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## Relationship between perceived organizational support, leadership behavior, and job satisfaction: An empirical study in Iran

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### **Abstract:**

As the second largest producer of cement after Egypt in the Middle East, Iran planned to increase production from 33 million ton/yr (Mt/yr) currently to 70 Mt/yr by 2021 due to increase in local demand and also to compete in export markets (Dehgan, 2002). Thus, Iran is experiencing some changes in workforce participation in order to achieve high level of organisational performance and effectiveness. The objective of this study is to determine the impact of leadership behavior and perceived organisational support on the job satisfaction of Iranian employees. Data were collected through questionnaire from 136 employees working in Tehran Cement Company. Consideration leadership behavior was found to have significant impact on both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction whereas perceived organisational support was significantly related to extrinsic job satisfaction. Interestingly, the interaction of leadership behavior and perceived organisational support were not significantly related to job satisfaction. The implications to human resource development for organizations that want to increase employee commitment is to focus on improving the quality of the supportive relationships between the employees and both the leader and the organisation.



**Keywords:** leadership behavior, perceived organisational support, job satisfaction, Iran.

**JEL Codes:** O15

## 1. Introduction

Leadership behavior has direct and matchless impact on the work environment, work outcomes and the success of organizations (Kritsonis, 2004). Previous studies emphasized that employees' response to leadership behavior and organization's values should motivate their actual performance (Fu et al., 2006). To have high level of organizational performance and effectiveness it is vital both employee and employer have high level of satisfaction (Lok & Crawford, 2003); therefore, their level of satisfaction has positive relationship to the success of the company.

The dissatisfaction of employee will lead them to less work commitment and high turnover from the organization, as well as physical withdrawal or they may retreat from the organization emotionally or mentally. On the other hand, job dissatisfaction not only increases intention to quit but also reduce the contribution of the employee to the organization (Lok & Crawford, 2003). The latest statistical information shows that 25 percent of the workforce in Iran are engaged in the industrial sector, 45 percent in the service sector whereas 30 percent are involved in agricultural activities (Kern Resource Center, 2005). The industrial sector contributed 28 percent of the Iran's GDP of which 14.5 percent was from the manufacturing and mining (Central Bank of I. R. of Iran, 2001). Therefore, managers in the cement manufacturing industry have to put more pressure on the effectiveness, efficiency and productivity of the 45 cement manufacturers in Iran. However, with two-thirds of the population under the age of 30 and literacy rate of 82% (CIA World Factbook, 2008), motivating and retaining employees in this industry poses implications to human resource management in Iran.

Many Western studies indicate that among the determinants of job satisfaction, leadership behavior (Cheng & Yang, 1977; Euske & Jackson, 1980 as cited by Darwish, 2000) and perceived organizational support (Burke & Greenglass, 2001; Burke, 2003) are viewed as important predictors and play a central role. Rude



(2004) suggest that perceived organizational support is strongly related to leadership behavior, hence insufficient support from leader is one of important factor to employees' dissatisfaction and burnout (Maslach et al., 2001) which the results are same with the lack of support from organization (Rude, 2004). However, very limited research has explored the linkage between perceived organizational support, leadership behavior and follower job satisfaction. We were further interested to compare the findings from the Western studies within the Iranian manufacturing industry. Therefore, the objective of this study was to determine the impact of leadership behavior and perceived organisational support on the job satisfaction of Iranian employees.

## **2. Context of the study: The Iranian cement industry**

Iran is one of the important countries in the Middle East that contribute significantly to the economic growth of this zone. Currently, Iran is the second largest producer of cement after Egypt in Middle East, which planed to increase from 33 Million ton/yr (Mt/yr) currently to 70 Mt/yr by 2021 to overcome the lack of cement due to increase in local demand and also to compete in export markets (Iran Daily, 2002). As illustrated in Figure 1, total cement production dramatically increased during last three decades (SESRTCIC databases). With almost 45 companies produce cement in Iran, the total production in 2006 was about 33 million tons with the growth rate of 1.5 percent (Department of Mine Industry of Iran, Ministry of Industry & Mine). According to the Industries and Mines Ministry in 2004, the labor force in the cement industry is about 18,100 persons. With the increase in operational capacity during recent years and according to estimated number of labor force in 2005 and 2006 with growth rate of 22.5 %, it is expected to have total amount of 47,000 labor force in cement industry by 2010 (Aftab News Agency, 2004).

Why the cement industry? Bakhshi (2008) pointed out some of main reason behind the importance of cement industry such as:

- High population growth
- High degree of infrastructure project investment by government
- Rapid urbanization



- Reinforcement of last generation of construction
- Natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods
- Rehabilitations of villages and towns

According to 2008 statistics, 70 percent of cement industry belong to public sector, however statistic shows 90 percent of new project operated and owned by private sector which increase the overall portion of private sector to 60 percent after project completion (Bakhshi, 2008).

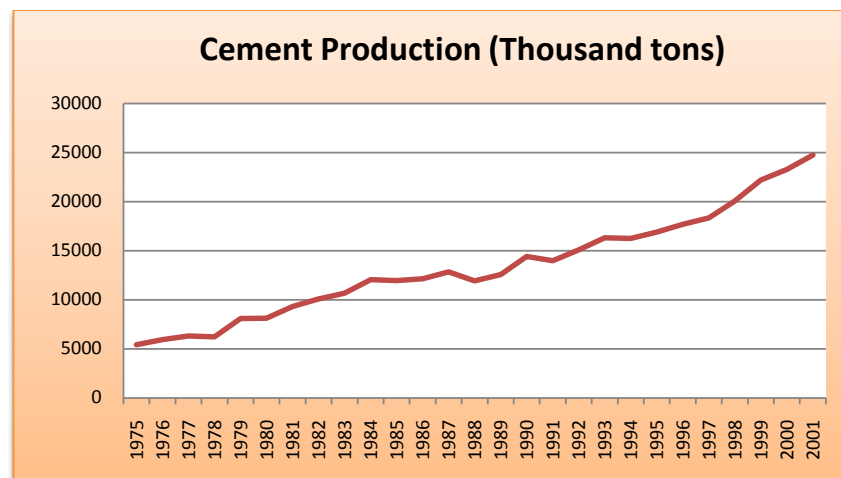


Figure 1. Cement Production [1975-2001] (SESRTCIC databases)

### 3. Literature review

#### Leadership behavior and job satisfaction

House and Filley (1971, 1996) tested path-goal contingency theory of leadership based on the prior research citing the works of Evans (1970) and Georgopoulos, Mahoney and Jones (1957) who maintained that the effective leader motivates employee to achieve the goal through reward and making clear employee's path to the organization's objectives which increase both employee satisfaction and organization's productivity.

Job satisfaction in this study is defined as the satisfaction level for leader and followers with the leader's style and approach as well as how satisfied they are in



general with the leader (Bass, 1985). Among determinants of job satisfaction, leadership is viewed as an important predictor and plays a central role. During the previous century, large amount of studies has gathered so many types of leadership in term group processes, personality and its effects, the art of inducing compliance, the exercise of influence, an act or behavior, a form of persuasion, a power relation, an instrument of goal achievement, an emerging effect of interaction, a differentiated role, the initiation of structure and a combination of various elements (Bass, 1990). But the usage of an appropriate theory extremely depends on the purpose of the study (Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1998).

This study uses the two dimensions that categorize leadership behavior, namely consideration and initiating structure (Lawrence, 2007). Leader who has consideration leadership behavior provide warm, friendly and supportive environment, whereas, leader with initiating structure leadership behavior assign tasks, specify procedures and is more action oriented (Lawrence, 2007).

Many previous studies show that consideration leadership behavior is positively related to employee job satisfaction while negative relationship report for initiating structure leadership behavior (Greene & Schriesheim, 1977; House & Filley, 1971; Nealy & Blood, 1968). However, other studies concluded differently and found negative relationship between consideration leadership behavior and job satisfaction (Halpin, 1954; Hodge, 1976; Patchen, 1962). Interestingly some studies indicate both consideration and initiating structure leadership behavior are positively related to job satisfaction (Bartolo & Furlonger, 2000; Katerberg & Horne, 1981).

The results of previous studies from different countries show that different styles of leadership do not have the same impact on job satisfaction (Stogdill, 1970; Walder, 1995). Based on the Stogdill (1970) initiating structure leadership style is more likely to provide greater commitment and job satisfaction in Asian firms, whereas in Western context consideration leadership style would provide greater job satisfaction. However, for the Iranian context being neither Eastern nor Western, given the past Western studies the following hypotheses were formulated:

*H1a: Consideration leadership behavior has positive impact on employees' intrinsic job satisfaction.*

*H1b: Consideration leadership behavior has positive impact on employees' extrinsic job satisfaction.*

*H1c: Initiating structure leadership behavior has negative impact on employees' intrinsic job satisfaction.*

*H1d: Initiating structure leadership behavior has negative impact on employees' extrinsic job satisfaction.*

#### **4. Perceived organizational support and job satisfaction**

According to Eisenberger, Huntingdon, Hutchinson and Sowa (1986:501), individuals tend to “form global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being.” These beliefs that are exchanges between an employee and employing organization are called perceived organizational support and is used to define in this study. High levels of perceived organizational support creates feelings of obligation, to the employers as well as makes them feel they have to return the employers' commitment by engaging in behaviors that support organizational goals. From the social exchange perspective, research has revealed that perceived organizational support is positively related to job attendance and measures of job performance (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

From a social exchange perspective, it can be argued that employees who perceive a high level of support from the organization are more likely to feel an obligation to repay the organization in terms of affective commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore & Wayne, 1993). According to Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro (1990), employees who feel supported by their organization and care about the organization would engage in activities that help to further the organization's goals.

One important issue is to differentiate perceived organizational support from job satisfaction (Zagenczyk, 2001). Previous study by Shore and Tetrick (1991)



disputes that perceived organizational support and job satisfaction conception are distinct but related. Perceived organizational support is a measure of employer commitment and set of beliefs about how much the organization cares for the staff well-being, whereas job satisfaction focuses on different sides or viewpoints of work and is the affective response to these different aspects of work situation.

In summary, many previous studies have shown that perceived organizational support was positively associated with levels of job satisfaction, high level of perceived organizational support resulted higher level of job satisfaction (Burke & Greenglass, 2001; Burke, 2003; Stamper & Johlke, 2003; Armstrong-Stassen, Cameron & Horsburgh, 1996). Given these theoretical claims and findings of previous studies, following hypotheses were suggested:

*H2a: Perceived organizational support is positively related to employees' intrinsic job satisfaction.*

*H2b: Perceived organizational support is positively related to employees' extrinsic job satisfaction.*

## **5. Leadership behavior, perceived organizational support and job satisfaction**

There is very limited research has explored the linkage between perceived organizational support, leadership behavior and follower job satisfaction. For employees the concept of support raise questions in relation to both interpersonal and organizational support (Connell, Ferres & Travaglione, 2003). How an organization shows concern with the needs and interests of the employee is based on two important theories; namely perceived organizational support (exchange between the employee and organization) and leader member exchange (exchange between the employee and supervisor) (Krause, 2004).

Whereas organizational support is important to employee satisfaction and loyalty, leadership behavior and how the employees perceive their superior support also play a vital role in obtaining the desired work outcomes. Previous studies show that perceived superior support (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski & Rhoades, 2002) is positively related to perceived organizational support. Moreover, Rhoades, Eisenberger and Armeli (2001) found that the relationship





between supervisor support and work outcomes (organizational commitment) is mediated by perceived organizational support (Breaux, 2004). In addition, supportive leadership behavior and strong relationship with superior influence employees' perceived organizational support (Krause, 2004).

Previous studies (Fu et al., 2006) suggest that leadership behavior and the organization's values should motivate the followers' actual performance due to their response to the leader's behaviors and the values emphasized by the organization (Fu et al., 2006). Perceived organizational support is strongly related to leadership behavior, whereas insufficient support from the leader is one of the important factors leading to employees' dissatisfaction and burnout (Maslach et al., 2001) as is the lack of support from organization (Rude, 2004). Based on the above researches and findings, these hypotheses were formulated:

*H3a: The interaction of consideration Leadership behavior and Perceived organizational support has positive impact on employees' intrinsic job satisfaction.*

*H3b: The interaction of consideration Leadership behavior and Perceived organizational support has positive impact on employees' extrinsic job satisfaction.*

*H3c: The interaction of initiating structure Leadership behavior and Perceived organizational support has positive impact on employees' intrinsic job satisfaction.*

*H3d: The interaction of initiating structure Leadership behavior and Perceived organizational support has positive impact on employees' extrinsic job satisfaction.*

Per the literature reviewed above, the conceptual framework for this study can be diagrammed as follows:

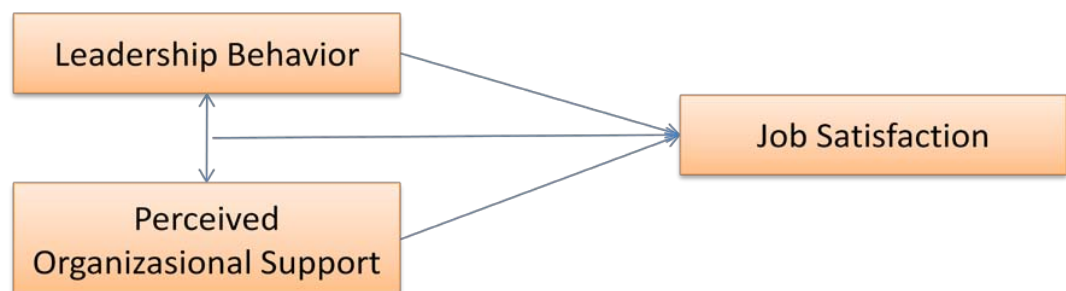


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study.

## 6. Methodology

### Research design

This study was a correlational study as we were interested to investigate the relationships between the independent variable Leadership Behavior and Perceived Organizational Support on the dependent variable Job Satisfaction. The study was conducted in non-contrived setting.

### Research site

We conducted our study in one of the 45 cement manufacturing companies in Iran, the Tehran Cement Company.

### Participants and sampling procedure

Data was collected via survey questionnaire from employees of the Tehran Cement Company located in Tehran, Iran. Random sampling was used on subjects from all departments of the company. Employees completed the questionnaire related to their perceived organizational support, their immediate leader's behavior and their job satisfaction. All data was collected at one point in time.

### Measures

#### Job satisfaction

Respondents' intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction was measured using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by Weiss, Dawis, England, and Lofquist (1967) comprising of 20 items of various aspects of the work environment on a 5-point Likert scale rating from (1) "not satisfied" to (5) "extremely satisfied".

#### Leadership behavior

We used the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) developed by the Bureau of Business Research, College of Commerce and Administration of Ohio State University (Stogdill, 1963). LBDQ includes 40 items and respondents rate their agreement using a five point Likert-type scale from (1) "never" to (5) "always".



### Perceived organizational support

The employees' point of view about his/her perceived organizational support was measured using the instrument by Eisenberger, Huntingdon, Hutchinson and Sowa (1986). The 8-item instrument used the Likert rating scale of (1) "strongly disagree" to (7) "strongly agree".

### Demographic variable

The demographic information collected information from all participants regarding age, gender, and educational level, tenure in the organization and level or position in the organization. Demographic variables such as year in the organization, level of the employee, educational level and gender has significant impact on work outcomes (Chen & Francesco, 2000; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Salancik, 1977). Three demographic variables (gender and educational level) were statistically controlled in the analysis due to potential effect of demographic variables on job satisfaction.

The questionnaire was translated to Persian from English using Brislin's (1970) translation model for cross-cultural research. The English version was first translated into Persian by a bilingual individual and then back translation (double translation) was done. The original and back-translated version was compared and they were found to be almost similar. However, to avoid the problem of understanding inherent in this method such as literal translation and missing information (McGorry, 2000), both the English version and Persian version were used in the survey.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

Data analysis was conducted using regression analysis. Prior to the conduct of regression analysis, four assumptions underlying multiple regression analysis (normality of the error term distribution, linearity of the relationship, independence of error term, and constant variance of the error term) were tested (Hair et al., 1998).

## 7. Results

A total 193 questionnaire were distributed and received from the employees of the company, but only 136 questionnaires were useable, representing an overall response rate of 70%. Majority of respondents were male (90.4%) and almost half were between the age of 30 to 39 years. With regards to educational level, the largest portion of respondents (59.6%) had diploma. Majority of the subordinates (57.4%) had experience in their present job more than 10 years. In term of job position level, 36.8 percent of respondents were office staff, followed by 29.5 percent heads of laborers, 16.2 percent first level managers, 14.7 percent laborers and 5.9 percent middle managers.

Items	<i>Extrinsic job satisfaction</i>	<i>Intrinsic Job Satisfaction</i>
The way my boss handles his/her workers.	.69	.21
The competence of my supervisor in making decisions.	.72	.20
The way company policies are put into practice.	.70	.29
My pay and the amount of work I do.	.63	.08
The chances for advancement on this job.	.73	.21
The working conditions.	.69	.12
The way my co-workers get along with each other.	.65	.34
The praise I get for doing a good job.	.60	.01
Being able to keep busy all the time.	.25	.47
The chance to be "somebody" in the community.	.20	.54
The way my job provides for steady employment.	.29	.59
The chance to do things for other people.	-.01	.70
The chance to tell people what to do.	.06	.76
The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities.	.10	.73
The freedom to use my own judgment.	.30	.56
Eigenvalue	5.81	2.32
Percentage of Variance	26.50	20.86

Note: N = 136.

Table 1. Exploratory Factor Analysis results for dependent variables.

Factor analysis was conducted for all study's variables using varimax rotation (Sekaran, 2000). As illustrated in Table 1, two factors (intrinsic job satisfaction - 7 items, extrinsic job satisfaction 8 items) were derived with the total variance explained of 47.37%. All eigenvalues exceeds 1.0, and factor loadings ranging between .47 and .73. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was at .86 while the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $p < 0.01$ ).



<i>Items</i>	<i>Initiating Structure Leadership Behavior</i>	<i>Consideration Leadership Behavior</i>	<i>Perceived Organizational Support</i>
Makes his/her attitudes clear to the group.	<b>.90</b>	.12	-.00
Tries out his/her new ideas with the group.	<b>.92</b>	.11	.00
Rules with an iron hand.	<b>.97</b>	.12	-.02
Criticizes poor work.	<b>.92</b>	.14	-.08
Speaks in a manner not to be questioned.	<b>.90</b>	.15	-.13
Assigns group members to particular tasks.	<b>.80</b>	.16	-.06
Schedules the work to be done.	<b>.82</b>	.13	.02
Maintains definite standards of performance.	<b>.75</b>	.05	-.04
Emphasizes the meeting of deadlines.	<b>.87</b>	.02	.02
Encourages the use of uniform procedures.	<b>.74</b>	.16	-.01
Makes sure that his/her part in the organization is understood by group members.	<b>.89</b>	.13	.00
Asks that group members follow standard rules and regulations.	<b>.87</b>	.09	.11
Lets group members know what is expected of them.	<b>.77</b>	.03	-.04
Sees to it that group members are working up to capacity.	<b>.61</b>	.18	-.04
Sees to it that the work of group members is coordinated.	<b>.79</b>	.04	.09
Does personal favors for group members.	.14	<b>.65</b>	.26
Does little things to make it pleasant to be a member of the group.	.07	<b>.68</b>	.25
Acts as the real leader of the group.	.02	<b>.63</b>	.34
Is easy to understand.	.05	<b>.71</b>	.01
Finds time to listen to group members.	.12	<b>.65</b>	-.03
Gives advance notice of changes.	.23	<b>.49</b>	.16
Keeps to himself/herself.	-.09	<b>.59</b>	.18
Looks out for the personal welfare of individual group members.	.24	<b>.60</b>	.29
Refuses to explain his/her action.	.04	<b>.53</b>	.29
Keeps the group informed.	.24	<b>.53</b>	.05
Acts without consulting the group.	.06	<b>.48</b>	.26
Backs up the members in their actions.	.11	<b>.69</b>	.29
Treats all group members as his/her equals	.32	<b>.62</b>	.39
Gets what he/she asks for from his/her superiors	.04	<b>.69</b>	.26
Is friendly and approachable.	.19	<b>.62</b>	.19
Is willing to make changes.	-.01	<b>.79</b>	.05
Makes group members feel at ease when talking with them.	.05	<b>.74</b>	.17

Puts suggestions made by the group into operation.	.17	<b>.61</b>	.28
Lets other people take away his/her leadership in the group	.07	<b>.53</b>	.23
Gets his/her superiors to act for the welfare of the group members.	.14	<b>.56</b>	-.07
Gets group approval in important matters before going ahead.	.11	<b>.68</b>	.34
Keeps the group working together as a team.	.34	<b>.45</b>	.23
Tehran Cement Co. values my contribution to its well-being.	.03	.27	<b>.51</b>
Tehran Cement Co. fails to appreciate any extra effort from me.	.02	.22	<b>.45</b>
Tehran Cement Co. would ignore any complaint from me.	-.06	.13	<b>.59</b>
Tehran Cement Co. really cares about my well-being.	-.08	.19	<b>.61</b>
Even if I did the best job possible, Tehran Cement Co. would fail to notice.	.06	.24	<b>.49</b>
Tehran Cement Co. cares about my general satisfaction at work.	-.08	.40	<b>.64</b>
Tehran Cement Co. shows very little concern for me.	-.07	.05	<b>.58</b>
Tehran Cement Co. takes pride in my accomplishments at work.	-.11	.33	<b>.60</b>
Eigenvalue	11.20	9.17	3.73
Percentage of Variance	24.87	20.38	8.29

Note.  $N = 136$ .

Table 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis results for independent variables.

As for leadership behavior, Table 2 shows that 37 out of 40 items were maintained during factor analysis with the total variance explained of 53.55%. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was at .83 while the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). All eigenvalues exceeds 1.0, and factor loadings ranging between .45 and .97. All eight items for perceived organizational support were maintained.

Factor	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	3.42	.69	<b>.83</b>				
2. Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	2.78	.79	.43**	<b>.88</b>			
3. Perceived Organizational Support	4.19	1.21	.33**	.66**	<b>.81</b>		
4. Consideration Leadership Behavior	3.56	.70	.41**	.68**	.54**	<b>.94</b>	
5. Initiating Structure Leadership Behavior	3.38	.93	.08	.07	-.02	.29**	<b>.97</b>

Note. \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; Diagonal entries in bold are coefficients alpha.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and intercorrelations of study variables

Table 3 presents the results related to descriptive statistics, reliability coefficients, and intercorrelations of all variables were reported. From Table 3 all measures have substantial reliability coefficients which ranged .81 to .97. Also, it can be concluded as our expectation intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction were found to be significant and positively related. Moreover, Initiating structure leadership behavior and consideration leadership behavior was found to be significant and positively correlated.

Two 3-step regressions were carried out to test study's hypotheses. For the first regression, intrinsic job satisfaction was the dependent variable. Extrinsic job satisfaction was the dependent variable for the second regression. The results of these 3-step hierarchical regressions are shown in Table 4. In the first step, the control variables consist of demographic variables (gender and educational level of the employee) were entered. In the second step, three independent factors were entered. In the third step the interaction of independent variable was entered to test whether the interaction of variables had stronger effect on job satisfaction.

Variables	Intrinsic Job Satisfaction			Extrinsic Job satisfaction		
	Step1 $\beta$	Step2 $\beta$	Step3 $\beta$	Step1 $\beta$	Step2 $\beta$	Step3 $\beta$
<i>Control Variables</i>						
Gender <sup>a</sup>	-.12			-.10		
Education1	-.9			.39**		
Education2	.12			.30**		
<i>Model Variables</i>						
Initiating Structure leadership Behavior		-.2			-.06	
Consideration Leadership Behavior		.34**			.48**	
Perceived Organizational Support		.19			.34**	
<i>Interactions</i>						
Consideration Leadership Behavior X Perceived Organizational Support			0.05			-.24
Initiating Structure Leadership Behavior X Perceived Organizational Support			-.39			.15
$R^2$	.05	.24**	.24	.17**	.61**	.61

Note: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$  <sup>a</sup> dummy-coded variable (0 = female; 1 = male)

Table 4. Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis.

The results in Table 4 show the following: H1a and H1b were fully supported this indicating that consideration leadership behavior had strong positive impact on



both intrinsic ( $\beta=.34$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and extrinsic ( $\beta=.48$ ,  $p<.01$ ) job satisfaction. However, the results did not support H1c and H1d in that the negative relationship between initiating structure leadership behavior and job satisfaction was present but not significant. The analysis for H2b suggests that higher level of perceived organizational support leads to higher level of extrinsic job satisfaction ( $\beta=.34$ ,  $p<.01$ ). However, the results for interaction term were not statistically significant. Therefore, H3 was rejected.

## 8. Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between leadership behavior, perceived organizational support and their interactions on job satisfaction (intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction). Three main hypotheses were formulated: (a) the relationship between leadership behavior and job satisfaction, (b) the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction and (c) the relationship between the interaction of independent variables and job satisfaction. In line with the path-goal contingency theory of leadership, the findings of this study suggest that the consideration leadership behavior increase employees' satisfaction. In concert with the Western studies (Greene & Schriesheim, 1977; House & Filley, 1971; Nealy & Blood, 1968), the results show that consideration leadership style positively impact job satisfaction in a patriarchal society like Iran. Whereas in this study the managers and their subordinates who evaluated them were all Iranians, this findings bears implications for Western expatriates interested to work in Iran in terms of which leadership behavior to practice that would engender employee satisfaction.

Previous studies have shown that perceived organizational support was positively associated with levels of job satisfaction, high level of perceived organizational support resulted higher level of job satisfaction (Burke & Greenglass, 2001; Burke, 2003; Stamper & Johlke, 2003; A-Stassen, Cameron & Horsburgh, 1996). However, the results of the present study differ from these Western studies. Whereas the relationship between perceived organizational support and extrinsic job satisfaction was significant, the reverse was true for intrinsic job satisfaction. It seems that the mostly male (90.4 percent) Iranian employees in this study did not derive intrinsic satisfaction from the perceived support they receive from their organization. However, their perceptions of organizational support correlate or





augur well with their satisfaction with external factors of the job such as the boss, co-workers, the job itself.

According to Connell, Ferres and Travaglione (2003), perceived organizational support and leadership behavior are significant predictors of desire work outcomes, like turnover intent and commitment (Connell, Ferres and Travaglione, 2003). Moreover, Rhoades, Eisenberger and Armeli (2001) found that the relationship between supervisor support and work outcomes (organizational commitment) is mediated by perceived organizational support (Breaux, 2004) and supportive leadership behavior and strong relationship with superior influences employees' perceived organizational support (Krause, 2004). However, the results of this study find no significant impact of the interaction between leadership behavior (both initiating structure and consideration) with perceived organizational support on either intrinsic or extrinsic job satisfaction. This contradictory finding could be attributed to the different cultural backgrounds in the Western studies and the Iranian patriarchal society.

The human resource management implication for both the Iranian managers and their organizations is that training their managers to be more employee-oriented may improve the quality of supportive relationships between the managers/leaders and their employees, which in turn will increase the employees' satisfaction. This is in line with previous studies that show different variables like leadership behavior and perceived organizational support do not have the same impact on job satisfaction in different countries (Stogdill, 1970; Walder, 1995).

As for theoretical implications, the findings of this study support Herzberg's distinction between intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction (Robbins, Marsh, Cacioppe and Millett, 1994). Hence, the finding of this study supported the findings of earlier researchers (Greene & Schriesheim, 1977; Bartolo & Furlonger, 2000; Burke & Greenglass, 2001; Brown, Scott and Reilly, 2006). From the social exchange perspective, the present findings find only partial support to Western studies on perceived organizational support and job satisfaction (Burke & Greenglass, 2001; Burke, 2003; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Stamper & Johlke, 2003; Armstrong-Stassen, Cameron & Horsburgh, 1996).

The current study has some potential limitations. First, the models advanced in the current study were tested on a relatively small sample size of 136 employees.



Whereas this number exceeds the minimum number suggested by Bartlett, Kotrlik and Higgins (2001), parameter estimates become more stable and accurate as the sample size increases (Schumacker & Lomax, 1996). Second, given the three selected independent variables manage to explain only on average of 24% and 61% in intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction respectively. It is more likely that other variables might be related to intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. Future research could explore other factors such as work ambiguity, organizational commitment, work motivation and organizational justice. Third, the population of this study working in the Tehran Cement Company is involved in the manufacturing sector. Statistics shows most of the Iranian workforce is in the service sector (45%). Therefore, further research could also conduct in the service sector to determine whether these findings would be similar in the different nature of job.

## **9. Conclusion**

Iran is experiencing challenges to achieve high level of organizational performance and effectiveness in order to maintain its growing cement production. Whereas organizational performance and effectiveness strongly depend on the level of employees' satisfaction (Lok & Crawford, 2003), this study was undertaken to investigate the impact of leadership behavior and perceived organizational support on employee satisfaction. The findings are similar to Western studies in that consideration leadership behavior was significantly related to both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction whereas perceived organizational support was significantly related to extrinsic job satisfaction. However, unlike Western studies, the interaction of leadership behavior and perceived organizational support were not significantly related to job satisfaction. In terms of Western theories, whereas the findings support Herzberg's distinction of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, it finds partial support to the relationship between Eisenberger's et al. (1986) perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. Iranian organizations that want to increase their employees' job satisfaction may need to focus on improving the quality of the supportive relationships between the leaders and the employees. The study also bears implications on how Western expatriates should practice their leadership behavior in Iran.



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