

The Influence of Employee Self-Efficacy on the Quality of Work Life

Hadeel Kadhim Saaed^a, Salma H.Raheemah^b, Alyaa J.Mohammed^c,
^{a,b,c}College of Administration & Economics – University of Baghdad, Email:
^adr.hadelkadim@coadec.uobaghdad.edu.iq,
^bsalmahatytaraheemah@coadec.uobaghdad.edu.iq,
^cdr.alyaa@coadec.uobaghdad.edu.iq

This research aims to study the effect of employees' self-efficacy on their quality of work life, due to the vital role that self-efficacy plays. If self-efficacy is high, workers succeed in achieving their duties and in overtaking the associating difficulties no matter how demanding those duties might be. The opposite is true for when self-efficacies are low; workers fail in carrying out the simplest duties assigned. This study proposes a theoretical framework that delineates studying the effect of self-efficacy in the quality of work life depicted in the opinions of a sample of managing directors of the Oil Products Distribution Company in Baghdad. Four subdimensions of the variable of self-efficacy were adopted, and five for the quality of work life variable. The research sample consisted of 42 members who were working as managers at various administrative levels for the aforementioned company. A questionnaire was used as the main tool, and the data were analysed by means of the arithmetic mean and the AMOS v.23 software. The research revealed that there was an influence of self-efficiency on the quality of work life.

Key words: *Self-efficacy, quality of work life, oil products, distribution, company managers*

Introduction

The abilities to work individually are reflected in the way they perform their duties and tasks. The higher these abilities are, the more productive their performances would be. For the psychological nature of workers, their orientations have a significant effect on worker productivity and the output of their organisations, regardless of the types of services and products involved. Thus, the higher the capacities of those workers are, the better their abilities to confront the challenges and difficulties arising in their organisations.

Likewise, workers with low self-efficacy are less able to face challenges and problems to the extent that they might even be unable to accomplish the given tasks in proper ways. This may be due to either personal factors such as social status, emotional life or attitudes towards others or problems cognitive in nature. In addition, there might be some organisational reasons suppressing their zeal and dampening their willingness to perform jobs. Thus, many components or factors can impact the individual work performance, including the environment, the prevalent culture of the organisation, the nature of the cooperation and relationships among workers, or whatever that has the potential to encourage workers, such as offering material and moral incentives, and the extent to which they feel satisfied with their jobs.

The effects of both subjective and organisational factors are well known. One factor may fluctuate over the other, and so its effect (on workers) becomes predominant. Bandura (1978), who became famous for his interest in the subject of self-efficacy, believes in the vital role of the worker's self-efficacy plays in achieving their duties, goals and in facing challenges. Accordingly, the research problem stems from the main question: To what extent do managers employ their self-efficacy in light of the quality of work life available and when confronting the challenges and difficulties of their work environment, including the poor harmonisation of organisational culture, such as the relations and cooperation level among colleagues, the disproportionate wages and rewards, and their poor satisfaction about their jobs?

Theoretical Background

Bandura (1978?) started publishing his works on "self-efficacy" for the first time in early 1960, a theory whose launch coincided that of his book: *Social Foundation of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. According to Bandura, self-efficacy refers to individual beliefs about one's ability to successfully achieve a certain goal (Bandura, 1978, p. 192). The term also is defined as people's judgments of their capabilities to organise and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). Self-efficacy is the individual belief about one's abilities, trust in those abilities and knowledge in light of the Pajares definition (Pajares & Graham, 1999, p. 220). The researchers agree with this definition of self-efficacy according to the directions of the current research.

In our present study, we will rely on the following subdimensions of self-efficacy: social self-efficacy, emotional self-efficacy, and cognitive self-efficacy.

First, social self-efficacy is defined by Smith and Betz (2000, p. 286) as "the individual's trust in his/her ability to incorporate oneself in the necessary tasks required for social interaction to make and maintain personal relationships."

Second, emotional self-efficacy: Goroshit and Hen (2014) mentioned that emotional self-efficacy was "The person's Judgment on his/her ability to handle emotional information in a proper and right way since it is the force variable that affects the emotional status of the individual as well as his/her performance" (Abdel-Hadi, 2017, p. 214). Likewise, emotional self-efficacy is the trust in someone's emotional abilities involved in his/her job or someone's belief in the ability to achieve emotional competencies.

Third, cognitive self-efficacy refers to a group of sub-functions used for understanding, assessing and organising behaviour (Bandura, 1978, p. 348). One of the main functions of thinking is to enable employees to predict events and develop methods of controlling those events that affect their work. Such skills require active cognitive processing of the information/data that include much doubt and ambiguity (Bandura, 1993, p. 126).

As for the quality of work life, there are currently many interpretations. They differ from each other based on the different intellectual and philosophical visions of the researchers and thinkers who have been dealing with the subject from different angles even when the implied goal has been the same as being an attempt to improve the working environment. The term began gaining more attention in the early 1970s, and its analysis and applications went viral, especially in the USA, resulting in much research and many studies on the subject.

It was the large and leading organisations in America that gave great importance to the subject of how to improve and analyse the quality of work life in light of the many organisational changes (Beach, 1999).

Moreover, the concept encompasses monitoring the views of employees regarding the quality of their work and the quality of their professional work life; helping the employers understand where to make improvements in terms of the things that can influence the workers, their participation in solving problems, and the decision-making process; and assisting in creating an organisational structure that is appropriate to the abilities and capabilities of workers (Parvar et al., 2013).

The quality of work life has also been defined as the activities carried out by the management to achieve job satisfaction for employees and thus achieving organisational effectiveness or potency (Hyde et al., 2012, p. 133), which is a method or approach in which different techniques are used to improve working methods and to give adequate attention to the employees and the organisations, thus achieving satisfaction (Sojka, 2014, p. 284). The

quality of work life has also been defined as the extent to which members of the organisation are able to satisfy their personal needs through their experiences in the organisation and which covers the emotions of employees concerning every aspect of the work including the fairness of wages, environment, job security and relationships with others (Garg et al., 2012).

Following the aforementioned, we find that most of the definitions are directed towards "humanizing the work" and to pay attention to the workers in their workplaces, providing them with whatever has the potential to make them feel satisfied with their careers. Hence, they perform their utter best, which in turn would be in the best interest of the organisation as a whole.

Having read a number of studies on the subject, the researchers of the current paper discovered a state of inconsistency prevailing among other researchers on determining the dimensions of the quality of work life, which started in the 1970s and is still valid today. However, the following points have been the focus of many researchers regarding those dimensions:

First - Working Environment: Physical work environment is defined as the facilities, equipment, resources and operational climate that employees encounter and interact with at their workplaces (Nayak, 2016, p. 71). Many modern organisations have been focusing on the physical, psychological and mental well-being of the workers and how they should be taken care of and be protected from hazards and work accidents by means of providing a healthy and safe work environment.

Second - Culture of the Organisation: Each organisation has its own regulations, procedures, culture and principles, which are in harmony with its objectives and features. The organisation tries to make the workers adhere to those principles and regulations, trying to reduce the contradictions that may occur between the organisation and its workers (Parvar et al., 2013). Recent studies on organisational culture have focused more on intangible qualities such as values, behaviours and attitudes, which help in the decision-making and development processes (Bendak et al., 2020).

Third - Relationship and Cooperation: This factor is called the social factor, which includes the importance of working within the community and the importance of social integration in the organisational process, the relationships among colleagues and social networks, the prevalence of respect between the management and the employees on one hand and between the workers and the dealers or customers on the other (Gayathiri et al., 2013). The researchers found that when the cooperation of the supervisor and the relationships in the work environment make the work life positive for the employees, the employers can focus on the cooperation of the supervisors in the correct guidance of the employees, and when doing

this, the employees can generate positive attitudes towards the activities and tasks of the work (Ashraf, 2019).

Fourth - Compensation and Rewards: One of the basic motivating factors for working individuals is the existence of rewards that play a key role in determining the quality of work life. Wages are also essential for any work, so they must meet the different aspirations and needs of the worker. Wages must be commensurate with the effort exerted by the workers (Parvar et al., 2013, p. 136). Compensation and rewards are considered one of the most important factors that assist employees in working for periods longer than required. They are one of the most important factors that make employees satisfied with their lives and workplaces. Appropriate compensation and tribute offered to the employees after they complete their work is a way to boost their morale that would enable them to perform even better (Marasigan et al., 2019, pp. 1-2)

Fifth - Job Satisfaction and Security: Job satisfaction symbolises employee satisfaction, freedom of thought, freedom from stress and an approach to trust towards job requirements by employees; an employee who is satisfied or very satisfied has a positive attitude towards customers, and improving the quality of work life can improve the level of job satisfaction among employees and reduce stress, thus reducing employee turnover (Dhamija et al., 2019, p. 3).

Hypotheses

The Influence of Self-Efficacy on the Quality of Work Life

We assume a positive influence of self-efficacy on the quality of work life. Employees who are satisfied with their work will see that their work environment is of high quality. However, the high self-efficacy to perform difficult tasks that affect the satisfaction of the employees and to achieve the quality of life of their work will increase their fears for their quest always to provide better (Mensah & Lebbaeus, 2013).

In this regard, Bandura (1978) indicates that the self-efficacy of an individual affects his/her choices of activities, labour and perseverance. Self-efficacy beliefs influence behaviour in many ways (Amtmann et al., 2012). Self-efficacy may be a reason for success and distinction when it is high among workers, while it is a reason for failure or failure to perform the work properly when it is low. It can clarify that the quality of work life includes two approaches (Coelho et al., 2016). The first was adopted in the current study and is hegemonic and welfare-oriented as it becomes clear that the employee is responsible for the quality of work life. Therefore, he must prepare to face various difficulties and working conditions.

The second is called Activity-centered Ergonomics Applied to Quality of Work Life – AEAQWL.

This research starts with the main hypothesis that there is a significant influence of self-efficacy on the quality of work life, from which the following hypotheses are subdivided:

- a. The first sub-hypothesis: There is a significant influence between the dimension of social self-efficacy and the quality of work life.
- b. The second sub-hypothesis: There is a significant influence between the dimension of emotional self-efficacy and the quality of work life.
- c. The third sub-hypothesis: There is a significant influence between the dimension of going towards others and the quality of work life.
- d. The fourth sub-hypothesis: There is a significant influence between the dimension of cognitive self-efficacy and the quality of work life.

Material and Method

Sample and Data Collection

To test our research hypotheses, we collected data from members of one of the companies affiliated with the Iraqi Ministry of Oil. We sought to enhance the external validity of the findings and to capture sufficient variance in the study's focal constructs, particularly using two variables in the current study. A sample of managers, amounting to 42, was chosen using managers from various administrative levels in the Iraqi Oil Products Distribution Company. Concerning gender, the questionnaire was distributed in the highest frequency to men (25), and the lowest frequency was for women (17). The highest frequency of scientific qualification is 22 for a bachelor's degree completion, then for 12 holders of a diploma, while the lowest category was for graduates with high degrees (6), then a higher diploma (2).

Measures

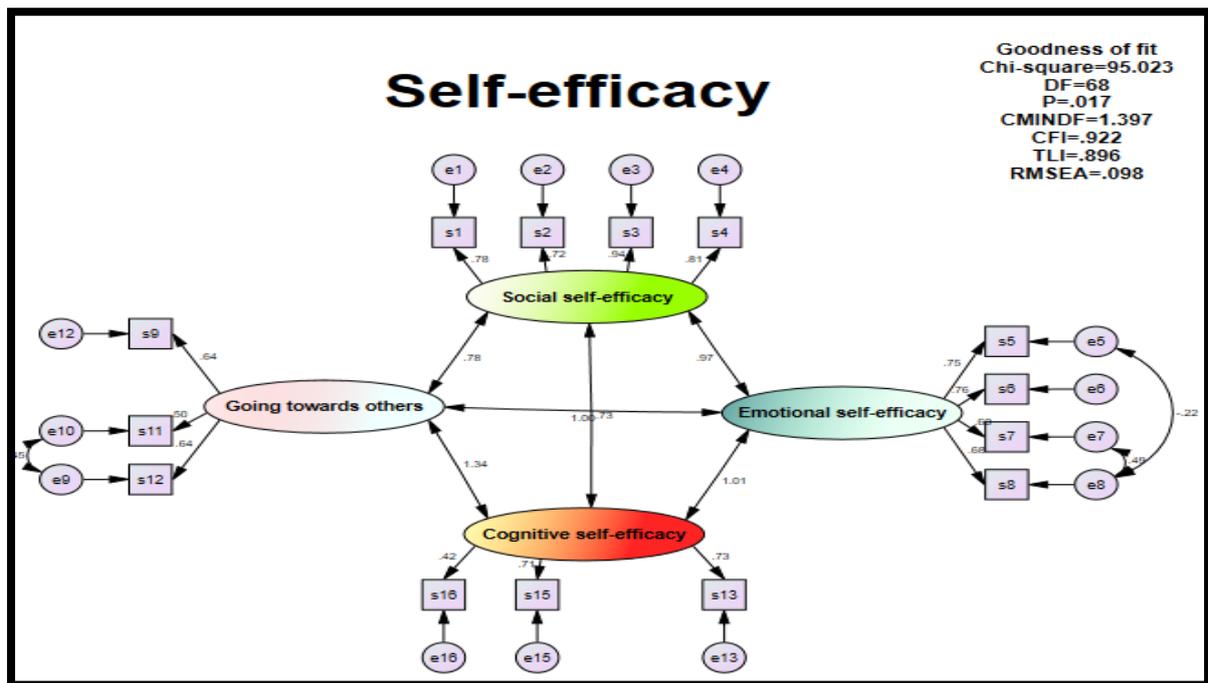
Self-Efficacy & Quality of Work Life

To assess self-efficacy, we relied on Loeb's (2016) 16-item scale, using a five-point Likert anchors. It includes four subdimensions (social self-efficacy, including orientation towards the self and orientation towards others, emotional self-efficacy, and cognitive self-efficacy). In the dependent variable, the quality of work life was adopted on a scale (Swamy et al., 2015), and it includes five subdimensions (work environment, organisational culture, relationship and cooperation, compensation, and satisfaction and job security), including a 22-item scale, using five-point Likert anchors.

Confirmatory Factorial Analysis of the Self-Efficacy Variable

By modification indices, the researchers develop their model based on the literature or the research theory and then try to test the conformity of the model to the experimental data. Therefore, in the case of a weak congruency, the usual procedure should be modifying the model by omitting the ambiguous choices or tracks and adding tracks or choices that enhance the model's fitness (congruency). The final model reached after the modification is shown in Fig. 1.

Figure 1. Complete Model of the Self-Efficacy Variable After Modification



Source: AMOS V.23 software

Table 1 below shows the significance of items or statements as they appear to be greater than the standard critical value (CR) of (1.96). This supports the validity (reliability) of the statements and that the extracted goodness of fit indices are close to the standard goodness of fit indices, which is a good sign. The nonsignificant item was omitted in addition to modifying the values of common discrepancies by making correlations among the items with (bearing) the highest common discrepancy that appeared in the recommendations of the modification indices (Byrne, 2009: 90) as is shown in Fig. 1 of the self-efficacy variable after modification.

Table 1: Shows the standardised regression weights, the standard error, the critical ratio and the significance value for the dimensions of the self-efficacy variable.

Significance value at 0.05 P	Critical Ratio C.R.	The Standard Error S.E.	Standardised Regression Weights	Dimensions	Track	Items (paragraphs)
			.784	Social self-efficacy	<---	s1
***	4.940	.188	.720		<---	s2
***	6.897	.166	.938		<---	s3
***	5.732	.192	.810		<---	s4
			.746	Emotional self-efficacy	<---	s5
***	5.171	.181	.756		<---	s6
***	4.008	.183	.601		<---	s7
***	4.150	.202	.679		<---	s8
***	4.260	.242	.636	Going towards others	<---	s9
***	4.617	.198	.501		<---	s11
			.645		<---	s12
			.726	Cognitive self-efficacy	<---	s13
***	5.005	.155	.710		<---	s15
.003	2.935	.175	.417		<---	s16

Confirmatory Factorial Analysis of the Quality of Work Life Variable

By observing the extracted conformity quality indices, it appears that most of these indices are not identical (incongruous). To improve these indices, we should modify them according to the recommendations of the Modification Indices (Byrne, 2009, p. 90), which involves either omitting the items with the highest common discrepancy within the model or modifying them.

As is shown in Fig. 2, the goodness of fit indices were within the model's required criteria.

Table 2: Shows the standardised regression weights, the standard error, the critical ratio and the significance value for the dimensions of the quality of work life variable.

Significance Value at 0.05 P	Critical Ratio C.R.	The Standard Error S.E.	Standardised Regression Weights	Dimensions	Track	Items (paragraphs)
			.465	Work environment	<---	s17
.005	2.809	.714	.753		<---	s18
.003	3.018	.867	.846		<---	s19
.010	2.587	.647	.664		<---	s20
			.674	Organisational culture & climate	<---	s21
***	4.636	.327	.829		<---	s23
***	4.882	.342	.903		<---	s24
			.560	Relationship & cooperation	<---	s25
***	3.491	.367	.801		<---	s26
***	3.550	.425	.816		<---	s27
.001	3.234	.305	.666		<---	s28
			.500	Compensation & rewards	<---	s29
.003	2.955	.468	.702		<---	s30
.003	2.971	.454	.651		<---	s31
			.491	Job Satisfaction & Security	<---	s33
***	3.847	.321	.594		<---	s34
.001	3.279	.848	.874		<---	s35
***	3.295	.780	.939		<---	s36

Analysis

Descriptive Analysis of the Variables of the Research

By this analysis, we seek to identify the real influence of the self-efficacy on achieving the quality of work life of the researched sample of managers working at the Iraqi Oil Products Distribution Company. The analysis would be based on the arithmetic mean and the standard deviation of the answers in addition to determining the level of relative significance for each dimension within the same variable based on the coefficient of variation. A five-point Likert scale was used to treat the answers of the sample responders as they replied to the questionnaire, of which each variable's level would be from 1 to 5.

Self-Efficacy (X)

The highest general self-efficacy arithmetic mean came with the "going towards others" dimension as it reached 3.286, which is higher than the hypothetical mean and is at a medium level since its standard deviation was 0.664 and the coefficient of variation was 20.206, as this dimension came second in relative significance. That was an indication of the cooperation existing among employees. However, the cooperation was not high enough because we see it among employees as a means of creating a good organisational (structural) climate suitable for the employees themselves.

However, the workers had difficulties understanding the inner feelings of their colleagues, especially negative feelings, which is an indication that an employee did not share his or her personal matters. This could be traced back to the lack of trust among the workers and the pressure of work and the crowded tasks that do not allow for time to be spent on chatting with others about those feelings.

The lowest general arithmetic mean was associated with the social self-efficacy dimension at 3.066, with a standard deviation of 0.897 and the coefficient of variation of 29.269. The dimension came fourth in terms of the relative significance, which indicates that the social self-efficacy was not at a good level since some employees were not dealing with the colleagues whom they were not familiar with. In most cases, the relationship is limited to formalities. On the whole, the variable of self-efficacy came with a mean of 3.168 and a standard deviation of 0.64.

This is indicative of the existence of self-efficacy within the researched company. However, it is not at the required level, as there is a decline in most dimensions of self-efficacy that came in average levels, and despite their existence, they were still not active and effective enough in real life. Employees had suitable capabilities and skills, but the working climate of the researched company was not enough to enable them to reveal those skills or to invest in them properly. Consequently, to continue in such a manner might have a deteriorating impact on the skills of those workers, feeding them frustration that would kill creativity little by little.

Quality of Work Life (Y)

The highest general arithmetic mean came at the "relationship and cooperation" dimension as it reached 3.143 at an average level with a standard deviation of 0.779 and a coefficient of variation of 24.792. The dimension came fourth in terms of relative significance, which indicates that levels of relationship and cooperation were below ambition to utterly influence the overall performance of the researched company. Despite the existence of the dimension of



"relationship and cooperation" among workers, it was not that influential on the managers, and it was limited to formalities only. The lowest average arithmetic mean was linked to the "organizational culture and climate" dimension.

This dimension reached (2.917) at a neutral level with a standard deviation of (0.840) and a coefficient of variation of (28.814). The dimension came fifth in terms of relative significance, which means that the level of the organisational culture and its climate was not good. Despite the existence of some cooperation that was needed among the organisation's departments to achieve general goals, there was a deterioration on the levels of granting freedoms to take part in the decision-making process concerning decisions that affect workflow. Instead, the decision-making process was limited to senior levels in addition to the fact that the wages policy was below the ambitions of the workers, which negatively impacted the overall culture and climate of the organisation.

On the whole, the value of the quality of work life came in an arithmetic mean of 3.03 with an average level and at a standard deviation of 0.62, which indicates a decrease in the quality of work life. The table below shows a decline in the majority of the quality of work life dimensions since the company suffered in creating a stimulating work environment, with employees feeling enormous working pressures that affected their levels negatively. Furthermore, the levels of compensation, rewards and job satisfaction had all been declining. The workers felt that they were not getting the wages commensurate with the efforts they were exerting in carrying out their work and that the promotion process was not proceeding well through its routine path. Accordingly, those matters impacted the overall level of the quality of work life within the researched company.

Table 3: Shows the arithmetic mean, the standard deviation, the coefficient of variation and the relative importance of the research variables.

Dimensions of the research variables	Arithmetic mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Relative Importance
Social self-efficacy	3.066	0.897	29.269	4
Emotional self-efficacy	3.185	0.632	19.850	1
Going towards others	3.286	0.664	20.206	2
Cognitive self-efficacy	3.137	0.725	23.098	3
Self-efficacy	3.168	0.641	20.247	1
Working environment	3.030	0.692	22.850	2
Organisational culture and climate	2.917	0.840	28.814	5
Relationship and cooperation	3.143	0.779	24.792	4
Compensation and rewards	3.125	0.679	21.730	1
Job satisfaction and security	2.935	0.709	24.174	3
Quality of work wife	3.030	0.620	20.476	2

Testing the Hypotheses of Influence

Testing the main hypothesis, we found that the calculated value (F) of the estimated model was 137.837, which was greater than the tabular value (F) of (2.79) at the significance level of (0.05). Accordingly, the hypothesis is accepted, which means that there is a significant influence between self-efficacy and quality of work life at 5% significance level, with a degree of confidence of 95%.

This indicates that self-efficacy has a real and effective role in achieving the quality of work life, i.e. when a company takes the employees to self-efficacy levels, that would positively affect the creation of quality of work life. It is clear through the value of the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.775 and that self-efficacy is capable of explaining 77% of the changes that occur to the dependent variable (quality of work life). The remaining of 23% is then

related to other variables that are not included in the current model of research. The value of the coefficient of the marginal propensity of 0.851 shows that the increase in self-efficacy by one unit would lead to an increase in the variable of quality of work life by 85%.

Testing the sub-hypothesis, we found that the calculated (F) value for the model was 82.874, 62.223, 33.822, and 71.034, which were greater than the tabular value (F) of 2.79 at the 0.05 significance level. Accordingly, the hypothesis is accepted, which means there is a significant influence between the dimension of self-efficacy and the quality of work life.

Table 4: Showing the statistical indices between self-efficacy dimensions of quality of work life.

Sig	R ²	F	B	A	Self-efficacy dimensions	track	Quality of Work Life
0.000	.674	82.874	.568	1.289	Social self-efficacy	→	Quality of Work Life Y
.0000	.609	62.223	.766	.591	Emotional self-efficacy	→	
.0000	.458	33.822	.633	.952	Going towards others	→	
.0000	.640	71.034	.685	.881	Cognitive self-efficacy	→	
.0000	.775	137.837	.851	.332	Self-efficacy	→	

Conclusions

The results of the research showed that there was some decline in social, emotional and cognitive self-efficacy levels. The majority of the relationships among the workers themselves and between them and the senior management were formal relations where administrative routine prevailed but was coupled with a decline in trust levels among workers. That was noteworthy since trust is considered a key factor in turning social, emotional and cognitive self-efficacy into success and, when available, would have the power to encourage feelings of disclosure, which in turn would encourage sharing opinions, therefore, creating a successful organisational climate coupled with enhanced overall performance and quality of work life within the researched company. This is not consistent with the findings of Amtmann et al. (2012). There is a positive relationship between social function and self-efficacy, which suggests that workers who are more confident in managing their symptoms are doing more and, as a result, are happy with their roles and social functions.



Despite the cooperation that existed among the workers, it was low on ambition, often limited and lacking the initiative needed to be taken by the individual employee towards others (colleagues). However, the initiative was being offered in situations where an individual was urged to do so. The reason behind that could be attributed to the senior management's weak interest in the human behavioural side of the workers, as the interest of the management was being limited to the official side (i.e., formalities) alone.

Despite the confirmed existence of self-efficacy among the employees of the researched company as the results showed, that efficacy did not live up to a level acceptable by the company as there was a decline in most dimensions of self-efficacy, regardless of the existence of the fertile ground needed to reach acceptable levels through the employees' skills and expertise. The negligence of the human side by the senior management negatively affected the attainment of the self-efficacy levels in the researched company. This contradicts the findings of a study (Mensah & Lebbaeus, 2013). Therefore, the higher an individual's self-efficacy is, the more confidence one has in his or her ability to succeed in a task. Therefore, in difficult situations, we find that people with low self-efficacy are more likely to lessen their effort or give up altogether. In contrast, those with high self-efficacy would try harder to master the challenge. The results of the research showed that there was some decline in the environmental and organisational climate of the researched company due to the weakness in the availability of a stimulating work environment, which would help employees recognise their achievements and feel a sense of belongingness to the company. Moreover, the existence of good material incentives within the company was not enough for some workers, especially those who found moral motivation and words of praise and appreciation an important motivational factor that should be coupled with the material stimulation. The results showed that the levels of job satisfaction and security were below ambition in terms of what the management of the researched company could do to raise the levels of performance as a result of the presence of job satisfaction. That was sensed through the employees' diminished conviction on how good the work environment was and how fair the wages and incentives were compared to the labour exerted within the company. The results showed that there is some decline in the quality of work life within the researched company due to the lack of seriousness in the attention given by the senior management to the basic dimensions of the quality of work life. The focus of the management was on the results to be gained and how to achieve the final objectives of the company without taking into considerations the basic means leading to the desired goals. In addition, the workers themselves, who needed a motivating environment and a suitable organisational climate to reach job satisfaction and security, which should be considered the highest aim of every company, were also not considered. Finally, the study results showed that the more the researched company cared for self-efficacy and tried to adopt it, the more influence it gained in the way of achieving the quality of work life. The more the company invested in activating the self-efficacy of the



workers, the more attainable progress became and the more influentially that helped in achieving the quality of work life within its boundaries.

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