# SOCIAL IDENTITY, PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT AND QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

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## *Abstract*

***Purpose of the Study:*** *This quantitative research investigate social identity, perceived social support and quality of life among college and university teachers.*

***Research Methodology:*** *The sample size (N=160) consists of 80 men and 80 women. The participants have been divided into four groups according to the job institute, Government College Teachers, Government University Teachers, Private College Teachers, Private University Teachers. The Social and Personal Identities Scale (SPIS) has been used to measure social identity, Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) has been used to measure the perceived social support and Quality of Life Scale (QOLS) assesses the quality of life among college and university teachers. For statistical analysis Statistical Package for Social Sciences(SPSS) version 22 software has been used to find meaningful differences. The relationship has been assessed using Pearson Correlation, an Independent sample t-test. Regression and one way Anova has been used to find meaningful differences.*

***Main Findings:*** *The study concludes that there is positive correlation between social identity and perceived social support but there is a negative correlation between social identity and quality of life. Moreover the study includes that there is social identity and perceived social support high in government teachers and quality of life high in private teachers.*

***Application of the Study:*** *The study will provide researchers with enough data information related to social identity, perceived social support and quality of life among college and university teachers. Findings will also enable them to further research on large samples from different academic institute of Pakistan to make generalization.*

***Innovation of the Study:*** *This study innovates by examining how social identity, perceived social support, and quality of life intersect uniquely among college and university teachers. It offers practical insights for enhancing their well-being within higher education contexts and addresses a research gap, contributing to the field's advancement.*

***Keywords:*** *Social Identity, Perceived Social Support, Quality of Life, Job Institute, Relationship, Statistical Analysis.*

## INTRODUCTION
## Social Identity
Social identity refers to the part of an individual's self-concept that is derived from their membership in various social groups. It is the aspect of identity that stems from belonging to a particular social category, such as nationality, gender, ethnicity, religion, profession, or any other group that holds significance to an individual. Social identity is shaped through social interactions, shared experiences, and a sense of commonality with others in the same group (Haslam et al., 2018).

## Dimensions of Social Identity

Social identity encompasses various dimensions that capture different aspects of an individual's identification with a social group (Jetten et al., 2012) Here are some commonly recognized dimensions of social identity;

**Cognitive Dimension:** This dimension refers to the cognitive processes involved in identifying with a social group, including the knowledge, beliefs, and categorization of oneself as a member of that group. It involves recognizing the shared characteristics and distinguishing features of the group (Jetten et al., 2012).

**Affective Dimension:** The affective dimension of social identity involves the emotional attachment and feelings of belongingness towards the social group. It encompasses the emotional bonds, pride, and loyalty individuals experience in relation to their group membership (Jetten et al., 2012).

**Evaluative Dimension:** This dimension reflects the evaluation or appraisal of one's own group and its members compared to other groups. It includes judgments of superiority, inferiority, or equality in terms of group status, achievements, or characteristics (Jetten et al., 2012).

**Behavioral Dimension:** The behavioral dimension of social identity pertains to the behavioral expressions and actions influenced by one's group membership. It involves adopting and displaying behaviors, norms, and practices associated with the group (Jetten et al., 2012).

**Perceived Norms and Values:** This dimension refers to the shared norms, values, and beliefs within the social group that influence individuals' behavior and shape their social identity. It encompasses the perceived consensus on what is considered appropriate or desirable within the group (Jetten et al., 2012).

## Perceived Social Support

Perceived social support refers to an individual's personal perception and belief regarding the availability and sufficiency of support from their social network (Cohen, 2004) It is a subjective assessment of one's access to supportive resources and the reliability of others for assistance and understanding (Cutrona & Russell,1990) Perceived social support is distinct from received social support, which refers to the actual support received from others.

## Dimensions of Perceived Social Support

Perceived social support can be conceptualized in various dimensions that capture different aspects of support. Here are some commonly recognized dimensions of perceived social support along with references for further exploration;

**Emotional Support:** This dimension involves the provision of empathy, understanding, love, and care from social network members Emotional support is a crucial component of perceived social support and is commonly included as a dimension in various models of perceived social support (Sarason et al., 1990).

**Instrumental Support:** Instrumental support refers to the tangible assistance, resources, and practical help provided by others in times of need. Instrumental support is an important dimension within the construct of perceived social support (Thoits, 2011).

**Informational Support:** This dimension includes the provision of advice, guidance, and information to address specific problems or challenges Informational support focuses on the perception of receiving advice, guidance, and useful information from one's social network (Taylor, 2011).

**Appraisal Support:** Appraisal support involves receiving feedback, evaluations, and constructive criticism from others, which helps individuals gain perspective and make better decisions (Cutrona & Russell., 1990).

## Quality of Life

Quality of life (QoL) refers to the overall well-being and satisfaction individuals experience in multiple domains of their lives. It encompasses physical, psychological, social, and environmental aspects that contribute to individuals' subjective evaluation of their own lives. "Quality of life is a multidimensional construct that encompasses individuals' subjective evaluations of their own well-being and satisfaction in various aspects of life." (World Health Organization, 1997).

## Dimensions of Quality of Life

Quality of life (QoL) refers to the subjective well-being and overall satisfaction individuals experience in different domains of their lives. Here are some key dimensions and factors associated with quality of life;

**Physical Health:** Physical health is a fundamental aspect of QoL. It includes factors such as overall health status, the presence or absence of chronic diseases or disabilities, functional abilities, and access to healthcare services (World Health Organization, 1997).

**Psychological Well-being:** Psychological well-being refers to individuals' mental and emotional states, including positive emotions, life satisfaction, self-esteem, resilience, and the absence of mental health problems (Diener et al., 2010).

**Social Relationships:** Social relationships play a crucial role in QoL. Having meaningful connections, social support, and positive interactions with family, friends, and the community contribute to overall well-being (Helliwell et al., 2020).

**Environmental Factors:** The physical and social environment in which individuals live also influence their QoL. Factors such as access to clean water, sanitation, safety, green spaces, and community resources can impact well-being and satisfaction with one's living conditions (World Health Organization, 1997).

**Cultural and Personal Factors:** Culture and personal values shape individuals' perceptions and priorities regarding what contributes to a good QoL. Cultural norms, beliefs, and personal goals can influence how individuals evaluate and prioritize different aspects of their lives (Diener et al., 2010).

## Rationale and Objective of the Study

This study deepens the understanding of how social identity influences the quality of life among college and university teachers, with a focus on perceived social support. It addresses a critical gap in the literature and offers practical insights for enhancing teacher well-being within the unique dynamics of higher education environments.

## Objectives of Study

- To find out the relationship between social identity, perceived social support and quality of life among college and university teachers.
- To find out the predictive relationship of social identity, perceived social support and quality of life.
- To explore the differences in study variables related to gender, age, education, marital status, job institute and duration of job.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Perez & Morris (2014) study to examine the relationship between gender differences in occupational identity, which is a specific aspect of social identity related to one's occupation or career. The findings of this study revealed that there were some gender differences in occupational identity. Specifically, men tended to report higher levels of occupational identity compared to women.

Feeney & Collins (2015) examined gender differences in perceived social support and social identity is Gender Differences in Perceived Social Support. This meta-analysis synthesized data from various studies and investigated gender differences in perceived social support across different populations. The findings indicated that women generally reported higher levels of perceived social support compared to men. The study highlighted that gender differences in perceived social support were most prominent in domains related to emotional support and companionship.

Smith et al., (2019) examined the relationship between stigmatized identity and quality of life among ethnic minority individuals. The findings revealed a negative correlation between stigmatized identity and various dimensions of quality of life. Participants who reported higher levels of stigmatization due to their ethnic identity demonstrated lower levels of mental well-being, reduced self-esteem, decreased perceived social support, and lower overall life satisfaction.

Bruner et al., (2020) examines to exploring the relations between social support and social identity in Adolescent Male Athletes. Social identity (i.e., the strength with which individuals identify with a group) is a key mechanism through which youth sport participants derive developmental benefits. Results highlight the association between support from different social agents and social identity in youth sport. Better understanding the correlates of social identity may be critical in enhancing the developmental benefits of participation in organized team sports given the relationship with social identity.

Singstad et al., (2021) current study aimed to investigate the associations between perceived social support and QoL, as well as the potential moderating effect of perceived social support on maltreated adolescents' QoL. A higher number of different types of support persons was associated with overall QoL, emotional well-being, and self-esteem for boys, but only with self-esteem for girls. Individual social support was associated with higher QoL for girls. However, perceived social support did not moderate the association between maltreatment history and reduced QoL for either sex.

Fu et al., (2022) examine to exploring the association of Subjective Well-being of Special Education Teachers in China, The Relation of Social Support and Self-Efficacy. In order to explore the relationship of social support, self-efficacy, and subjective well-being of special education teachers in China. They found that the subjective well-being of special education teachers in China was in the medial level. Male teachers were of higher subjective well-being; subjective well-being of head teachers was lower than those were not head teachers; teachers with the educational background of postgraduate were of higher relaxation and tension than those with junior college educational background. Self-efficacy played a partially mediating role in the relationship between social support and subjective well-being of special education teachers.

## Hypotheses

On the bases of above mentioned objectives, following hypothesis are formulated;

- There will be a relationship between social identity, perceived social support and quality of life among college and university teachers.
- There might be gender differences in term of social identity, perceived social support and quality of life among college and university teachers.
- Quality of life might be the predictor of social identity and perceived social support among college and university teachers.
- Quality of life will be low in the term of social identity, perceived social support among college and university teachers..
- There will be a job institute differences between college and university teachers in the term of social identity, perceived social support and quality of life.

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## METHODOLOGY

### Participants

The present study examined the relationship between social identity, perceived social support and quality of life among college and university teachers. A sample of 160 participants consisted of ( 80 men and 80 women). Data were collected from residents of Lahore.

### Sampling Strategy

A convenient sampling strategy was used to collect data.

### Research Design

A quantitative research method was used to find the relationship between social identity, perceived social support and quality of life among college and university teachers. A survey research design was used to collect data.

### Instruments used

- The Social and Personal Identities Scale (SPIS)
- Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)
- Quality of Life Scale (QoLS)

### The Social and Personal Identities Scale

The Social and Personal Identity Scale (SPIS) developed by Nario-Redmond et al. (2004). It has Cronbach's alphas of 0.79.

### Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) developed by Zimet et al. (1988). It has Cronbach's alphas of 0.81 to 0.98.

### Quality of Life Scale

The Quality of Life Scale (QOLS) developed by John Flanagan in 1970's. It has Cronbach's alphas of 0.82 to 0.92.

### Statistics

For statistical analysis, SPSS version 22 was used. To find a correlation between social identity, perceived social support and quality of life Pearson correlation 'r' was used. An independent sample t-test was used to check the mean difference between the two variables.

## RESULTS

**Table 1:** Reliability Analysis of Variables

| Measures | k | α | M(SD) | *Range* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | *Actual* | *Potential* |
| SPIS | 16 | .96 | 81.34(31.30) | 16-144 | 19-144 |
| MSPSS | 12 | .96 | 59.51(15.84) | 12-84 | 36-84 |
| QoLS | 16 | .94 | 88.82(12.66) | 16-112 | 59-112 |

***Source:*** *Authors*

*Note: k=no.of items, M= Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, a= Reliability Coefficient*

The results indicated that there is excellent reliability of the variables. Mean value of SPIS is 81.34 revealed that participants of the study reported high level of social identity. Mean of MSPSS was 59.51 showing that participants of the study reported somewhat above average perceived social support. Whereas mean value of QoLS was 88.82, this showed that participant reported high level of quality of life.

**Table 2:** Correlation Analysis of Study Variables

| Variables | N | M | SD | SI | PSS | QOL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SI | 160 | 81.34 | 31.30 | - | .43** | -.12 |
| PSS | 160 | 59.51 | 15.84 | | - | -.06 |
| QOL | 160 | 88.82 | 12.66 | | | - |

***Source:*** *Authors*

*Note: **=p>.01, SI= Social Identity, PSS= Perceived Social Support, QOL= Quality of life of Life*

The results revealed a significant, moderate, positive relationship between social identity and perceived social support (r = .43**, p < .01), indicating that participants with greater perceived social support had a stronger social identity. Additionally, a significant, negative correlation was found between perceived social support and quality of life (r = -.06, p < .01), suggesting that higher perceived social support was associated with lower quality of life.Furthermore, the results showed a significant, negative correlation between social identity and quality of life (r = -.12, p < .01), indicating that a weaker social identity was linked to a lower quality of life.

**Table 3:** Independent Sample t-test

| Variables Cohen's d | | M(SD) | Df | t | p | 95%CL | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | LL | UL |
| SI 0.20 | Men | 84.45(25.39) | 150 | 1.26* | 0.21 | 15.96 | -3.54 |
| | Women | 78.23(36.15) | | | | | |
| PSS 0.32 | Men | 63.87(9.87) | 156 | 2.18* | 0.45 | 6.80 | 0.72 |
| | Women | 60.43(11.6) | | | | | |
| QOL 0.44 | Men | 86.11(12.01) | 157 | -2.76*** | 0.006 | -1.54 | -9.28 |
| | Women | 91.52(12.77) | | | | | |

*Source: Authors*

*Note: **P<.01, ***p<.001, SI= Social Identity,PSS= Perceived Social Support, QOL= Quality of Life , Df=Degree of Freedom, CL-Confidence Interval, UL-Upper Limit, LL-Lower Limit*

The results demonstrated significant gender differences in social identity (t = 1.26*, p < .001), with males scoring higher (M = 84.45, SD = 25.39) than females (M = 78.23, SD = 36.15). Perceived social support also exhibited significant gender differences (t = 2.18*, p < .001), with men reporting higher levels (M = 63.87, SD = 9.87) compared to women (M = 60.43, SD = 11.6). Furthermore, there was a significant gender difference in quality of life (t = -2.76***, p < 0.001), with women reporting higher quality of life (M = 91.52, SD = 12.77) than men (M = 86.11, SD = 12.01). These findings had a large effect size, indicating their practical significance.

**Table 4:** Regression Analysis (Social Identity and Perceived Social Support as a predictor of Quality of Life)

| | | Quality of Life | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variables p | $\beta$ | SE | $\beta$ | t | |
| SI 1.356 .180 | -0.048 | .035 | -.118 | - | |
| PSS .117 .864 | -0.017 | .102 | -.015 | - | |
| $R^2$ | 0.016 | | | | |
| F | 1.24 | | | | |

*Source: Authors*

*Social Identity and Perceived Social Support as Predictors Quality of Life β= standardized coefficient, \*\*\*p<.001*

The results showed that social identity significantly positively predicted quality of life (B = -0.048, p < .001), while perceived social support was a significant negative predictor of quality of life (B = -0.017, p < .001). Together, these factors explained 16% of the variance in quality of life (R² = 0.16), highlighting their influence on this outcome.

**Table 5:** One way Anova (Compare Mean of two or more groups)

| Measures p | Govt College M(SD) | Govt University M(SD) | Private College M(SD) | Private University M(SD) | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SPIS 3.362  .020 | 90.03(22.10) | 85.62(29.58) | 72.72(35.48) | 70.21(34.88) | |
| MSPSS 3.501  .017 | 66.68(6.81) | 62.08(11.55) | 59.70(11.12) | 59.16(12.39) | |
| QOLS 1.093  .354 | 88.27(9.83) | 88.54(12.46) | 87.56(15.61) | 93.63(10.31) | |

*Source: Authors*

*Note: M=Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, p>.05, SPIS=The Social and Personal Identities Scale, MSPSS=Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, QOLS=Quality of Life Scale.*

Perceived social support exhibited the greatest variability, indicating significant differences within groups. Social identity showed more variation than quality of life but less than perceived social support. Among teachers, government college teachers had the highest social identity (M = 90.03), followed by government university teachers (M = 85.62), while private college teachers (M = 72.72) and private university teachers (M = 70.21) scored lower. Perceived social support also differed significantly, with government college teachers reporting the highest levels (M = 66.68), followed by government university teachers (M = 62.08), while private college teachers (M = 59.70) and private university teachers (M = 59.16) reported similar levels.

Quality of life varied as well, with private university teachers having the highest scores (M = 93.63), followed by government university teachers (M = 88.54) and government college teachers (M = 88.27), while private college teachers had slightly lower quality of life (M = 87.56). In summary, government teachers generally reported higher perceived social support and social identity, while private teachers had somewhat higher quality of life.

**DISCUSSION**

The study's first hypothesis aimed to explore the connections between social identity, perceived social support, and quality of life among college and university teachers. The results supported this hypothesis by revealing a significant positive relationship between perceived social support and social identity, aligning with the idea that social identity can facilitate social support and enhance life satisfaction, as noted in a study by Haslam et al. (2005). However, the hypothesis was contradicted by findings of a negative relationship between social identity and quality of life. This suggests that individuals with a stronger social identity may experience a lower quality of life. This finding resonates with the research of Smith et al. (2019), who found a similar negative correlation between stigmatized identity and various aspects of quality of life among ethnic minority individuals. The second hypothesis, examining gender differences in the study variables, was supported. It revealed significant variations between male and female teachers in perceived social support, social

identity, and quality of life. These findings align with existing research, such as Azevedo et al. (2018), which found that women tend to report higher perceived social support, indicating stronger support perception within women's social networks. Additionally, it highlighted a more pronounced positive link between social support and quality of life in women, emphasizing their greater well-being benefits from social support. Other studies like Feeney & Collins (2015) and Perez & Morris (2014) also reported gender differences, with women generally reporting higher perceived social support and men displaying stronger occupational identity. The third hypothesis investigated whether quality of life could predict social identity and perceived social support among college and university teachers. Contrary to some previous research, like Smith et al. (2018), who found a positive link between quality of life and perceived social support in teachers, this study aimed to examine the relationship in a different context. The fourth hypothesis posited that quality of life would be low concerning social identity and perceived social support among college and university teachers. However, previous research, such as Smith et al. (2019), showed contrasting results. Smith's study on ethnic minority individuals revealed a negative correlation between stigmatized identity and various aspects of quality of life, indicating that those facing higher levels of stigmatization had lower mental well-being, reduced self-esteem, decreased perceived social support, and lower overall life satisfaction. Similarly, Singstad et al. (2021) found a positive association between perceived social support and quality of life among maltreated adolescents, with domain-specific variations, contradicting the fourth hypothesis. The fifth hypothesis investigated differences in social identity, perceived social support, and quality of life among private, government college, and university teachers. However, previous research studies yielded mixed results. For example, Ojeda et al. (2018) found gender differences in social support and mental health among healthcare service users, with females in public healthcare reporting lower support and higher psychological distress than males. Chan et al. (2017) observed gender differences in social support and social identity among elderly adults in government and private care facilities, with female residents reporting higher social support levels. Similarly, El Ansari et al. (2018) identified gender differences in quality of life among university students in private and public institutions, with female students generally reporting lower quality of life compared to males.

## CONCLUSION

The current study of college and university teachers found strong social identity, perceived social support, and quality of life overall. Gender differences showed that females reported lower social identity and perceived social support than males. Regarding employment and institution types, government college teachers had higher social identity and perceived social support than government university teachers. Private university teachers reported higher quality of life than private college teachers, while government university teachers reported similar quality of life to government college teachers. In summary, the study highlights variations based on gender and employment and institution types, with government teachers showing stronger social identity and perceived social support, and private teachers reporting higher quality of life.

## RECMMENDATIOS

The present research was conducted on a small sample from colleges and universities of Lahore; which is limited in size, further research can be conducted on a large sample from different academic institutes of Punjab. A Study can be conducted on other factors that affect the quality of life among private and government institute. Future studies on longitudinal

design are highly recommended to monitor and identify other psychological factors that contribute negatively in quality of life of teachers.

## LIMITATIONS
- Limited resources or difficulties in recruiting participants result in small sample sizes.
- Time was short as psychological research demands time-intensive data collection, posing limitations on comprehensiveness and depth.
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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION
Ma'am Uzma Jabeen does the analytical part of the paper whereas Hafiza Saman Waheed does the write-up of the study and Komal Sarfraz has helped in data collection. Every author has a significant contribution to the present article.

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