izeh school principals. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and the main research hypothesis (H1) is confirmed.

At the same time, the probability of regression coefficients shows that social support with a beta coefficient of 0.45 and a quality of working life with a beta coefficient of 0.18 can predict school principals' self-efficacy but among the two variables, predicting social support is the best predictor of managers' self-efficacy.

**Table 4.** Multivariate Correlation Coefficients between Social Support and Quality of Working Life with Self-efficacy of School Principals

Criterion Variable	Predictive Variables	Multivariate Coefficient	Determination Coefficient	f Value	Significance Level	Regression Coefficients
Managers' Self-efficacy	1.Social Support	R= 0.545	0.30	f=52.12	P=0.001	B= -0.45 t= 7.78 p= 0.001
	2. Quality of Working Life					B=0.18 t=3.16 p=0.02

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a relationship between social support and self-efficacy of Izeh city school principals. The table below shows the relationship between social support and self-efficacy of Izeh high school principals in terms of Pearson's simple correlation coefficient.

**Table 5.** The Relationship between Social Support and Self-efficacy of School Principals by Pearson Simple Correlation Coefficient

Variable	Self-efficacy of Izeh High School Principals		
	Frequency	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Social Support	250	0.52	p= 0.001

As can be seen in Table 5, the correlation coefficient between social support and self-efficacy of Izeh school principals is  $r = 0.299$  and  $p = 0.001$ , which is significant at  $p < 0.05$ . These results show that there is a significant relationship between social support and self-efficacy of Izeh city school principals. That is, the increase in the social support score is accompanied by an increase in the self-efficacy score of Izeh city school principals. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and the second research hypothesis (H2) is confirmed.



**Hypothesis 3:** There is a relationship between the quality of working life and the self-efficacy of high school principals in Izeh city.

Table 6 shows the relationship between work quality of life and self-efficacy of high school principals in Izeh city by Pearson simple correlation coefficient. As can be seen in Table 6, the correlation coefficient between the quality of working life and the self-efficacy of Izeh school principals is  $r = 0.353$  and  $p = 0.001$ , which is significant at  $p < 0.05$ . These results show that there is a significant relationship between the quality of working life and self-efficacy of Izeh school principals. This means that the increase in the quality of working life score is accompanied by an increase in the self-efficacy score of Izeh city school principals. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and the third research hypothesis (H3) is confirmed.

**Table 6.** The Relationship between the Quality of Working Life and the Self-efficacy of School Principals by Pearson's Simple Correlation Coefficient

Variable	Self-efficacy of Izeh High School Principals		
	Frequency	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Quality of Working Life	250	0.353	$p=0.001$

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate a direct relationship between social support and self-efficacy. The results obtained from testing these hypotheses are similar and coordinated with the results of the research of Yar Mohammadzadeh and Feizollahi (2016); Agha Khan Babaei et al. (2016); Rostami et al. (2015); Nobakht (2011); Alipour Birgani et al. (2015); Zamani Nasab and Fatji Ashtiani (2015); Tamanaifar and Leith (2013), Shabani et al. (2012), Wang et al. (2015); Yusliza (2012), Chu (2010) and Haslam et al. (2006). Therefore, education officials and planners can increase the self-efficacy of the teaching staff by planning training programs and promoting social support, and parents can increase social support by providing the necessary emotional support for principals and teachers, subsequently increase self-efficacy for education managers and staff.

According to the results of this study, the quality of working life is significantly related to the self-efficacy of school principals in Izeh. The results obtained from the test of this hypothesis are similar and coordinated with the results of Hosseinian et al. (2016); Ghanbari and Hemmati (2015); Ahmadi and Eghtesadi (2014); Rostami et al. (2010); Karimzadeh Shirazi and Razavieh (2008); Mensah and Lebbeaus (2013) and Shioh and Marilyn (2002). Therefore, in order for self-efficacy, sustainability, and retention of experienced and skilled workforce, attention to the quality of working life in education requires the attention of senior management of the Ministry of Education and the Islamic Republic. In this regard, according to the needs of education staff at different levels of work, including material and professional needs, the quality of life of their work can be reached to the desired level and cause more self-efficacy of employees in education. Given the conditions and constraints in the environment, it is possible to create a sense of inefficiency among employees, teachers, and educators, and this thought has a negative effect on their job performance and quality of work. This feeling of inefficiency for the education organization can cost problems such as delayed work and dissatisfaction with the provision of education services, so by improving the quality of working life, we can largely prevent the dissatisfaction and inefficiency of skilled and specialized staff.

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