

# The Relationship between Locus of Control and Social Support with Social Adjustment in Vocational School's Trainees in Tehran

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of current study was investigating the relationship between the "locus of control" and "social support" with "social adjustment" in accounting Trainees studying in the technical and vocational centers in Tehran. The study's population was compromise of all students who studying accounting in the technical and vocational centers of Tehran in the academic year 1392, which 200 subjects were selected from them; and completed the Rutter's internal and external locus of control scale, wax's social support questionnaire and Bell's compatibility questionnaire. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and multiple regression, the results shown a significant relationship between the variables of social support and social adjustment, and also locus of control and social adjustment. Findings from this research will bring an important strategy for support centers, services, educational, cultural, counseling centers and psychotherapy; and with proper training of parents, they can help their children to foster their internal locus of control; and also increase utilizing the social resources in helping people dealing with the stress of daily living, their abilities to cope with personal and environmental needs.

**KEYWORDS:** locus of control, social support, social adjustment

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## INTRODUCTION

In Today's world, we needs flexibility in terms of social adjustment more than any other time. Daily efforts of all the people turn around adjustment, and every man strives conscious or unconsciously to satisfy their varied and sometimes conflicting demands in the environment where they lives. It is important to note that individuals uses a suitable and correct way for adjustment (Abraham and Verghese, 1986). Adjustment is not means being consistent in the congregation and community, but also means knowing this truth that every individual should pursue his own goals in accordance to the social and cultural context or framework (Elliott and Gresham, 2003). Basis of social adaptation is creating a balance between their own needs and demands with expectations of the community, which can affect all aspects of person's life (Dhingra et al, 2005). From a social perspective, maladaptive behavior arises from an inability to cope effectively with stress. From this perspective, social maladaptive behavior is partly caused by a flaw in the social support system. This system includes spouse, parents, siblings, relatives, friends, teachers, counselors, as well as community organizations and government agencies (Collins, 2003). Social supports includes social resources which people are ready to accept them in order to improve their social relations (Cronkite and Mouse, 1995, cited by Laura et al, 2007). Social support systems can be used in emergencies, and provide protection and emotional support for people, so that enhance their ability in dealing with stressful situations and to adjust with situation (Mitchell et al, 2011). Many studies such as Salovitta,, Italinna, and Leinonen (2003 ), White and Hastings (2004 ), Cecilia and Belgrave (2007 ), Weiss ( 2003), Holland and Holahan (2003 ), Brambly, Harry Davidson and Emerson (2004 ), Tao, Dong, Pratt, Panser and Hunsberger (2000 ), Hartap (1983 ) and Qragoozlu, Rahiminejad and Rezazadeh (1387 ) have shown that there is a significant relationship between social support and social adjustment (cited in Fathi et al., 1389). Whitmore (1993) studied the direct effects of "social support" and some other variables on the "adjustment" of 125 women who had suffered a miscarriage in their first trimester, a medical stressful stimulus. In this study, "social support" was considered as a significant predictor of the "adjustment" (cited by Azin, 1390). In a study by Abriaco (1992), while examining the relationship between competences in solving social problems and "social support" and "adaptation" in the 129 students, a significant relationship was found between social support and adjustment measures.

On the other hand, if you learn to assume responsibility for the events, or take them under control; you will keep this pattern in your whole life, and in the face with psychological pressure and threats and unexpected events and mental illness, show more consistency and adjustment (Kirkcaldy et al., 2008). People with external locus of

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control believe that their success and failure roots in external factors such as fate, luck, chance, powerful and unpredictable environmental forces, but people with internal locus of control believe that their actions and abilities (internal and personal factors) determines their success and failures (Biabangard, 1994). Locus of control is developed based on learning and individual experiences during growth. Even more important, the locus of control is based on the individual's perception of life, so it can be reassessed and changed (Klincke, Translated by: Mohammad Khani, 1380).

Farese (1971), Cooper (1983), Leckfort (1982), Gely (1986), Miris (1988), Coatman (1004), Benson & Deeter (1992), Steinhhausen et al. (1983), Jacobson et al. (1990), Miles et al. (1995) shown that individuals with internal locus of control adjust better with stressful events than individuals with an external locus of control, have better mental health and psychological adjustment in the personal and social situations and in all aspects of life (cited by Eatemadi et al., 1390). In contrast, in another study by Zimmer and colleagues (1994) a strong relationship between internal locus of control and adjustment was found (Fathi et al, 1389).

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

**Population, sample and Methods:** This study was follows a correlational design. Research population consist of all students who studying accounting in the technical and vocational centers of Tehran in 1392. Educational administration districts 6 was select through cluster sampling method, and from schools reside in district 6, 5 schools were selected randomly. To determine the sample size, based on research methods, and given that the study has three variables, 50 sample were considered for each variable. For greater certainty, and possibility of rejections, a total of 200 female trainee (single and married) have participated in this study. Three questionnaires were distributed randomly among the students at the time of visiting selected schools. After communicating effectively with students, and provide the necessary information, the questionnaire distributed among 200 trainee, and after considering and discarding incomplete questionnaires, the data were analyzed using correlation and regression.

### Research Tools (procedure)

#### Rutter Internal –External Locus of Control Scale

This scale was developed by Rutter (1966) for assessment of the person's generalized expectations, the internal or external locus of control reinforcement. The social learning theory have been used as the theoretical basis of this measurement tool. The scale consists of 29 items, each of which has two A and B sentences; and 23 of them measures locus of control, and other six items provided for mislead and deviation of participants. In the main forms of Rutter Locus of Control Scale, Getting a high score is indicative of exterior orientation. Scores on this scale range from zero to 23. The minimum score on a scale is zero (indicative maximum internal attitude), and the maximum score that one subject can achieved is 23 (indicating maximum exterior attitude) (Biabangard, 1371).

According to Robinson, Shaver, and Rutter studies in 1966, the half-splitting reliability of the scale which tested on students from Ohio University in America was 0.73; the Kuder-Richardson reliability with 400 participants was 0.70. Movafagh (1375 ) measured the validity of this scale using concurrent criterion validity by mean of Strickland scale for internal-external locus of control as the criterion; and report a 0.39 validity score for the scale (Yaryari et al., 1386).

#### Wax Social Support Questionnaire

This questionnaire was developed by Wax, Phillips, Holly, Thompson, Williams and Stewart in 1986 based on the definition of social support. The questionnaire has 23 questions. It's contain three subscales for assessment of social support from family, friends (each with eight items), and others (seven items). The reliability coefficients of the subscale of family, friends and others between a sample of Iranian students was 0.55, 0.65, and 0.54, respectively (Bavi, 1383). Pasha, Safarzadeh and Mashak (1386) measured validity coefficient of 0.84 using Chornbach alpha and 0.82 using half-splitting method (cited by Hooman, 1384). In this study, a modified version by Abrahimi ghavam (1371) has been used. Grading of this examination is either zero or one. Each correct answer is awarded a score. Earning a high score indicates higher social support.

#### Bell Social Adjustment Scale

This questionnaire has been developed by Bell in 1961, and has five subscales of coping at home, work adjustment, health adjustment, emotional and social adjustment. The whole test has 160 questions, and the answered as Yes and No (Varba and co-workers, 2007; cited by Eatemadi, 1390). In the current study, we only used the social adjustment subscale, which has 32 questions. Bell (1962) has reported a reliability coefficient of 0.88 for social adjustment. Bahrami (1371) measured the reliability of the test using Chornbach alpha, and the alpha coefficient was

equal to 0.89. Also, Naqshbandi (1379) evaluate this tool in a normalized sample of Iranian students, and chornbach alpha coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.86 (cited in Azin et al., 1388).

### RESULTS

The findings showed that internal locus of control and social support are positively correlated with social adjustment of trainees. According to the results, mean and standard deviation of social adjustment are, 11.86 and 3.945, respectively. Among the predictor variables, the internal locus of control have highest average (9.25) with a standard deviation of 4.262, and friends' social support have lowest means (5.95), with a standard deviation of 1.450.

**Table 1. Correlation coefficient matrix of social adjustment variables of trainees and predictor variables**

Variable	1	2	3	4
Social adjustment	0.374**	0.198**	0.196**	0.141*
<b>Predictor variables</b>				
1. Internal locus of control	-	0.002	0.064	0.045
2. Family social support	-	-	0.329**	0.406**
3. Friends social support	-	-	-	0.286**
4. Others social support	-	-	-	-

\*. P<0.05 \*\* P<0.01

According to Table 1, there are significant and positive correlation between social adjustment with internal locus of control and social support from family and friends (P<0.01), and social support from others (P<0.05); So, it can be concluded that the highest student scores on locus of control and social support variables is, the same increase is observed in social adjustment scores. In this matrix, there is no correlation between internal locus of control and social support, social support from family and social support from others, however, significant positive correlation between social support from family and friends and social support from others (p<0.01).

To determine the best predictor of social adjustment among trainees, among the predictor variables, a multivariate regression model for two regular sets, with the concurrent-time and partial correlations method were used.

**Table 2: Regression analysis results of the two models**

Model	Source of changes	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F	P
1	Regression	372.978	1	372.978	27.113	0.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Error	2723.817	198	13.757		
	Sum	3096.795	199			
2	Regression	537.484	4	134.371	10.238	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Error	2559.311	195	13.125		
	Sum	3096.795	199			

<sup>a</sup>. Predictors: (Constant) internal locus of control  
<sup>b</sup>. Predictors: (Constant) internal locus of control, social support from family, friends and others

As it can be seen, calculated F is significant at 0.01 level, therefore, we can conclude with 0.99 of significance level that there are significant statistical relationship between internal locus of control and social adjustment, and the predictor variable (internal locus of control) has the power to predict the criterion variable. Also the calculated F in the model 2 is significant at 0.01; therefore, with 0.99 of significant level, we can conclude that there is a relationship between the variables of social support social adjustment; and predictor variable (social support) has the power to predict the criterion variables.

**Table 3. Multiple correlation coefficients and squared multiple correlation of locus of control, social support from family, friends, and others in the prediction of social adjustment**

critierion variables	Model	Predictor variable	Multiple correlation coefficient	Square of Multiple correlation coefficient	Square of modified multiple correlation coefficient	F	P
Trainees social adjustment	1	Internal locus of control	0.347	0.120	0.116	27.113	0.000
	2	Internal locus of control, social support from family, friends and others	0.417	0.174	0.157	4.178	0.007

The first analysis suggests that locus of control significantly affects the changes in social adjustment, and trainees with higher internal locus of control tend to have stronger social adjustment. And the second analysis shows that all four levels of social support predicted a significant variance in social adjustment after internal locus of controls; As a result, students with same internal locus of control, providing the social support would increase the likelihood of better social adjustment. Therefore, it is concluded that internal locus of control and social support predictor variables has the power to predict the criterion variables. Thus, the regression equation is statistically generalizable to the entire population.

Criterion variable	Model	Statistical index Predictor variable	Beta non-standard coefficients	Standard error	Beta standard coefficient	t	p
Social adjustment	Constant	1	8.884	0.628	-	14.147	0.000
	Internal locus of control		0.321	0.062	0.347	5.207	0.000
	Constant	2	4.119	1.605	-	2.566	0.011
	Internal locus of control		0.313	0.060	0.338	5.175	0.000
	Family social support		0.371	0.187	0.145	1.979	0.049
	Friends social support		0.317	0.191	0.117	1.663	0.098
	Others social support		0.103	0.223	0.033	0.462	0.645

The findings in this table shows that considering the value of the slope, the greater the amount of internal locus of control, the more is expected for the social adjustment of trainees; as well as, the more is value of the variable components of social support, much more is expected for social adjustment of trainees.

Indicators presented in Table 5 shows the relative strengths of each predictor.

Variable	bivariate correlation	Partial correlation
Internal locus of control	0.347 **	0.347 **
Family social support	0.198 **	0.140 *
Friends social support	0.196 **	0.118
Others social support	0.141 *	0.033
<b>bivariate correlation: correlation of each predictor's with social adjustment of trainees</b>		
<b>Partial correlations: correlation of predictors and social adjustment of trainees with control of other predictors</b>		
*. P<0.05 ** . P<0.01		

As it can be seen, all bivariate correlations between all levels of internal locus of control and social support with social adjustment of students is significant ( $P<0.05$ ). Only partial correlation values between locus of control and social support from families with social adjustment of trainees is significant. Based on the correlation analysis, it can be concluded that the only useful predictor of the amount of social support values is internal locus of control, which is 12% ( $R_2$ ) alone of the all projected changes in the social adjustment of trainees. While the share of other variables are only 5% (12 % -17 %).

## DISCUSSION

In accordance to current study aimed to investigate the relationship between internal locus of control, social support and social adjustment, in the trainees of technical and vocational centers of Tehran; findings showed that internal locus of control, social support and social adjustment of students are positively correlated. Significant relationship between locus of control and social adjustment is in agreement with the findings of Farez (1971 ), Cooper (1993 ), Lefcourt (1982 ), Galy (1986 ) and Mires (1988 ) and disagreement with the results of Zimmer and colleagues (1994 ) ( cited by Eatemadi, 1390). These different results may be due to differences in samples size, age, education, tools used, etc. In any case, it if demonstrates the need for further research in this area.

The explanation for this finding could be said, people with internal locus of control will identified stressors and appropriate coping strategies, which are focused on modifying or eliminating stressors (for example, problem-solving strategies); hence, they will experience fewer negative consequences. On the other hand, individuals with an external locus of control are more likely to evaluate the events as uncontrollable, use inappropriate strategies for reducing the negative consequences of stresses (for example, to avoid); but necessarily do not reduce stressors. There is much experimental evidence which confirm this idea that individuals with an internal locus of control, use

strategies focused on problem-solving and have better capability to deal with the issues, and have a greater ability for adjustment (Han, 2000. Quoted by Etemadi, 1390). Also, people with external locus of control, who believe that their behaviors and abilities have no effect on reinforcements and supports that they received, is often give little value to any attempt to improve the situation. In contrast, individuals with internal locus of control believe that they have a strong control over their lives, feel more responsibility for directing their own life, and valued their own skills and advancements; resulting in an effort to adapt to the community (Ashby, 2003). Nevertheless, serious internal control is not perfect, as James (1957) showed that people who have a tendency to have severe internal and external controls, have shown less adjustment and adaptively. It should be noted that the strong internal or external locus of control, both can be harmful. To achieve this conclusion, how is the relationship or impact of internal locus of control over adjustment and adaptation, we are at the start point of this race, and conclusions based on only several study cannot enjoyed broad generalizability.

The results of current study showed that social support components (social support received from family, friends and others) are also positively correlated with social adjustment. Significant relationship between social supports received from families with social adjustment is in agreement with the results of previous research done by Dunn and colleagues (1987), Guavasi (1994), Kardeck and colleagues (1994), Brownstein et al. (1993), Baylor (1995), Field et al (1995). Consistent and meaningful relationship between social support received from friends with social adjustment is consistent with the results of research conducted by Hartap (1983), Wang (1993), Vienna (1995), Brent & keif (1995), Bicker (1995), Field et al (1995 ) (cited by Fathi et al., 1389). There are not any prior research regarding to relationship between social support received from others, and social adjustment. In explaining these findings, it can be said that social support systems can provide necessary emotional shields and support resources and references for the emergency situations. In addition, people can boost needy individuals capabilities for fighting stressor conditions through providing personal and social support, and provide cognitive information and awareness for those in need, thereby increasing their ability to cope with stressful situations, and increasing their adjustability ( Dewayne et al., 2012).

Also, social supports are products of social activities that increase people's sense of mastery through collaborative tasks, and in addition, provide cognitive and physical help and assistance for people; increasing their ability to adjust with community (Rostami, 1389). Those who receive social support, they feel that someone loves them and valued them, others who upholds them, and they belong to a social network of family, friends or community organizations which can provide material and spiritual assistance, and they will benefit these assistance in coping with the problems (Sarafino, 2002). Mental aspects of social support has a great influence on the individual's level of performance, and research findings suggest that the greater is the individual perception of support from others (potential support), the rate of successful responses to stress and difficult situations is increase, and therefore the adjustment is higher. The objective aspect of social protection will greatly reduce the severity of stress, and this will enable people to readjust (same reference). According to recent research findings, we can conclude that increased social support and having an internal locus of control, has an important role in their social adjustment and integration. Workshops with an emphasis on problem solving skills, sociability, capability of loving and being loved, learning how to make positive relationships, a pathfinder in establishing close ties, close ties and friendship with others and help parents nurture their children's locus of control can increase people abilities to adapt to individual needs and environment, and valuable step toward promoting mental health of community.

### **Limitations**

- The lengthy and large number of questions led to prolong completion time, which can affect the amount of contribution to study in the participant's side. So one of the study limitation is some trainees' lack of cooperation or refusal to complete the questionnaire.
- There are little research studies about the relationship of locus of control and social adjustment in Iran, along with limited access to these resources; made the amount of available references for study and comparing the findings some difficult.

### **Future recommendations**

- The relationship between locus of control and social adjustment, fewer studies have been conducted in Iran, so more effort is needed in this area, as well as the relationship between individual and environmental variables related to social adjustment must be studied.
- It is recommended that in future research, the relationship between locus of control, social support and social adjustment of both genders would be explained and compared.
- It is recommended that research be carried out in the larger society, to make the results more confidently generalized.

- Counseling centers are able to hold workshops for parents to provide education, social support and good parenting practices in order to strengthen children's internal locus of control.
- It is recommended that level of social adjustment of vocational center's trainees are compared with other schools, and acquired results is incorporate in the technical and vocational centers curriculum.

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