

Identifying the contexts of law-evasion emergence in the urban fabric of Kashan

Mohsen Niazi¹ [0000-0001-7544-1028](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7544-1028) 

Professor of the Department of Social Sciences, Kashan University, Kashan, Iran.

Mojgan Saeedi [0000-0003-3984-0851](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3984-0851) 

PhD in sociology, Kashan University, Kashan, Iran

Introduction

The increase in law-evasion behaviors, as evidenced by empirical data and official statistics in Iranian society, particularly in recent years, has emerged as a significant social issue that necessitates a thorough examination and analysis of its various dimensions. This phenomenon has become particularly pronounced in cities experiencing rapid social and economic changes and possessing diverse social structures. As one of Iran's historical cities with a multicultural framework, Kashan faces numerous social and cultural challenges that may contribute to the rise of law evasion among its citizens.

Theoretical Framework

The present research draws upon various theories, including Durkheim's anomie, Putnam's social capital, Hirschi's control theory, Sutherland's differential association, Tyler's procedural justice, and Blau's relative deprivation. These theoretical perspectives help understand the social and cultural factors influencing law evasion in Kashan.

Methodology

This study is survey-based and quantitative, with data collected through a standardized questionnaire. The target population consists of the citizens of Kashan, and using Cochran's formula, a sample size of 385 individuals was determined. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded an overall alpha value of .824. Content validity was also considered when evaluating the questionnaire. Data analysis was performed using SPSS software.

Findings

The results of this study indicate that various factors influence law-evasion, the most significant of which include procedural justice (the perception of fairness in legal processes), social anomie (the feeling of normlessness and lack of social cohesion leading to increased law-evasion behaviors), religiosity, ingroup social capital (strong relationships and ties within social groups), informal control, peer group behaviors, and adherence to civic norms (commitment to civic values and a sense of social responsibility). Collectively, these variables accounted for 49.1% of the variation in the dependent variable of law-evasion.

Conclusion

A key finding of this research highlights the importance of procedural justice in reducing law evasion. Individuals' perceptions of fairness in legal processes directly influence their willingness to comply with laws. Indeed, increasing trust in legal institutions and a sense of justice in judicial and executive processes contribute to a reduction in law-evasion tendencies. Furthermore, social anomie has been identified as the most significant predictor of law-evasion; in societies where individuals feel normlessness and lack social

¹ Correspondent Author: niazim@kashanu.ac.ir

cohesion, the propensity for law-evasion behaviors increases. Religiosity and religious beliefs also play a crucial role in reducing law evasion; the findings indicate that individuals with stronger religious beliefs exhibit a lower tendency to violate laws. This issue demonstrates the role of religious and moral culture in reinforcing adherence to social norms.

Additionally, intra-group social relationships and strong ties among individuals within a social group can help control deviant behaviors. Furthermore, ingroup social capital can decrease law evasion through enhancing positive social interactions. Informal social controls, such as the influences of family and peer groups, significantly impact citizens' behavior. The findings reveal that peer group behaviors and social pressures from contemporaries greatly affect individuals' law-evasion behaviors. This research suggests that addressing law evasion in society and improving urban quality of life requires multifaceted strategies. Among these strategies are improving procedural justice within legal institutions, strengthening social cohesion, promoting religious and ethical values, enhancing social capital, increasing constructive social oversight, and fostering a culture of citizenship. These strategies can serve as part of urban policies in Kashan and other similar cities, reducing social anomalies and improving urban management conditions.

Key Words: Norm violation, Procedural justice, Social anomie, Ingroup capital, Civic norms