

People's Participation: Determining Some Socio-cultural factors (Study among the Citizens of Tabriz)

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Abstract: Participation is defined as the participation of individuals in the realities of daily life or the sharing of activities among individuals by their own consent. The purpose of this study was to determine some social and cultural factors related to the participation of citizens of Tabriz. The research method was survey and the data collection tool were a questionnaire. The statistical population was all citizens aged 15-45 living in urban areas of Tabriz, including men and women, numbering 820,000 and the sample size was 680 people who were selected and selected in three age groups. In this study, the independent variables (predictors) of social cohesion, social trust, government satisfaction, modernity, age, gender and socio-economic status of citizens had a significant relationship with the dependent variable (criterion), i.e. participation. Of course, the variable of modernity had a significant and inverse relationship with participation. Given the low level of citizen participation, it can be said that this situation is due to structural barriers in the political and cultural system of Iran. The connection of individuals with society and the establishment of a relationship with it and their separation from society all go back to the social and cultural environment in which they are located. What drives actions are the habits and patterns of behaviour that develop in society, various institutions, and individuals.

Keywords: participation, social cohesion, social trust, modernity, government satisfaction.

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Introduction

Participation is a human right that ultimately leads to the liberation and self-reliance of human beings, and instrumentally to the mobilization and role-playing of the human masses in the practical processes of social life. If today social scientists deal with issues such as development, justice and reciprocal rights, one of the most important criteria for such divisions and ratings is the existence of "participation" (Roshan, 2007: 4). Given the importance of citizen participation in the process of development and awareness of the fact that participation is a form of interaction that forms the foundation of social life, and that social life is not based on participation, it is based on human participation and society. The purpose of this study is to determine the level of participation of citizens of Tabriz and to identify some factors related to the participation of citizens of Tabriz.

Research Purposes

1. Determining the relationship between the level of social cohesion and the level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz
2. Determining the relationship between the level of satisfaction with the government and the level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz
3. Determining the relationship between the level of social trust and the level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz
4. Comparing the level of participation of Tabriz citizens according to socio-economic status
5. Determining the relationship between the rate of modernity and the level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz
6. Comparing the level of participation of Tabriz citizens according to their gender
7. Comparing the level of participation of Tabriz citizens according to their education

Theoretical Foundations

Inglehart has emphasized increasing participation in the West with three factors: improving education and political information, changing norms governing women's participation, and changing value

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priorities. In her view, variables in education, socioeconomic status, skill and information levels, Communication skills, work experience and organizational networks have contributed to increased participation. According to Oakley and Marsden, where participation is tantamount to awareness-raising and key development decisions have already been made, participation cannot be separated from the scope of government responsibility and control. Lerner considers social participation as one of the components of the modernization and modernization of societies and emphasizes mental readiness and psychological variables to achieve modernization. Huntington believes that development and participation require the formation of a modern personality and personality. According to him, traditional man always expects to be resident, not to change in nature and society, but modern man is faced with different attitudes and perceptions. He accepts the possibility of any change and adapts and adapts to them (Huntington, 1991: 54).

Almond and Powell emphasize the role of self-reliance in modernity and citizen participation. According to them, a modern human being is an informed and participatory citizen who, in addition to self-confidence, acts independently in making life decisions and welcomes new ideas and thoughts. Citizen participation indicates how citizens with different participatory attitudes take advantage of opportunities. Institutions and subjects provide those (Ghaffari, 2007: 52) Habermas calls the space in which communication action takes place the public sphere. The public sphere is the arena and realm of human social life in which they can form something in dealing with public opinion. The public sphere is one of the categories of the modern world, that is, bourgeois society. He argues that the public sphere is essentially a network of communications that use communicative action to create a social space for the exchange of meanings between individuals and groups. The public sphere, unlike institutions that are externally dominated or have internal power relations, promises the principles of democratic participation and oversight (Hulab, 1999: 26). According to the theory of exchange, human beings are computational beings who calculate their costs and benefits in material and immaterial forms and then take action. Although this theory does not remain at the level of individual actions and moves towards collective actions, but considers collective actions as the product of the action of a set of individuals. Individuals argue everything on the basis of benefit and satisfaction and base it on the participation of participatory or non-participatory action. Individuals tend to take participatory action if they accept that the possibility of achieving benefit will be accelerated and facilitated in collective and participatory conditions; otherwise, they will prefer to always act individually (Saeedi, 2003: 21).

Research Background

Hedayatullah Nikkhah and Zahra Sadat Ahmadi have shown that there is a relationship between the variables of social trust, sense of social belonging, social responsibility, sense of powerlessness, age, level of education, employment status and income with citizens' social participation, but between gender, status Marriage and indigenous status are not related to citizens' social participation. Respondents were also relatively mentally prepared, but objectively and practically had very low participation. The level of social participation of the citizens of Bandar Abbas has been relatively low. (Nikkhah and Sadat Ahmadi, 2017). According to the results of Yazdanpanah research, the rate of formal social participation, ie voluntary participation in non-governmental organizations among the citizens of Tehran, in total more or less participation in informal social activities such as helping the poor, participating in delegations have been. This study showed that the subjects experienced personal disorder and powerlessness and saw many obstacles to social participation. According to the results, the higher the level of powerlessness, alienation and feelings of personal disorder, the lower the level of social participation, ie voluntary, informed and targeted participation of individuals in society, as well as the existence of barriers, especially family, economic, social barriers and evaluation of these barriers. It has affected the level of social participation on the part of individuals (Yazdanpanah, 2007).

The results of a study among the citizens of District 9 of Tehran showed that there was a relationship between feelings of powerlessness and citizen participation, but there was no relationship between the level of usefulness and people's willingness to participate with the municipality. There was also a relationship between public awareness of municipal activities and partnership with the municipality, there was a relationship between public trust in the municipality and partnership with the municipality.

Other results of this study include the relationship between education and gender and participation (Roshan, 2007). Findings of Salahshour research among the youth of some areas of Tehran have shown that the level of social participation of the youth has been between low and medium. Women's participation was higher in frequency than men, but in terms of intensity of women's participation was low, while the intensity of men's participation was higher than women. Based on the statistical analysis of the research, there was a direct and significant correlation between the variables of sense of belonging and social attachment, social satisfaction, use of mass media, social trust, age, social status and social participation. The variables of disorder and self-alienation had a significant inverse relationship with social participation. Also, there has been a very weak relationship between the variables of generalism, gender and rationality with social participation (Salahshour, 2006). The results of Alipour et al. In some areas of Tehran have shown that there is a significant relationship between social trust in its three different forms (individual, generalized and institutional) and organized social participation, although the extent and direction of this relationship in each case was different. Also, multivariate regression coefficients have shown that among the studied variables, generalized trust and socio-economic status were the best predictors for social participation (Alipour, Zahedi and Shiani, 2009).

Koo et al. (2010) conducted a study in Taiwan entitled "Social Participation and Life Satisfaction with the Functioning of Youth Social Capital". In this research, social capital theory has been used to explore the causal relationship between trust and social interaction and social participation with each other and family interaction with life satisfaction. The subjects were high school students, whose opinions were surveyed by 2050 people. The results showed that favorable interaction in the family has an effect on high levels of social trust. In addition, recognizing high social trust leads to having a desirable social network. High social trust also increases social participation. Favorable social interaction in the family increases life satisfaction and favorable social network promotes life satisfaction. Finally, social participation encourages people to be satisfied with life (Khalifa, 2010: 30) Findings of Lipst study in different countries show that in general, participation among people with better education, members of occupational groups And higher incomes, middle-aged people, dominant religious and racial groups, men versus women, locals, urbanites, and members of associations and administrative institutions tend to increase. However, such variables sometimes really do affect participation. Therefore, education and participation have a high and significant correlation, because education increases the sense of civic duty, competence, interest and political responsibility and increases personality traits such as self-confidence, sense of superiority, order. And becomes an intellectual formation. In addition, schools are places where skills related to participation are acquired, and ultimately, those with more education have a better and more ability to transfer their political knowledge to their children, and thus the relationship between They continue education and participation (Mousavi, 2012).

There is comparative study to show that all over the world women have entered the socio-political ranks and face high political organizational duties. In Iran, women do participate in the middle and micromanagement but their progress in parliamentary election, decision making and policy making has not been immense. (Omidian, N. B., & Mansour lakoorej,M., & Soltani Larkani,Z, 2012).The results of a reseach indicate that the independent variables of group bonds, social alienation, mass media and socioeconomic status had significant relationship with participation as the dependent variable. (Aziz Khani,E., & Mohseni ,Tabrizi.A., & Aghajani .H , 2016). In a paper the role of UNO for women rights has been discussed. Then he tried to analyze the status of women in Islam. Then he discusses the rights of women given in Pakistan by different governments. In last political participation of women in Musharraf regime has been analyzed. (Abbas Shah,S.R., & Asim.M., & Hussain Bukari.S.M., & Ahmad.M, 2014)

Hypothesizes

1. There is a relationship between the level of social cohesion and the level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz.
2. There is a relationship between the level of satisfaction with the government and the level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz.

3. There is a relationship between the level of social trust and the level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz.
4. The level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz varies according to the socio-economic base.
5. There is a relationship between the level of modernity and the level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz.
6. The level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz varies according to their gender.
7. The level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz varies according to their education.

Research Variables

Participation

Webster culture has defined participation as the participation of individuals in the realities of daily life or the sharing of activities among individuals by their own consent (Webster, 1981: 1946).

Social solidarity

Collective agreement between the members of a society which is the result of accepting and internalizing the value and normative system of a society and the existence of collective belonging and the existence of interaction among the members of that society (Biroo, 1991: 400).

Social trust

Social trust is defined as the socially acquired and accepted expectations and commitments that individuals have towards each other and towards social organizations and institutions (Patton, 1999: 105).

Socio-Economic Statue

Socio-economic status is the status of status and economic empowerment of a group of individuals in the hierarchy of social stratification (Miller, 2005: 394).

Individual modernity

Modernity means the acceptance of new patterns and methods in social life, the spirit of innovation and renewal of work, so that people with this characteristic are more willing to accept new changes and to maintain old patterns and methods less resistance to new patterns. Show (Azadarmaki and Ghaffari, 2007: 68).

Satisfaction with the government

Indicates the level of acceptance, efficiency and trust that people have in the government (Azkia and Firoozabadi, 2004: 59).

Measuring the citizen participation variable

Eight items were used to measure citizen participation, which is a dependent variable. The reliability coefficient of this variable was 0.70.

- In the past year, have you participated in the following activities?
- Cooperation with the municipality, such as maintaining green space
- Dowry purchase programs for needy families or helping the poor
- Participation in religious delegations, vows, religious meetings or celebrations
- Cooperation with neighbors in mourning ceremonies
- Accept responsibility for the public affairs of the place of residence
- Cooperating with neighbors or managing a residential complex (or neighborhood) in public affairs and environmental health
- Cooperation with support associations such as the protection of the rights of the elderly, children and injured women
- Cooperation with cultural-artistic organizations, charities, parents and school teachers

Measuring independent variables

Social cohesion variable

Eight items were used to measure social cohesion. The reliability coefficient of this variable was 0.72.

- Whenever there is trouble or trouble for a neighbor or a local, I step forward and help.
- The locals are mostly people of fault finding and absenteeism.
- The locals do not blame him for his mistakes.
- The locals are only thinking about themselves.

- The locals do not see the eyes of others.
 - The locals maintain great and small respect.
 - Locals do not participate in each other's joys and sorrows.
- The reliability coefficient was 0.72.

Modernity

4 items were used to measure modernity. The reliability coefficient of this variable was 0.73.

- Out of respect for the past, we should not welcome new methods.
- The adoption of new models endangers the cohesion of society.
- In accepting new patterns, let others take the lead.
- If we want to harmonize with advanced societies, we lose religious traditions and values.

Satisfaction with the government

Five items were used to measure government satisfaction. The reliability coefficient of this variable was 0.77.

- As a citizen of Tabriz, how much do you trust government officials?
- In your opinion, how quickly do government officials start the work of citizens?
- In your opinion, to what extent are government officials partisan in their work?
- How much do you think government officials listen to the people?
- To what extent do you think government officials keep their word?

Social trust

The following 5 items were used to measure social trust. The reliability coefficient of this variable was 0.76.

- To what extent are the citizens and residents of this city willing to lend each other tools?
- How much do the citizens and residents of this city trust each other?
- To what extent are the citizens and residents of this city living up to their promise?
- To what extent do the citizens and residents of this city guarantee each other financially?
- To what extent are the citizens and residents of this city willing to lend money to each other?

Socio-economic status

To measure the socio-economic status, 3 questions were used: education level, job status and income level.

Research Method

The research method was survey and the data collection tool were a questionnaire. The statistical population of this study was citizens aged 15-45 living in urban areas of Tabriz, both men and women, who were about 820000 people. The sample size was estimated based on Cochran's formula 680 people who were determined in three age groups of 15-25, 25-25 and 35-35. Formal validity was used to assess validity. Cronbach's alpha method was used to assess reliability. Cronbach's alpha values were acceptable.

Description of Findings

From 680 statistical samples in the present study, 337 were male citizens and 343 were female, 49.6% were male and 50.4% were female. In this study, citizens were divided into three age groups. The number of each age group of 15-25, 26-25 and 36-36 years old was about 225 people equal to 33.1%. 45% were unemployed. 45% of non-employed people, 14.7% had labor jobs, 12.1% had technical jobs, 8.2% had employees, 12.6% had sales jobs and 7.4% had specialized jobs. 51.1% of the respondents had a low base, 35.9% had a medium base and 13% had a high socio-economic base. The average participation among the studied citizens is 42.2 with a standard deviation of 19.77, which is a low level of participation. The average rate of social cohesion among the studied citizens is 52.63 with a standard deviation of 12.50, the average rate of modernity among the studied citizens is 65.62 and the standard deviation is 20.82, the average variable of government satisfaction among the citizens is The study is equal to 61.62 and the standard deviation is 19.13 and also the average variable of trust among the studied citizens is equal to 72.09 and its standard deviation is equal to 17.64.

Testing Hypotheses

Pearson correlation test was used to test the relationship between citizen participation and the degree of social cohesion. According to the obtained results, the correlation rate was 0.202 and the significance level was 0.00. There was a significant relationship between citizen participation and social cohesion. The relationship between citizen participation and the use of mass media was tested through Pearson correlation test. The correlation rate was 0.14 and the significance level was 0.00. There was a significant relationship between citizen participation and the use of mass media. According to Pearson correlation test, the relationship between citizen participation and the level of social trust, the correlation rate was 0.146 and the significance level was 0.00. There was a significant relationship between citizen participation and the level of social trust. Pearson correlation test, the relationship between citizen participation and government satisfaction, the correlation rate was 0.252 and the significance level was 0.00. There was a significant relationship between citizen participation and government satisfaction. Pearson correlation test was used to test the relationship between citizen participation and the use of mass media. The correlation rate was 0.14 and the significance level was 0.00.

There was a significant relationship between citizen participation and the use of mass media-test was used to compare gender and citizen participation. The test results showed that there is a significant difference between the average participation of male and female citizens and the participation of women is more than the participation of men. The value of F394 and the significance level were 0.000. The average social participation of women was 45.84 and men was 38.49. T-test was used to compare the job status and citizen participation. The test results showed that there is no significant difference between the average participation of employed and non-employed citizens. The value of T was 1.72 and the significance level was 0.001. The mean of employed was 39.89 and non-employed was 45.01. Analysis of variance was used to compare the level of education and citizen participation. The results showed that there was no significant difference between these two variables. The value of F514 was 1.1 and the significance level was 0.171.

Analysis of variance was used to test the hypothesis of comparison between the two variables of participation and age group. The results showed that there is a significant difference between the age groups of citizens and their participation. The value of F657 / 9 and the significance level were 0.000. Due to the significance of F-test, LSD post hoc test was used to follow significant differences in multigroup analysis. The results of this test showed that the highest difference between the means was in the age group of 15-25 years with other age groups and it is due to the low mean obtained compared to other age groups in the participation. Analysis of variance was used to test the hypothesis of comparison between the two variables of participation and socio-economic status of citizens. The results showed that there is a significant difference between the socio-economic status of citizens and their participation. The value of F453 was 5.54 and the significance level was 0.004. Due to the significance of F-test, LSD post hoc test was used to follow significant differences in multigroup analysis. The result of this test showed that the greatest difference between the means can be observed in the low and high socio-economic base.

Conclusion and Discussion

According to Parsons' theory, whenever in social situations, one's expressive actions are directed at others, it leads to cooperation and cohesion with others. A high level of cohesion is when the actions of individuals are ethical and group-oriented. In these actions, responsibility and loyalty to others, society and participation reach their highest level. The results of this study confirmed the validity of both the theory under review and the findings of previous research. The findings of this study showed that the level of participation is not affected by education, but the higher the socio-economic status, the higher the level of participation. This finding is inconsistent with the views of Lerner and Inglehart, who argue that the more educated individuals are, the more inclined they will be to participate. Inglehart identifies most participants as young people with higher education. Learnedness also links the literacy factor to social participation. Huntington and Nelson also believe that the higher a person's social class and status, the higher their social participation. Among the status variables, the level of education has the greatest impact on social participation. The findings of this study also showed that there is a significant

relationship between the status and social status of individuals and their participation. This finding is consistent with the findings of Salahshour and Alipour. Theorists such as Inglehart and Putnam believe that trust encourages individuals to volunteer, work in groups, and participate. The findings of this study also confirm this theory. Collected data from the study population show that there is a significant relationship between social trust and participation, that is, the more people trust those around them, their cooperation, group activity and participation also increase. Salahshour, Roshan and Alipour have also reached this conclusion.

Daniel Lerner considers participation as one of the important variables in development and modernity and believes that the development potential will be created in a society where social participation and mass media in a relatively high level is provided in that community. Lippst looks at the correlation between the spread of literacy, mass media and the emergence of participatory democratic institutions. According to Habermas, in modern society it is through the act of communication that human beings are freed from domination and build their world in a rational-communicative and democratic way. Communicative action also takes place in a public space. The existence of a public sphere and free and independent dialogue is a necessity of participatory action. If a person does not consider himself a part of society and feels that his action in building society is useless and he feels powerless and powerless in relation to various issues, problems and affairs, he will never participate in group activities.

Suggestions

considering the situation of the level of participation of the citizens of Tabriz and its relationship with some variables, the following suggestions are provided to increase the participation:

- 1- Since participation means commitment and acceptance of individual and social responsibility, the necessary conditions must be provided to increase participation.
- 2- It seems that modern people are not very interested in participation and citizen participation is more traditional. Therefore, in parallel with the realization of the idea of modernity and the influence of modernity among citizens, the level of their participation has decreased. It is necessary that new participatory and civic institutions be formed in the form of non-governmental organizations so that citizens can participate in these institutions voluntarily.
- 3- The right to choose, freedom of thought and reason is institutionalized in society and individuals can participate freely in society.
- 4- The private sphere is separated from the public sphere so that citizens can take an active part in determining their own destiny.

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