The study of social capital rate among the male and female students at Islamic Azad University

Iraj Mahmodi, Hadi Aghaei, Leila Amjadi

1Department of Education, College of Education, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran.
2Young Researchers and Elite Club, Malekan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Malekan, Iran.
3Department of Education, College of Education and Counselling, Roudhehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudhehen, Iran.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 15 April 2014
Received in revised form 22 May 2014
Accepted 25 May 2014
Available online 15 June 2014

Key words:
Social capital, trust and participation, volume of individual communication network, social support

ABSTRACT

Objective: This paper seeks to investigate the social capital rate in male and female students at Islamic Azad University of Tabriz research. Background: The statistical sample size is obtained equal to 378 through Cochran formula by stratified random sampling and the subject of research is investigated through the questionnaire. Results: The research results indicate that there is a significant difference between the gender and social capital, but no significant difference between the male and female students in terms of social participation. Conclusion: Furthermore, there is a significant difference between the gender and trust, social participation, volume of individual communication network and social support.

© 2014 AENSI Publisher All rights reserved.

To Cite This Article: Iraj Mahmodi , Hadi Aghaei, Leila Amjadi , The study of social capital rate among the male and female students at Islamic Azad University. Adv. Environ. Biol., 8(10), 1688-1692, 2014

INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that the social capital is an emerging concept in social studies, this concept has a root in human relationships. Nowadays, the achievement of development, civil society, universal standards, and proper context for social environment are only formed by the social capital. The social capital is created through information streams such as job training, exchange of ideas, information exchange of norms relating to the transactions in social communication, public participation, self-help groups, the spirit of collectivism against the individualism, and altruism. The social capital can be observed among the groups of friends, colleagues and schoolmates, roommates, classmates, members, sporting clubs and so on. In general, the social capital can be considered as the infrastructure of modernization process, then it is essential to recognize the rate and type of social capital utilize the factors which increase this social variable since our country is situated in a state of transition and there is a need for comprehensive planning to achieve the sustainable development and pass from the transition state to a relative and real stability.

Wellman argues that there is a kind of anxiety and concern for society in modern era when the people have always been in a fear that the modern society might leave them alone and they should faced with the loneliness. The main part of this concern arises from the type of certain perception and thought during this era.

Wellman have provided three models for explaining the nature of society according to the new conditions in modern era. He has offered three questions and answers based on this question: How is the society in modern era?
- Socio-missing model: Have the communities disappeared in modern era?
- Socio-preserving model: Have the communities modified into the less local communities with sparse structure, more heterogeneous and less coherent?
- Socio-releasing model: According to this model, the communities are destroyed due to the huge and far-reaching changes and the type of people's lifestyles have been changed due to the massive changes such as urbanization, industrialization, capitalism, bureaucracy, globalization and the development of communication technologies, and the individuals' relations have become impersonal, fleeting and weak in modern era and in the cities. Weber, Durkheim, Park and Vorse are the advocates of this model [2].

A) Socio-missing model: The size of personal social networks is small in this model. The relations are weak and based on the familiarity. The percentage of relatives and neighbors is low due to severe weakening of social and spatial requirements. The relationship with friends is high in this model because of voluntary relations, but these relationships are not in multiple fields. Therefore, the people have different friends in different fields such as...
work or recreation. The friends have no great relationships and are less familiar with each other. Thus the population is low in these networks and there is a low variety of contacts such as the face to face and telephone due to the large number of weak ties and high heterogeneity [10].

B) Socio-preserving model: This model suggests that the cohesive and integrated communities, as existed in traditional and small societies, are still the great sources of providing the support and interaction and huge social changes have not been able to negatively affect the social communication and ties in modern era; here, the community can be seen in nationalities. Herbert Gans is among the proponents of this model. In this model, there are the strong and multiple relations, and the voluntary relations are low due to the social and spatial requirements. There is high network congestion since the relatives and neighbors know each other. Most of the communications are done face to face and in a group. The members’ relations are homogeneous in this model due to the strong ties among the members and there is high level of social support.

C) Socio-releasing model: In this model, the communication is neither completely lost (missed) nor has the rural and neighboring form (preserved community) in modern cities and world, but it has the dispersed state and there is a low neighborliness in it. Despite the fact that this model supports the primary importance and ties and neighborliness, but it believes that most of the ties are now replaced with dense and tightly bounded solidarities and integrity. In this model, the community has never lost, but it is modified from the neighboring form into the cross-shaped, transboundary, sparse, dense and less bounded; and the huge social changes have been only able to make enormous social changes in the pattern and structure of relationships, not completely eliminate it [2].

The relationship with friends is much stronger and more intense in this model. There is a low dispute with neighbors and relatives and this model is due to the weakened social and spatial requirements. In this model, the individuals voluntarily choose their community of relationships and there is a high level of friendship among them, thus the people have a lot of friends in different social contexts, but despite the fact that there are different relationships with friends in different areas, these relationships are less multiple. This model has moderate population compared to two previous models since some friends know and have relationship with each other. The contacts are more by phone in this model and there is low numbers of face to contacts; moreover, the social support is moderate in this model compared to previous ones [2].

The results of some studies indicate that the social capital has been diminished and has become the main source of social pathologies in an in-transition community like Iran. On this basis, the women have less access to valuable resources of social capital than men. In this regard, a research by Abdollahi et al [1], indicates that the more we move towards higher levels after the family, the more the social capital is reduced and this reduction is significant in collective fields and social trust. The social capital is also low and below in Iran and we are faced with the erosion of traditional social capital. Furthermore, the results of research by Firouzabadi and Imani [10], also indicate that among the conceptual elements, the social capital and public confidence are significantly lower in less-developed areas than the medium and high-developed areas, and the low level of inter-group social capital can lead to the social isolation and dominance over the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment in urban areas. Moreover, the research by Asadi (1974) indicated that only 53 percent of respondents believed that most of the people can be trusted [14].

Kamali (2004) has indicated that the level of trust, as a component of social capital, has been lower in women than men and this difference is higher while trusting in distant acquaintances. The study by Salehi Hikouei [13], indicates that the size of network and the level of trust in distant acquaintances are higher in men than women. Nateghpour and Firouzabadi [6], have also found that the rate of social capital in men is higher in trust and formal participation than the women. Eskandari [5], has found that the level of social trust is low in women in our society and this is the pathological sign of social relations and constitutes a barrier to women's entry into the community. For instance, Vanless [15], have found that the social capital is more correlated with the older women's health status in urban areas than the rural areas; therefore, some of the issues related to the women's health are not directly associated with their biological characteristics, but also correlated with the social exclusion and lack of access to social valuable resources which are experienced by women according to their limited rules during their lives [7].

The extensive studies on the social support have indicated that the relatives (close and distant), friends, neighbors, and colleagues are the important sources who can be referred to when needed. Different ties provide a variety of social support for their member. In other words, the individuals achieve a wide range of different social support due to the diversity of relations. The social supports enable the people to cope with everyday problems and crises of life. According to Wellman's view, the source of support and the kinds of support and ties it provides are significantly important.

The community members are not identical in communication and its quality and quantity there are differences among them according to various aspects such as the gender differences which are resulted from social, cultural and structural factors and always led to the separation of boys and girls in socialization during the life time, so that the gender segregation and then the segregation are raised in various fields of society such as family, school, university, job system, etc. The segregation in public field reduces the opportunities and chance for women to achieve a variety of ties and make a communication with different people. Other samples
are the stereotyped and gender thinking in society and culture with consideration of motherhood and housekeeping role as the women's main role and responsibility. This distinction between boys and girls affects their communication membership and their communities and thus the boys and girls will have different social capital. The difference in social capital between girls and boys can be investigated in terms of social trust, social support, social participation, social capital, and the individual volume of communication network). On this basis, this research studies the social capital in girls and boys at Islamic Azad University of Tabriz. Therefore, the investigation of social capital characteristics in male and female students also clarifies its differences. This question is raised: What is the difference between boys and girls in terms of social capital?

Sociologists have considered the important distinction between sex and gender. The sex refers to the physical and biological differences between men and women, while the gender refers to the personal and emotional characteristics and acquired cultural, social and psychological differences defined by society between men and women. [8]. The boy or girl baby will have the important consequence for all aspects of life. The masculinity and femininity are shaped during the socialization process and lead to various distinctions between men and women [9]. The gender differences between the men and women will have implications one of which is the gender inequality which often has a wide range of consequences for most of the communities.

Various aspects of society and its domains such as the business institutions and firms, economic organizations, political parties and even the communication activities and social participation and membership in some groups are classified based on the sex and thus enhance the gender differences and inequalities between women and men and lead them to more different and distinct social worlds. The origin of numerous gender differences in women and men's social capital and communication membership has roots in social structure and is results from the cultural and social infrastructures which have widespread discrimination. Nowadays, due to the development of personal contacts and communications, which have had the personal and collective benefits for communities, the rate of this communication and diversity of sources and support, which are accessible to individuals, are significantly important. However, there is a kind of separation and inequality in women and men's membership. Different systems provide different ways of achieving the social status and sources for men and women and they are created through different networks, communication and forms of participation [3]. For instance, a gender deviation and segregation is done in jobs and this has had a significant impact on the model of communication between two genders. In most of the communities, there is discrimination between men and women in access to strategic sources and opportunities and the women have always been under the discrimination and inequalities. In gender stratification system, the women are prevented from working in high-level and strategic positions, in contrast most of the high-level positions are dominated by men in the community and thus the men and women have different sources of information and their contacts and communication are different. The diversity and number of links provides a variety of different sources in terms of support for individuals (ibid, 2005).

The cultural system in any community has been organized to apply the discrimination against women according to the available values and norms in society, and it deprives them from numerous positions in community by creating barriers to women for entering the society, and thus the women are led to less-important and marginal fields of society and their communication activities are reduced in society. When women and men utilized different communication networks, they will receive different sources and support, and thus their social capital will be different, so that the communication with men provides better or worse social capital; in other words, the communication with men makes useful social capital in terms of a variety of sources and support which men tend to have and the communication with women makes useful social capital in terms of a variety of support and assets which the women tend to have [4]. In general, in addition to the social and cultural factors, which have affected the higher consolidation of gender differences between men and women and discrimination against women and led the men and women to different social areas during the socialization process from family to school, peers, job system, etc., the major life events such as the marriage, child caring, housework, employment, etc create the gender social capital and men and women's different characteristics and different type and source of perceived support between them.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study has the survey, cross-sectional and explanatory type. In this study, it is appropriate to apply the survey method due to the large size of statistical population and selected sample. The data is extracted after collecting data by questionnaire and interview techniques and is analyzed through SPSS software. The researcher-made questionnaire is applied in this study to measure the social capital. The statistical population of this study consists of all 24829 students at Islamic Azad University of Tabriz and the sample size is measured equal to 378 according to Cochran formula. Therefore, the stratified random sampling is done in this study and the number of samples determined based on the contribution of each faculty.
Reliability of items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studied variables</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Cronbach's alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social participation</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume of individual communication network</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Trust</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research hypotheses:

There is a difference between the students' gender and level of social capital.
There is a difference between the students' gender and level of social participation.
There is a difference between the students' gender and level of social support.
There is a difference between the students' gender and level of social trust.
There is a difference between the students' gender and level of social relations.

Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Studied variables</th>
<th>T statistics</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Social Capital</td>
<td>1.215</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Social Trust</td>
<td>2.201</td>
<td>0.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social support</td>
<td>2.568</td>
<td>0.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Social participation</td>
<td>1.596</td>
<td>0.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Volume of communication network</td>
<td>1.067</td>
<td>0.046</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First hypothesis: There is a difference between the students' gender and level of social capital.
According to Table 2, the t-test results indicate that t=1.215 at the confidence level of 95% and significance level of sig=0.00. In other words, Ho is rejected and H1 confirmed (researcher's hypothesis); in other words, there is a difference between male and female students in terms of social capital.

Second hypothesis: There is a difference between the students' gender and level of social trust.
According to Table 2, the t-test results indicate that t=2.201 at the confidence level of 95% and significance level of sig=0.02. In other words, Ho is rejected and H1 confirmed (researcher's hypothesis); in other words, there is a difference between male and female students in terms of social trust.

Third hypothesis: There is a difference between the students' gender and level of social support.
According to Table 2, the t-test results indicate that t=2.568 at the confidence level of 95% and significance level of sig=0.05. In other words, Ho is rejected and H1 confirmed (researcher's hypothesis); in other words, there is a difference between male and female students in terms of social support.

Fourth hypothesis: There is no difference between the students' gender and level of social participation.
According to Table 2, the t-test results indicate that t=1.596 at the confidence level of 95% and significance level of sig=0.09. In other words, Ho is confirmed and H1 rejected (researcher's hypothesis); in other words, there is no difference between male and female students in terms of social participation.

Fifth hypothesis: There is a difference between the students' gender and level of social relations.
According to Table 2, the t-test results indicate that t=1.067 at the confidence level of 95% and significance level of sig=0.04. In other words, Ho is rejected and H1 confirmed (researcher's hypothesis); in other words, there is a difference between male and female students in terms of volume of communication network.

Discussion and conclusion:

This study investigates the differences between boys and girls in terms of way and level of interactions and social capital, thus it investigates different perspectives on gender differences between male and female students. According to the research emphasis on the social relationship and links, it can be concluded that the individual interactions and relationships with other members, and the tool sources and support resulted from achieving these links, are the capital which is achieved only by activists' interactions and the quality of their relationships as well as the strength and intimacy of a relationship.

In the first step, the research results indicate that there is a significant difference between the gender and social capital, but no significant difference is observed between the male and female students in terms of social participation. Furthermore, there is a significant difference between the gender and trust, social participation, volume of communication network, and social support. Therefore, it can be concluded that the gender itself makes no difference between girls and boys in terms of social capital, but the situations or opportunities and limitations, which are created in person due to the gender, are significantly important as well as the opportunities for boys by job system and labor market, and deprivation of girls from numerous social activities, despite the fact that there is more active participation by girls and women in social activities, and political fields to some extent.
Therefore, the results of research rejects the findings by Abdollahi et al [1], Firouzabadi [6], Kamali [11] and Nateghpour and Firouzabadi [6], in the first step. Furthermore, it confirms the results of research by Assadi (1974), and Salehi Hikouei [13]. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of study by Barry Wellman indicating that the individual interaction on network complements their phone and direct connections [12]. Wellman concluded in his research that the more the individual network size is enhanced, the more his access to more sources is enhanced. Bigger networks provide further support and the communication, contact, and continuity in these kinds of communications would lead to further support.

The boys are often faced with a wider range of people in communication due to the contact with the outside environment and consequently the higher social activities and exposure to social situations and better job than the girls. In contrast, the girls are put in private field. The girls receive more support (emotional and practical) from members than boys and are supported more by close relatives particularly the sisters, mothers, wives, child and less by friends and colleagues. In contrast, the friends and colleagues are the main sources of support for boys than girls, so that they are the sources of financial, practical and information support for members than girls.

In general, it can be concluded that the girls and boys differ in some ways and it seems that the contextual factors such as the activity status play more decisive roles in the rate of social capital in girls and boys. On the other hand, the boys and girls are not different in terms of their characteristic factors such as the activity status play more decisive roles in the rate of social capital in girls and boys. On the other hand, the boys and girls are not different in terms of their characteristics especially due to their gender, but they are different in terms of opportunities which are created for them because of gender. Being boy and girl provides different situations for individuals in community and thus these situations create differences in girls' and boys' lives and lead to their separation in the community and distinguish their social world and make them much more different.

REFERENCES