

Investigating the Relationship between Social Capital, Political Participation and Socialization of Female Employees

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Abstract

The present study investigates the relationship between social capital, political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd. The statistical population includes all female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd who were 150 and were selected by total counting sampling. In term of purpose this is applied research and the method is descriptive correlational. The content validity was used to determine the questionnaire validity. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined and confirmed by using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of social capital (95%), political participation (88.5%) and socialization (95%). The data was analyzed in two ways of descriptive and inferential statistic using SPSS 18 software. In descriptive statistics indexes such as frequency percentage and drawing tables and charts and for inferential statistics indexes such as Pearson correlation coefficient and regression were used. The study findings shows that there is a significant relationship between social capital, political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd i.e. the more social capital women have, they have more political participation and socialization.

Keywords: Social Capital, Social trust, Social cohesion, Social participation, Social responsibility, Political participation, Socialization, Women.

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1. Introduction

Social capital creates "sustainable organizational advantage" in organizations. In Fussel et al., (2006) view that it provides some active action for individuals, groups and organizations and access to resources and opportunities and various support. Organizational socialization is a process which employees similarize with organizational values and learn organizational expectations about their behaviors dependent on jobs and necessary social knowledge to perform their roles as effective members and lead to various outcomes such as satisfaction, commitment and favorable organizational behaviors (Nadi et al., 2009). Social capital is laying the groundwork for cooperation among members of the society while reducing social trust leads to individualism and self-interest. The primary purpose of socialization is the continuation of core values of and giving mindset to staff for coordination with other employees (Abedi Ardakani, 2014: 293). Various factors of formal and informal structures have effect on the process of political socialization of society members (Khajeh Soruri, 2015). Women have effective roles in development of families and society (Shojaei, 2005: 12). One of the most important indexes in assessing the development of the society is the level of women's participation in economic, social and political activities (Garousi and Shabestari, 201: 56). Democratic governments are trying to provide these opportunities (Alam et al., 2011: 102). Although women have achieved some success in politics, their role, especially at the elite level, was very small (Ruhani, 2010: 25). Inconsistency of men and women's orientation to political participation is not inherent but rooted from social structure. Women have low and different access levels to social capital and always suffer from unequal distribution of opportunities and resources, especially in developing countries. Social structure provides communication and dealing opportunities with others for their actors. Women have less social capital due to their low levels of presence in the community and this factor prevents women from entering into society and various political, social and economic activities. Giving male identity to politics would be the rightful claim for men and it retire women from political issues (Golshan Rostami et al., 2010: 36). Findings show that there is no significant difference between men and women in social capital, but in formal participation the difference is significant.

Situations and structures like education level and socioeconomic status are components of social capital, which also affect gender (Rezayi nasab and Fotouhi, 2015). Rafat Jah and Rahimi (2015) in a study entitled as "A comparative study of factors of political passivity of women compared to men" showed that the most important factor of people is a sense of political ineffective and economic problems.

Also women had more political passivity and apart from psychological and economic factors, it is related to women role in society and gender stereotyped beliefs. Also the findings suggest that low political awareness and self-confidence of women compared to men and their less use of new technologies of communication and information. Azimi et al., (2015) showed that women's political participation follows the level of political consciousness and their attitude to politics, perception of gender inequality in politics, trust in government institutions and authorities and finally is affected by social capital, especially Association activities. Muhammadi et al., (2015) in a study entitled as "Analysis of life quality role on the type and level of participation" show that in general, there is a significant relationship between the quality of life and the type and extent of political participation. Shokrbeigi et al., (2016) in a study of "Social factors affecting the socio-political participation of women" indicated that variables such as social trust, age, socio-economic status and marital status were explained this factor. Motazed et al., (2015) in a study "Sociological study influencing factors on political participation" showed that there is a significant correlation between the mass media of social trust, social participation, gender and political participation. Bahadori, Khosroshai et al., (2012) in a study of "The relationship between psychological capital and social capital" concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between psychological capital and its components with social capital. Thus individuals with favorable psychological capital also benefit from a higher social capital. Jafarinejad et al (2009) in a study of "Investigating the participation of female employees of educational department" concluded that the political participation of women in political activities is desirable and female teachers in areas such as participation in parliamentary elections, acquiring political news and information, participation in demonstrations have the highest activities but in terms of political participation (membership in political parties, MPs) were less than average. Azam Azadeh & Moshtaghian (2016) in a study of "Barriers of women's participation in social development process" showed that at micro level, gender socialization, gender spaces, type of social network for women, women's mobility difficulty (physical mobility, accommodation, employment), restrictions of social opportunities (educational, occupational and group) and lack of strategic consensus of elite are the barriers of development and advanced of women character and at macro level, normative and symbolic dimensions of social structure have difficulties that do not provide the primary platform for women's participation in development. Sano (2008) studied the role of social capital in production management of coastal areas in Fiji. In this study the variables of individual's social capital, including norms and social

cohesion, social trust, social cohesion, social awareness and social participation were influential in management of economic groups. Martin (2008), in a study entitled as “Women and political participation” presented official statistics about political participation of women and mentioned mechanisms to increase women's political participation. These mechanisms are: 1- political quota systems; 2- allocating budget for women as a percentage of the national budget; 3- Creating National Organization for women that have a major role in the leadership and supervision of the manner of employing women in government.

Krant (2007) is a study as “Gender, religion, social capital” emphasized on religious commitment as an element of social capital and political participation in American women and was looking for the relationship between women's participation in religious organizations and the creation of social capital. These results provide evidence for the relationship between religious beliefs and activities of political behavior. Vanbrg (2007) in a study of social capital and political participation of women in social capital showed that women like men have high social capital but less likely they use their social capital in formal activities and it is more possible that they use social capital as a resource for balancing work and protect the health and welfare of their family and work. Taormina (2006) in a study about women's political participation, issues and challenges indicated that structural and functional barriers that are against women's political participation are results of social and political relationships in a society and the absence of women at the head of human communities is because of the lack of political skills, economic resources, training, learning and access to information and opportunities for education, health and employment are directly related with women's ability to create the right environment for policy and development. The results of Zhang's study (2007) for investigating the role of social capital on performance of private companies in China showed that there is no significant relationship between various memberships of the organizations and performance of private firms. The components of social capital in the study are social participation, trust, cohesion and social awareness. Krause et al., (2006) in determining components of social capital affecting the performance of US companies introduced cognitive capital (social awareness), social participation, social cohesion and increasing social interactions to improve the performance (income improvement, activity quality and product presentation and complexity of the work). There was a significant relationship between social and psychological capital in a way that reducing individual trust was followed by reducing mental health. Chow (2003) in study “Organizational socialization and career success of Asian managers” showed

that there is a significant positive relationship between development experiences with performance, likelihood of success, job satisfaction and organizational commitment and on the other hand low perceived organizational support reduces the effectiveness of these programs. Women as a significant part of the population of each country who play an important role in the development of country always suffer from unequal distribution of opportunities and resources, especially in developing countries (Karam, 2004). Nowadays in regard of political dimensions of 180 countries, only 13 countries are run by women. In developed countries 26 % of women and in developing countries 17.87 % of women are participating in parliament. In regard of individual or mass presence of women which is the first and third paragraph of Article VII of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, apart from few countries that do not give women the right to vote, most countries of the world have accepted that (Abbasi, 2016). This is while among 136 countries in terms of women's economic participation, Iran ranking in gender gap is 130 and in political empowerment, the rank is 129 (Azam Azadeh and Moshtaghian, 2016). Ignoring the social and cultural factors which is affecting women's political participation means that ignoring the political behavior of half of the population of each country which challenges the country achievement to democracy (Movahed et al., 2008). Therefore, understanding the relationship between social factors related to women's political participation and socialization can be helpful.

2. Purpose of Study

- Identifying the relationship between social trust of women with political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd
- Identifying the relationship between social cohesion of women with political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd
- Identifying the relationship between social participation of women with political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd
- Identifying the relationship between social responsibility of women with political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd

3. Research Methodology

This is a descriptive study and since it examines the relationship between variables. It is a correlational research and in term of data collection it is a cross-sectional study. The statistical population includes all female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd who were 150 that were selected by total counting sampling. Searching documents by using library method and three questionnaires were the tools used for the study:

- Social Capital Assessment by Bontis (1998) with 24 questions about components of social responsibility, social participation, social cohesion and social trust and five levels Likert Scale (very low = 1, low = 2, moderate = 3, high = 4 and very high = 5)
- Political participation questionnaire, Jay Dobrin (1978), indices are: : the effect of factors such as age, education, work experience and educational major on politically motivated indices (5 indices) and political participation (4 indices) of women and five levels Likert Scale is consisted of 50 items.
- Questionnaire of employee's socialization was designed by Taormina (1994) and introduced by Bigeliardi et al., (2005) and five levels Likert Scale were used. Aspects of organizational socialization are: Training 1: 1-5, 2. Understanding: 6-10, 3- Employees' Support: 11-15, 4- Future perspective: 16-20

Content and face validity were used for the study and they were confirmed by experts. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the validity of study and the validity coefficient for "social capital of women" questionnaire was 94%, political participation: 85% and socialization of female employees: 95%.

Descriptive statistics methods (frequency distribution, mean, standard deviation and calculating central and dispersion parameters) were used for data analysis and for inferential statistics of research hypotheses, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used for determining normality of data distribution and Pearson correlation coefficient and regression were used to confirm or reject the hypotheses in 95 percent confidence level and they were analyzed by SPSS Software.

4. Findings

Research hypotheses were tested in this part:

Table 1. The relationship between variables of political participation and socialization

| | | Political participation | Socialization |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Social capital | Pearson correlation | .305 | .330 |
| | significance level | .000 | .000 |
| Social trust | Pearson correlation | .291 | .354 |
| | significance level | .003 | .005 |
| Social cohesion | Pearson correlation | .228 | .234 |
| | significance level | .005 | .004 |
| Social participation | Pearson correlation | .291 | .236 |
| | significance level | .001 | .004 |
| Social responsibility | Pearson correlation | .193 | .213 |
| | significance level | .018 | .009 |

According to Table (1), because the calculated correlation coefficient for variables of social capital, social trust, social cohesion, social responsibility, social participation and political participation, respectively are (0.305) (0.291) (0.228), (0.291) and (0.193) and for socialization respectively are (0.330) (0.354) (0.234) (0.236) (.213) with confidence level of 95% and a significance level less than five percent (0.005), as a result, the research hypothesis is confirmed and null hypothesis is rejected; therefore it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between all variables of social capital, social trust, social cohesion, social participation and social responsibility with political participation and socialization.

The social capital component can predict the political participation of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd. Since the variables of this hypothesis are of distant type, stepwise regression is used to test this hypothesis.

Table 2. Stepwise regression test for predicting political participation by social capital component

| steps | Independent variables | Non standardized coefficients | Error | standardized coefficients | t- test | Sig level | R | R2 | RA | F-test | Sig level |
|--------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|---------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Step 1 | Fixed value | 2/698 | 0/166 | | 16/233 | P<0/0005 | | | | | |
| | Social participation | 0/189 | 0/055 | 0/271 | 3/240 | 0/001 | 0/291 | . | - | 11/698 | 0/0001 |
| Step 2 | Fixed value | 1/728 | 0/179 | | 15/236 | P<0/0005 | | | | | |
| | political participation | 0/169 | 0/059 | 0/238 | 2/843 | 0/0005 | 0/393 | 0/154 | 0/069 | 8/924 | 0/0003 |
| | Social trust | 0/140 | 0/057 | 0/237 | 2/987 | 0/0003 | | | | | |

Stepwise regression test shows that in first step, social participation were most interpretive as 8.5% and in second step social trust increase d the interpretive power

by 6.9%. In general the components of social participation and social trust can explain 39.3% of changes in political participation. Standardized coefficients indicate that each of social participation and social trust components has positive effect and in turn of increasing one unit of social participation and social trust, the political participation rates respectively increase as 0.238 and 0.237.

The social capital component can predict the socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd. Since the variables of this hypothesis are of distant type, stepwise regression is used to test this hypothesis.

Table 3. Stepwise regression test for predicting socialization by social capital component

| steps | Independent variables | Non standardized coefficients | Error | standardized coefficients | t- test | Sig level | R | R2 | RA | F-test | Sig level |
|--------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|---------|-----------|-------|-------|----|--------|--------------------------|
| Step 1 | Fixed value | 2/696 | 0/133 | | 20/269 | P<0/0005 | 0/354 | 0/125 | - | 21/143 | ./... ^o P< |
| | Social trust | 0/194 | 0/042 | 0/354 | 4/598 | P<0/0005 | | | | | |

Stepwise regression test shows that social trust was the most interpretive as 8.5%. Other components were not able to explain the significance of socialization. Standardized coefficients indicate that social trust component has positive effect and in turn of increasing one unit of social trust and the socialization rates increase as 0.354 units.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The results show that there is a significant relationship between women social capital and political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd. To explain the relationship it can be stated that social capital is a total of potential, available and accessible resources through the network of relationships of an individual or a social unit and one of the most important organizational capabilities and assets which can assist organizations in creating and sharing knowledge and create sustainable organizational advantage compared to other organizations. In fact, positive relationships and a high level of trust could create situations that personnel and different units of an organization share their knowledge with each other without any doubt which increases employees' innovation and improves organizational performance. In other words, the presence of qualitative aspects such as trust, values and common goals, cooperation, expectations and requirements and so forth among different individuals and groups remove the layers of unnecessary bureaucracy which suppress the innovation and creativity among the staff

and also the time and resources which are spent on controlling and monitoring the behavior of individuals in the organization could be used to create new ideas and innovative activities.

Husseini et al., (2014) in a study about “Investigating the relationship between socialization and political participation of women” concluded that women are affected by different socialization and gender stereotypes in the process of socialization through institutions such as the family, the media, schools, educational institutions and consider politics as a male domain and have no intention for political participation, particularly political arena. Political arena is mostly derived from different socialization of women than the structure of society. But the first condition is increasing the participation of women in political arena, eliminating and preventing the reproduction of stereotypes and gender identities derived from the culture of the society in the process of socialization. Thus we should have scientific considerations and appropriate planning to facilitate the conditions for the presence and survival of women in society and authorities should have appropriate views for women presence in society as half the population and it cannot be achieved until everyone realizes that social development is not possible until women's role is considered.

There is a significant relationship between women's social trust and political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd.

Trust plays an important role in political participation and socialization of women. Therefore organizations by taking thoughtful steps toward organizational trust, especially institutional trust, among female employees and managers help their organizations. Putnam knows social capital as trust, cooperative norms and networks that facilitate achieving mutual benefits and the purpose of social capital is ensuring effective democracy and economic development.

Members of a group who trust each other are more successful and have more efficiency. Movahed et al., (2008) showed that there is a significant correlation between aspects of social capital and political participation of respondents. Vanbrg (2007) in a study of social capital and political participation of women in social capital showed that women like men have high social capital but less likely they use their social capital in formal activities and it is more possible that they use social capital as a resource for balancing work and protect the health and welfare of their family and work.

There is a significant relationship between social cohesion with political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of

Bojnourd. Fulfilling demands of employees through developing processes and creating suitable working conditions for supporting and involving female employees in designing and planning tasks can increase their efficiency and raise their spirits. Taleghani et al., (2012) showed that disability socialization and self-disability of women is the main reason of reducing women's empowerment. Also there is a direct relationship between disability socialization and self-disability of women is the main reason of reducing women's empowerment. These findings are consistent with Martin (2008), Today et al., (2004) findings.

There is a significant relationship between women social participation with political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd.

Social participation implies the development of inter-group relations in form of voluntary associations, clubs, associations and groups who are usually local and nongovernmental (NGOs) and their purpose is involve people in different social processes in form of social policies. The findings of this study are consistent with Rafat Jah & Rahimi (2015), Shokr Beigi et al., (2016), Muhammadi et al., (2015), Azimi et al., (2015) Motazed Rad et al., (2015) studies.

There is a significant relationship between women social responsibility with political participation and socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd. Sano (2008) believed that social capital has effective role in organization management. Bahadori, Khosroshai et al., (2012) suggest that people who have better psychological capital have better social capital. The findings are also consistent with Jafarinejad et al (2009) study.

Social capital components can predict the political participation of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd.

Krant (2007) in a study as "Gender, religion, social capital" emphasized on religious commitment as an element of social capital and political participation in American women and was looking for the relationship between women's participation in religious organizations and the creation of social capital. Results of this study show there is a relationship between religious beliefs and activities with political behaviors.

The aspects of social capital, especially trust, participation, cohesion and responsibility with sharing information effectively, controlling exchanging information and reducing administrative and management costs encourage people to participate and cooperate with each other and create new opportunities which facilitate innovation and creation in an organization (Movahed et al., 2008, Jafarinejad et al., 2009). Chow (2003) in a study "Organizational socialization and career success of

Asian managers” showed that there is a significant positive relationship between development experiences with performance, likelihood of success, job satisfaction and organizational commitment and on the other hand low perceived organizational support reduces the effectiveness of these programs. Azam Azadeh and Moshtaghian (2016) and Rezaei Nasab and Fotuhi (2015) also had similar findings.

Social capital components can predict the socialization of female employees of Educational Department of Bojnourd. Evidence indicate the fact that in case of creating trust among group members, people tend to cooperate more in activities and this leads to greater trust. In fact, trust is an introduction for knowledge and resources. A person who can achieve a higher level of confidence is more likely to reach the knowledge and resources of social network. When the social capital resources in organizations are high, the need for legislation and regulations, establishment of administrative and supervisory bodies decreases. Trust, social cohesion, participation and responsibility in the organization are a capital of an organization which improves the quality of work environment. This capital facilitates the socialization of an organization and makes political participation (trust and strong bonds are its important factors) more applicable. Since social capital control resources that will be provided by social communication, each factor that increases social capital directly increase opportunities for socialization and political participation. In this regard, it seems that Iranian current society as a society in transition with semi-active status is faced with obvious gender gap. To increase and expand women's participation in society it is necessary that their active presence and their social and political participation become a part of general culture of society and on the other hand we should eliminate the distortions, myths and negative perceptions of personal taste compared to the process of political and social participation of women in society and be established and remove gender gap of separating public into two groups of men and women. Social empowerment and reducing obstructions of development which is a combination of the three components of knowledge and ability to make decisions and organizing will be generalized to women's political participation; it requires increasing political awareness, political decision-making and political organization of women. Thus increasing educational level, employment and Association relations can be effective on increasing political participation of women. Women are affected by different socialization and gender stereotypes in the process of socialization through institutions such as the family, the media, schools, educational institutions and consider politic as a male domain and have no intention for political participation, particularly political arena. Thus weak political participation of women is derived from different

socialization of women more than the structure of society. To increase the participation of women in political arena, eliminating and preventing the reproduction of stereotypes and gender identities is derived from the culture of the society in the process of socialization. According to the findings it is necessary to provide proper ground for women to expand the network of social relationships and strengthen the communication bonds based on intimacy. Promoting political participation and socialization requires the ability to make extensive public relations and having access to data resources and generally capital resources.

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