



## Role of Feelings of Security in Possessing Citizenship in Academic Competence and Quality of Life in Derelict and Unsupervised Adolescents

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**Abstract:** The present study aimed to investigate the role of the feelings of security in possessing citizenship in predicting academic competence and quality of life in derelict and unsupervised adolescents. The current research is practical in terms of its purpose and correlation type in terms of method. The statistical population of this research included all derelict and unsupervised adolescents of Khorramabad (Iran) in 2022. The participants were 120 people (age range 15 - 18 years) from adolescents residing in boarding centers were selected using accessible sampling method. In order to collect data, Academic Competence Evaluation Scales (DiPerna & Elliott, 1999), Feelings of security in possessing citizenship Scale (Samara & Barzegar, 2015) and Quality of Life Scale (Skevington et al., 2004) were used. The hypotheses were examined by multiple regression. The results revealed that the association between feelings of security in possessing citizenship and academic competence and quality of life is significant ( $P < 0.01$ ). Also, the regression results indicated that feelings of security in possessing citizenship accounted for 8.2% of the variance in the prediction of academic competence and quality of life ( $P < 0.001$ ). In general, based on the findings of the research, the feelings of security in possessing citizenship in derelict and unsupervised adolescents has a significant effect on their academic competence and quality of life. Based on this, it is possible to enhance the educational and social processes of derelict and unsupervised adolescents by improving awareness of feelings of security in possessing citizenship in them.

**Keywords:** Feelings of security in possessing citizenship, academic competence, quality of life, derelict and unsupervised adolescents

### Introduction

Derelict and unsupervised children and adolescents are people who have lost their guardian for any reason, either permanently or temporarily (Madani Qahfarokhi & Zainali, 2011), like the children left in the streets and public places that are not supported by others, and in the so-called they are on the way. The absence of parents makes a person prone to mental illness and behavioral problems (Najarian & Safari Shali, 2012). One of the problems that orphaned and abused children face is citizenship rights. Citizenship as a social and political process of the 19th century in traditional civil societies has been raised as a serious interaction between the state and the nation, and simultaneously with the issue of membership in the nation-state, it has become one of the important social and political issues (Janoski, 1998).

Citizenship, as a modern social phenomenon, is one of the central components of democratic political systems and a key indicator to show the realization of democracy in a modern society that has an efficient

and dynamic public sphere and civil society ([Tavasuli & Hosseini Nejadi, 2013](#)). Citizenship rights have a close relationship with the position of authority. According to some experts, in a society where citizens' rights are not institutionalized, the relationship between the people and the government is unstable.

Citizenship in any society is the basic condition of democracy ([Samara & Barzegarparezi, 2016](#)). In the discussion of citizenship, the feeling of having citizenship rights is one of the important aspects of citizenship, which plays a very important role in consolidating and strengthening the social foundations of any society. [Sorial and Peterson \(2019\)](#) have pointed out that in Australian schools, social empathy and the feeling of having citizenship rights are emphasized and students are taught their rights. It has also been mentioned that the feeling of having citizenship rights has an effect on the students' sense of trust and social happiness. The researchers pointed out that the feeling of having citizenship rights has a role on the cognitive and emotional components in students ([Gefen & Somech, 2019](#)). Our understanding of citizenship rights has an impact on anti-social behavior ([Spiro, 2019](#)). The behavior of citizens and the manner and extent of their participation in social affairs are among the fundamental variables and issues in the development of social capital and development of human societies ([Marshall, 2006](#)).

Researches have shown that social, cultural and economic capitals play a role in the tendency of citizens towards an uplifting social life style ([Abidi Hourilar, Pabouyan, & Avanesyan, 2020](#); [Farzalian, Ganji, & Niazi, 2019](#)).

Nowadays, all progress is the result of learning and we need to learn to acquire knowledge and skills and for this reason, education should be more effective and provide more learning opportunities for people ([Adib, Fathiazar, & einipour, 2015](#)). The complexity of today's world on the one hand and the sensitivity of education on the other hand, requires more knowledgeable students to prepare the ground for human progress. Among the efficiency criteria of an educational system is the identification of the components that affect the academic competence of students. Studying and discovering the factors affecting this construct can lead to better academic success for students ([Maltais, Duchesne, Ratelle, & Feng, 2015](#)). Academic competence refers to students' perception of their ability and performance and their beliefs (about the resources needed for excellent performance) ([Maltais et al., 2015](#)). In fact, academic competence includes skills, attitudes and behaviors that lead to the judgment of a student's performance and academic progress. It is a combination of knowledge, behavior and obvious skills that give a person this ability to perform its tasks effectively ([Mah & Ifenthaler, 2018](#)). Academic competence has two components: technical competence and behavioral competence; Technical competence means what issues people should know and what skills they should have to perform their specialized tasks correctly and well; and behavioral competency includes issues and competencies that are related to the behavioral domain of individuals ([Abdollahi & Tabodi, 2019](#)). Academic competence, communication and autonomy are mediators of students' perception of relationships with teachers and engagement in school; in addition, researches have shown that attachment styles, relationships, emotional and social competence, learning environment and participation in the classroom, attention and problem solving were among other predictors of academic competence ([Maltais et al., 2015](#); [Tu,](#)

[Erath, & Flanagan, 2012](#); [Valiente, Lemery-Chalfant, Swanson, & Reiser, 2008](#)). In other words, students have a high level of enthusiasm in schoolwork, will experience high expectations about success, a strong disciplinary climate and good relationships with teachers and other students in the classroom ([Abbasi, Shahkarami, & Aalipour, 2019](#)). [Lari, Hejazi, Joukar, and Ejei \(2020\)](#) showed that supporting autonomy versus control, competence, strengthening student mastery goals, care, interest and participation, mutual trust and supporting the class structure are the main themes of characteristics and actions that affects the teacher-student relationship. The results of [Kulakow \(2020\)](#) showed that students with competency-based learning experience a higher level of self-concept than students with teacher-centered learning and perceived competence was the mediator of the relationship between self-concept and achievement motivation for students as well.

Also, [Lander, Mergen, Morgan, Salmon, and Barnett \(2019\)](#) reported that there is a significant interaction between competence and self-concept. In research aimed at investigating the prevalence of behavioral and emotional disorders among children living in orphanages, it was found that behavioral and emotional disorders are more prevalent among children and adolescents in orphanages ([Rahmani Zahed, hashemi, & Naghsh, 2018](#)). In research conducted on Romanian children living in a care center, it was observed that rate of these children suffering from psychiatric disorders is 55% vs 22% compared to children who live in the family environment.

One of the components involved in citizenship rights is the quality of life. Quality of life includes a person's perception of his position in life, in the cultural context in which he lives and in relation to his goals, expectations, relationships with others and his needs ([Vykoukalová, Pavlíčková, Čeněk, & Smolík, 2016](#)). Quality of life is a comprehensive and general concept that includes all the physiological, psychological, cognitive, social, cultural and economic dimensions of a person's life ([Balestrino & Martinez-Martin, 2017](#)). Researchers agree on three principles related to quality of life, which are (1) multidimensionality, (2) subjectiveness, and (3) dynamicity ([Amin, Salleh, Muda, Ahmad, & Ibrahim, 2013](#)). Quality of life is a comprehensive term that includes all aspects of life, including health, and is more than physical health, and includes the feeling of being healthy, the level of satisfaction, and the existence of a general sense of self-worth. It is an abstract and complex concept that includes various fields that are all related to personal satisfaction and self-esteem ([Lichtle, Downes, Engelberg, & Cappe, 2020](#)). The quality of life is related to the mental health of people and it expresses the states and changes and abilities of people and the level of satisfaction of people with the functions of life ([Skarstein, Bergem, & Helseth, 2020](#)). Research results show caring for a child with a disorder reduces the quality of life of family members, especially the caregiver ([Singh, Lancioni, Medvedev, Hwang, & Myers, 2021](#)).

The results of [Wilde and Dozois \(2018\)](#) also showed that early maladaptive schemas harm people's quality of life and provide the basis for depression and other mental disorders. From the point of view of [Samadi Tari and Jahangir \(2018\)](#), there is a significant negative relationship between the early maladaptive schemas and the quality of life. This means that among the early maladaptive schemas, the components of abandonment, dependence, sacrifice, entitlement and insufficient self-control were able

to predict the quality of life. On the other hand, the critical period of development is less than the age of separation of the child from the family (as a rich environment), the greater the damage. The infant period is a critical period in development, and if the infant does not have rich experiences and diverse sensory stimulation during that period, it suffers from a lack of stability. In fact, the critical period of development is the optimal time to develop a special ability, the limit of which is around two years of age. Anthony and others have predicted that when separation from parents occurs in early childhood, the probability of children becoming delinquent increases.

As far as we have searched, conceptualizing the quality of life, citizenship rights and academic competence have not been addressed directly and in relation to each other in derelict and unsupervised adolescents. In terms of theoretical importance, the findings of the present research will lead to the expansion and adjustment of the theoretical and empirical views of citizenship rights, quality of life and academic competence of derelict and unsupervised adolescents in the field of social adaptation, and in terms of practical importance, the obtained findings will expand practical and clinical horizons. Therefore, the aim of the current research is to answer the question of whether there is a relationship between feelings of security in possessing citizenship, academic competence and the quality of in derelict and unsupervised adolescents.

## **Material and Methods**

The current research is practical in terms of its purpose and correlation type (regression analysis type) in terms of the method. The statistical population of this research included all derelict and unsupervised adolescents in 2022 of Khorramabad (Iran), and by using the accessible sampling method, a sample of 120 people in the age group of 15 to 18 years were residents in day care centers of Khorramabad city, selected and participated in the research. In this research, the data collection method was done after obtaining permission from the Technical and Ethical Committee of Welfare Organization. Then the objectives of the research were explained to the participants and they were assured that all their information would remain confidential.

**Academic Competence Evaluation Scales:** This scale was developed by ([DiPerna & Elliott, 1999](#)), has 67 items and its scoring is on a 5-point Likert scale from never=1, to almost always = 5. This scale has three versions: teacher, student and college student. The student version is suitable for sixth to twelfth grade students, which is used in this research. In this scale, academic competence is considered as a structure consisting of academic skills and educational enablers (a structure similar to learning behaviors). The subscale of academic skills includes items 1 to 30 and the subscale of educational enablers includes the items are 31 to 67. [DiPerna and Elliott \(1999\)](#) reported the internal consistency coefficient for the above subscales in the range of 0.92 to 0.98 and the test-retest coefficient in the range of 0.70 to 0.92. In Iran, the validity and reliability of this tool has been investigated by [Moosavi, Abolmaali Alhosseini, and Mirhashemi \(2017\)](#) and the significant relationships of this questionnaire with the questionnaire of academic emotions and academic achievement indicated its simultaneous criterion validity. Also, the results of internal consistency of this scale with Cronbach's alpha method

range from 0.0 to 0.86 and the range of correlation coefficients of these factors was reported between 0.30 and 0.71. Also, in [Mahmoudpour, Darba, Khanjani Veshki, and Pasha \(2020\)](#), the reliability using Cronbach's alpha was reported as 0.81. In the present study, reliability using the Cronbach's alpha was 0.95.

**Quality of Life Questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF):** This questionnaire has 26 items that measure the quality of life in four dimensions: physical health, mental health, social relationships, and environmental health ([Skevington, Lotfy, & O'Connell, 2004](#)). The way of scoring the options of this scale is also based on the Likert scale and of the 5-point type: not at all score "1", to very high score "5". After performing the calculations in each dimension, a score equal to 4 to 20 will be obtained for each subscale; which are 4 signs of the worst and 20 signs of the best situation in each area. The reliability of this questionnaire has been reported by the quality-of-life assessment group of the World Health Organization using Cronbach's alpha method for subscales and the whole scale between 0.73 and 0.89. Also, the discriminant validity of this questionnaire was tested with the difference between male and female scores, which was calculated as 0.79 in different dimensions ([Skevington et al., 2004](#)). In [Nejat, Montazeri, Holakouie Naieni, Mohammad, and Majdzadeh \(2006\)](#), Cronbach's alpha coefficients for physical, psychological, and environmental domains were 0.70, but for social relations domain, it was 0.55.

**Feelings of security in possessing citizenship Scale:** In this research, the questionnaire of [Samara and Barzegarparezi \(2016\)](#) was used to measure the feelings of security in possessing citizenship. This scale has 17 questions and its scoring is done on a 5-point Likert scale (1: completely disagree to 5: completely agree). The validity of this scale has been confirmed by the developers using face, content and construct validity and four subscales have been extracted. The components of this scale include social rights (questions 1 to 5), political rights (questions 6 to 9), civil rights (questions 10 to 13) and cultural rights (questions 14 to 17). The reliability of this scale was also reported as 0.90 using Cronbach's alpha method by [Samara and Barzegarparezi \(2016\)](#). [Bagherikerachi and Anayshegar \(2019\)](#) also found the reliability of this tool in their research to be 0.80 for the whole scale and for dimensions of social rights (0.83), political rights (0.79), civil rights (0.76) and cultural rights. (0.86) that it indicates the good reliability of this tool.

## Results

In this research, out of 120 people, 50 people (41.66%) were girls and 70 people (58.33%) were boys. The mean and standard deviation of the participants age were 16.42 and 1.85, respectively. The field of study of the studied subjects was 24 people (20 percent) in the fields of humanities, 14 people (11.66 percent) in the fields of experimental sciences, 12 people (10 percent) in the fields of mathematics and physics, 36 people (30 percent) were studying in technical and professional fields and 34 people (28.33 percent) were studying in art, work and science fields. The mean and standard deviation of the research variables are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics of research variables

| Variable             | Mean   | SD    | K-S   | p     |
|----------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| Academic competence  | 198.86 | 38.05 | 0.078 | 0.071 |
| Quality of life      | 75.44  | 17.25 | 0.079 | 0.063 |
| Feelings of security | 55.48  | 4.95  | 0.059 | 0.086 |

In Table 1, the mean, standard deviation and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of the variables of academic competence, quality of life and feelings of security in possessing citizenship are presented. According to the results, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic is not significant for the research variables ( $P > 0.05$ ), so the research variables have a normal distribution and parametric analysis can be used for them.

**Table 2.** Matrix of correlation coefficients between research variables (n=120)

| Variable                | 1      | 2      | 3 |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|---|
| 1. Academic competence  | 1      |        |   |
| 2. Quality of life      | **0.48 | 1      |   |
| 3. Feelings of security | **0.52 | **0.41 | 1 |

\*\*  $p < 0.01$

According to the results of Table 2, the correlation coefficient obtained for the variables of feelings of security in possessing citizenship with academic competence is ( $r=0.520$ ), which is significant ( $P < 0.01$ ). Also, the correlation coefficient for the variables of feeling of security in possessing citizenship with the quality of life is ( $r=0.410$ ), which is significant ( $P < 0.01$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected. That is, based on the above method and in the case of the studied society, there is a positive and significant relationship between the feeling of security in possessing citizenship with academic competence and the quality of life in derelict and unsupervised adolescents.

**Table 3.** Model summary and regression analysis

| Model | R     | R <sup>2</sup> | Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> | Durbin-Watson | F    | p     |
|-------|-------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------|------|-------|
| 1     | 0.286 | 0.082          | 0.084                   | 1.24          | 8.48 | 0.001 |

According to Table 3, 8.2% of the variance of academic competence and quality of life is explained by the feeling of security in possessing citizenship. Also, the model used in predicting academic competence and quality of life is significant ( $F = 8.485$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.082$ ). To determine that the predictor variable entered into the model contributes to predicting the criterion variables and to what extent, the regression coefficients was provided in table 4.

**Table 4.** Regression coefficients of the role of the feeling of security in possessing citizenship in predicting academic competence and quality of life

| Model | Criterion variables | B     | eta $\beta$ | T     | p     |
|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------|
| 1     | Constant            | 45.64 | -           | 6.21  | 0.001 |
|       | Academic competence | 0.160 | 0.430       | 3.498 | 0.001 |
|       | Quality of life     | 0.620 | 0.130       | 2.252 | 0.010 |



Beta values were used to determine the contribution of the predictor variable on each criterion variable. Based on the Table 4, the variable of feeling of security in possessing citizenship has a significant contribution in the explanation (prediction) of the academic competence (Beta = 0.430), and quality of life variable (Beta = 0.130).

## Discussion

The present study was conducted with the aim of investigating the role of the feeling of security in possessing citizenship in predicting academic competence and quality of life in derelict and unsupervised adolescents. The results of the research showed that the feeling of security in possessing citizenship is the strongest predictor of academic competence. This means that with the increase in the feeling of security in possessing citizenship (social, cultural, and civil), the academic competence of the participants increases. The results of this research are in line with the research results that show the relationship between the feeling of security in possessing citizenship and happiness ([Ebrahim Najafabadi & Sam Aram, 2011](#)), the feeling of trust and social happiness ([Sorai & Peterson, 2019](#)) social consolidation ([Samara & Barzegarparezi, 2016](#)) and the relationship between the feeling of security in possessing citizenship and the dimensions of social capital of students ([Faraji, Ranjbari, Moradi, & Amiri, 2021](#)). It should be mentioned that the indicators of citizenship rights, including in the dimensions of social justice, the expansion of cultural activities and civil rights and benefits, can have an effect on the level of self-confidence, peace and security of the social mind and can help people to respect the rights of others and do not engage in anti-social behaviors. This indicates that the perception of social justice can help in desirable social behaviors ([McGregor & Chatiza, 2020](#)).

According to some studies, the feeling of security in possessing citizenship such as social acceptability, social security and social needs can have a positive effect on the amount of desirable and healthy social interactions ([Dean & Gibbs, 2015](#)). Studying and discovering factors affecting this variable can lead to better academic success for students ([Maltais et al., 2015](#)). In fact, academic competence includes skills, attitudes and behaviors that lead to the judgment of a student's performance and academic progress, and is a combination of knowledge, behavior and overt skills that give a person this ability to perform its duties effectively ([Mah & Ifenthaler, 2018](#)).

Also, the results of the research showed that the feeling of having social, cultural and civil rights predicts the quality of life. This means that with the increase in the feeling of security in possessing citizenship (social, cultural and civil), the quality of life of adolescents increases. The results of this research are in line with the research results that show the relationship between the feeling of security in possessing citizenship and happiness ([Farzalian et al., 2019](#)). [Abidi Hourilar et al. \(2020\)](#) showed the relationship between social, cultural and economic capitals align with the tendency of citizens towards an uplifting social lifestyle. The quality of life is related to the mental health of people and it expresses the states and changes and abilities of people and the level of satisfaction of people with the functions of life. Research

results show caring for a child with a disorder reduces the quality of life of family members, especially the caregiver (Dingwall, Eekelaar, & Murray, 2014; Singh et al., 2021; Skarstein et al., 2020).

The present work has some limitations. First, the subjects were selected based on the accessible sampling and for generalization, it is better to use random and cluster sampling methods. Therefore, the findings of this research may not be generalizable to the entire population. Lack of follow-up programs for the education of citizenship rights for all students, especially for participants, was another limitation. Also, the data was obtained through self-report and bias may have occurred in answering sensitive questions. Considering the above limitations, it is suggested to use structured or semi-structured interviews to collect data in future researches. Also, conducting the research with a bigger sample and on different age groups and comparing its results with the findings of the current research can provide the possibility of proper planning for the education of citizenship rights for derelict and unsupervised adolescents in order to promote their educational, social and quality of life.

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### Ethical considerations

Following the principles of research ethics: The principles of ethics have been fully observed in this research. They were aware of the research process and the subjects' information was kept confidential.

**Conflict of interest:** The authors state no conflict of interest in the study.

**Financial sponsor:** The authors acknowledge that they have not received any financial support for all stages of the study, writing and publication of the paper.

**Acknowledgements:** The researchers wish to thank all the individuals who participated in the study.

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