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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Relationship Between Types of Capital and Quality of Life Among Pensioners of the Social Security Organization in Tehran, with an Emphasis on Journalists' Social Security

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Interdiction:

Contemporary discourse increasingly acknowledges the importance of improving the quality of work life, reflecting its widespread significance. Consequently, identifying the relevance of each component of quality of work life for organizations is essential, as it provides critical information that enables organizations—through appropriate policies and desirable strategies—to enhance performance, increase human resource productivity, and ultimately improve the quality of work life. In this context, the Social Security Organization (SSO) plays a pivotal role nationally. Therefore, analyzing strategies to enhance the quality of life (QoL) of pensioners is imperative. QoL, as a key indicator of social development, is influenced by various factors, including economic, social, and cultural capital. Given the growing number of pensioners in Iran and the

SSO's mandate to support this population, examining the relationship between different forms of capital and their QoL is crucial.

This study aims to conduct a sociological analysis of the relationship between types of capital and the QoL of pensioners of the Tehran Social Security Organization, with a specific focus on journalists. Social capital—comprising networks of trust, norms, and mutual cooperation that facilitate collective action—is among the most influential intangible resources in modern societies. For professional groups such as journalists, social capital not only strengthens professional identity but also plays a critical role in ensuring welfare, security, and QoL. Journalists are frequently exposed to occupational risks, including job insecurity, psychological pressure, political and legal challenges, and, in some cases, physical danger. Under such conditions, social capital provides robust support across three key dimensions:

1. **Trust and Solidarity:** Trust within professional communities enables journalists to rely on collective support when facing challenges. Solidarity, manifested through unions, associations, and informal networks, enhances their resilience.
2. **Professional Networks:** Collaborative networks and experience-sharing among journalists, editors, and media organizations facilitate knowledge exchange, career development, and access to resources.
3. **Mutual Commitment and Social Norms:** A sense of belonging to a professional group, coupled with norms of cooperation and ethical responsibility, empowers journalists to defend both their rights and the public interest.

Methods:

This research is applied in purpose and descriptive-correlational in methodology. It examines the relationship between variables—specifically types of capital and QoL—among retired journalists covered by the SSO. The study was conducted in two phases:

- Phase 1: Measuring the QoL of pensioners in Tehran under the SSO.
- Phase 2: Analyzing the relationship between types of capital and QoL using structural equation modeling (SEM), which facilitates assessment of causal relationships and overall model fit.

Data were collected using standardized and researcher-developed questionnaires and analyzed with statistical software and SEM. The statistical population comprised pensioners of the SSO, from which 155 individuals were randomly sampled. A one-sample t-test was employed to assess the components of social capital; results indicated that most indicators were at an average and acceptable level.

Findings:

The results revealed that among the QoL subscales, the lowest mean score was observed for the physical health dimension, whereas the highest mean score pertained to social functioning. The overall QoL mean score was 61.5, indicating a relatively favorable level. Regarding economic capital, 3.5% of respondents were below the poverty line, 76% were at an average level, 18% belonged to the middle class, and 2.5% were classified as wealthy. Most respondents fell within the middle-class group.

SEM results demonstrated that social capital exerted the greatest impact on QoL ($\beta = 0.546$), followed by economic capital ($\beta = 0.381$) and cultural capital ($\beta = 0.297$).

Conclusions:

The findings indicate that cultural capital and its subscales were at an average-to-good level. Strengthening all forms of capital—particularly social capital—plays a significant role in improving pensioners' QoL. Specifically:

- Social capital: Path coefficient of 0.35 (95% confidence level), indicating a significant positive effect. Strengthening trust and social ties improves QoL.
- Economic capital: Path coefficient of 0.66 (99% confidence level), showing a strong positive effect. Improving economic opportunities directly enhances QoL.
- Cultural capital: Path coefficient of 0.069 (99% confidence level), confirming a positive effect.

All dimensions of QoL (physical function, bodily pain, vitality, fatigue, mental health, and social functioning) and all aspects of social capital (networks, trust, cooperation, values, mutual understanding, and commitment) were positively correlated with life quality. Consequently, social and economic planning should focus on strengthening social trust, creating job opportunities, and encouraging cultural and artistic activities to augment both capital and QoL.

Challenges in Social Security Coverage for Journalists

Journalists frequently encounter specific challenges, including:

1. Unstable Employment: Many journalists work under short-term contracts or freelance arrangements, rendering consistent insurance coverage difficult.
2. Insufficient Welfare Programs: Existing social security programs may inadequately cover occupational hazards, stress-related illnesses, or legal risks unique to journalism.
3. Limited Awareness: Some journalists lack sufficient knowledge of their social security rights and benefits.

Synergy Between Social Capital and Social Security

The integration of social capital and social security for journalists can generate a powerful synergy:

- Strengthening Professional Associations: Journalists' unions can act as mediators to ensure comprehensive insurance coverage and negotiate with policymakers.
- Building Trust Between Journalists and Institutions: Institutional trust motivates journalists to actively participate in social security programs.
- Collective Action for Policy Reform: Through cooperation, journalists can advocate for policies that better address occupational risks, mental health, and economic security.

The QoL of journalists depends not only on income and work environment but also on access to social security and the ability to mobilize social capital. Social capital strengthens solidarity, increases trust, and empowers journalists to secure better welfare protections. For sustainable development in media and society, policymakers must recognize the unique risks journalists face and design social security frameworks that are inclusive, flexible, and responsive to their professional realities.

Data Availability Statement

Data available on request from the authors.

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Ethical considerations

Not applicable.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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