

## **Investigating the Relationship between Dimensions of Social Capital and the Rights and Duties of Citizenship**

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*Received 18 January 2017*

*Revised 3 February 2017*

*Accepted 15 March 2017*

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**Abstract:** *This research aimed at investigating the role of social capital on the rights and duties of citizenship among master students of Marvdasht Islamic Azad University. 353 students were surveyed using cluster sampling. The study made use of two questionnaires of citizenship and social capital corporation. This instrument benefited from face and structural validity and the reliability index was reported to be more than 7.0. Data analysis was done using correlation and structural equation model with overt and covert variables. Data from surveys were put into AMOS and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software in order to be analyzed. The findings indicated that there is a significant relationship between social capital and compliance with laws and awareness of rights. However, no significant relationship was found between social capital and participation and sense of responsibility. Significant relation was also found between citizenship rights. The developed model for social capital fitted with citizenship rights and duties.*

**Keywords:** *Citizenship rights, duties of citizenship, social capital.*

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### **Introduction**

Sociologists in the area of citizenship culture have regarded social networks and trust as an asset in facilitating the indices of citizenship culture (Zmerli, 2010). Citizenship culture includes citizenship commitment and responsibilities as well as awareness of their own rights (Armingeon, 2007:358; Badescu & Neller, 2007:159). Since 17<sup>th</sup> century, citizenship is among the concepts that has been termed as “citizen’s culture” by scholars such as Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Hobbes (Ameli, 2001:50). Citizen culture and citizenship have been always discussed in philosophical, political, and legal thoughts. Cultural norms of citizenship includes parallelism, commitment and sense of responsibility. It also covers social values such as equality, freedom, individualism, democracy and responsibility (Zokaei, 2003:80; Jahangiri, 2002, 15; Hashemianfar & Ganji, 2009:28).

According to different perspectives, two dimensions can be considered for citizenship culture as social structure. The first is citizenship rights while the second one considers the relationship between the government and the citizens. Hence, it can be generally argued that citizenship includes observing others’ rights and commitment in performing duties on a continual basis (Fathi, 2011:165; Kaldi, 2013:32). What is considered important in this research is the favorable social context in reaching citizenship culture. Citizenship approaches, communitarians and civil republicans have emphasized citizenship theories on the basis of commitments and raised the concept of common goal. They believed that in comparison with the group, social context and commitment take the priority (Hossein Zadeh and Ebrahimpour, D., 2013). In general, citizenship considers the fact that how much burghers respect each other’s rights, feel responsibility and in a sense feel close with others in urban and social matters (Shian, 2002: 67). Furthermore, the social capital index supplies economic resources, decrease charges, increase social affairs, lowers down the damages in broader scale, cause voluntary jobs and help citizens to know themselves as a civil person and perform their citizenship duties appropriately (Gidenz, 2001; Zakaei, 2001).

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Social capital is influential in strengthening the voluntary activities as the most important index of citizenship norm in Western Europe (Badescu & Neller, 2007: 159; Hooghe, 2003:42; Feezell, Conroy, Meredith & Guerrero, 2013: 7; Hilde & Van der Lippe, 2010:481). From citizenship perspective, Western Europe citizens obtained a higher rank in comparison with their Eastern Europe counterparts (Armingeon, 2007:358; Badescu & Neller, 2007:159). Russell Dalton investigated the norms based on citizenship duties (emphasizing on voting and observing the law) which is about to be replaced with active citizenship norms in non-institutionalized forms of participation (Marc & Jennifer, 2015:332; Marc & Jennifer, 2014:421). In creating active citizens who are aware of their rights and duties, social capital plays a vital role as an important concept in the civil society. Accordingly, the central question of this paper revolves around the influential effect of social capital on citizenship culture.

### **Literature Review**

Rastegar Khaled and Azimi (2013) explored the relationship between social capital and democratic citizen among Tehran University students. Findings of their study showed that the growth of social capital result in their higher level of being a democratic citizen. On the other hand, as social trust rises, citizen's attitude dimension that controls citizenship rights scales up as well. Concerning the variables of the study, the results indicated that male students are in higher level of being a democratic citizen. In addition, concerning different races, Turks people seem to proceed. Pamela Paxton (2002) studied the relationship between social capital and democracy in a global scale. By creating a space for the emergence and diffusion of critical discourse, social capital aids democracy. Her longitudinal study demonstrated the fact that social capital improves democracy and there is a possibility of democracy being reflected in social capital (Rastegar Khaled and Azimi, 2013). In a comparative study, Rice and Ling (2003) reviewed the relationship between social capital and democracy in eleven European and American cities and maintained that those countries whose citizens have higher social capital have more tendencies towards democratic behaviour and vice versa. In a survey study entitled "social capital and democratic citizen in South Korea", Chong-Min Park and Da-Cho Shin (2003) investigated the effect of social capital on the development of democratic citizenship among people. The authors concluded that social involvement as an objective aspect of social capital developed the behavioral dimension of democratic citizenship while social trust as a subjective dimension of social capital developed the attitudinal dimension of democratic citizenship (Rastegar Khaled and Azimi, 2013).

In his study of the social capital and inclusive democracy, Jiko Lee (2008) emphasized the tendency towards democratization as a result of development in social capital. More specifically, he is concerned with whether the social capital improves the democratic citizenship. In his study which was carried out by means of survey among South Korean people, he concluded that in the development of democratization in Korea, two elements of social capital play a significant role in directing Korean people toward democracy; structural element of civil partnership encourages people to learn democratic norm and participate in political matters. On the other hand, social trust as the cultural element of social capital which encourages people to confirm the virtues of democracy leads to the development of democracy among South Korean people (Rastegar Khaled and Azimi, 2013).

### **Theoretical Framework of the Study**

Aristotle considered citizen as a political and social human being who participates in social affairs and it is through his participation that he is able to realize his social and political presence (Nejati Hosseini, 2001: 4-5). According to David Miller analysis, the classic citizenship component includes law, shared duties, and satisfaction and citizenship credits. Such components have considerable share in modern citizenship views as well (Tavasoli & Nejati Hosseini, 2002:35). Turner and Hamilton have identified the components that control the citizenship rights as civil society, capitalism society, rationalism, equality, justice, public domain, social contract, moral responsibility, public will, partnership, liberalism and democracy (Manochehri & Nejati Hosseini, 2004: 35). According to Marshall (1964) three types of citizenship laws have been formed in the past three centuries: 1. civil rights, 2. political rights, 3. social rights. In his sociological model of citizenship, Turner (1993) outlined four essential sources of citizenship, identity, congregation and resources (economic, cultural, and political) in cooperation with

each other. He believed that in addition to the establishment of a legal opportunity, citizenship creates a specific cultural identity for both the individual and the group.

Faulks, K. (2000) maintained that the key characteristic that distinguishes citizenship from absolute obedience is the presence of participation ethics. Citizenship is not considered as a passive position but an active one. From Parsons' perspective, public norms in the form of activism, universalism, liberalism, egalitarianism and acquired criteria must be developed to reach public citizenship identity. Therefore, in moving from traditional societies to modern ones some changes appeared in the realization of citizenship rights in the individual and structural level. According to Parsons, the most important values that strengthen the democracy and cause the development of citizenship culture in society contains having rational and critical spirit in scientific knowledge, respecting laws and enjoyment of civil liberties that requires citizens to comply with it (Ritzer, 2000:89). In this research the main idea of the relationship between social capital and democratic citizenship are based on Putnam theories.

As a famous theoretician in the realm of social capital, he unveiled the direct effect of social capital on democracy. Regarding the close relationship between social capital components (trust and civil participation) and democratic citizenship dimension (attitudinal and behavioral), it can be argued that Putnam's intended social capital developed democratic citizenship in addition to democracy consolidation. In clarifying his theory concerning the relationship between social capital and democracy, Putnam has asserted the combination of trust and civil participation component in the establishment or strengthening the democracy. Therefore, considering Putnam's theory it can be said that the presence of trust among citizens leads to the formation of civil partnership networks and people's participation in such extensive networks encourages people to actively participate in relevant affair. Accordingly, in contrast to the previous theoreticians who have merely noticed the objective dimension of social capital (civil partnership), Putnam have relied on the objective and mental dimensions which are civil partnership and social trust. In fact, based on his views, it can be argued that the presence of both dimensions (trust and civil partnership) is essential in the development and growth of democratic citizenship. Massive trust at the community level aids the formation of voluntary association and creates civil partnership. On the other hand, the presence of civil partnership networks results in developing informed citizens who are aware of political issues.

From another perspective, regarding the attitudinal and behavioral dimension, it can be said that since trust is an intangible and subjective concept, and encompasses the quality of social relationship, it can develop the attitudinal aspect of democratic citizenship including the attitude toward democracy and law abiding. Furthermore, since civil partnership component is a tangible and objective matter and relates to extensive voluntary associations, it can lead to the development of attitudinal dimension democratic citizenship. In general, it can be concluded that from one side, social trust among citizens nurtures the democratic beliefs in their minds. From the other side, civil partnership associations lead them towards acting democratic behaviors. On the basis of the principles and theoretical framework the following hypothesis will be investigated.

### **Research Hypothesis**

1. There is a significant relationship between social capital and citizenship rights and duties.
2. The statistical model of the effect of social capital on citizenship rights and duties fits the data.

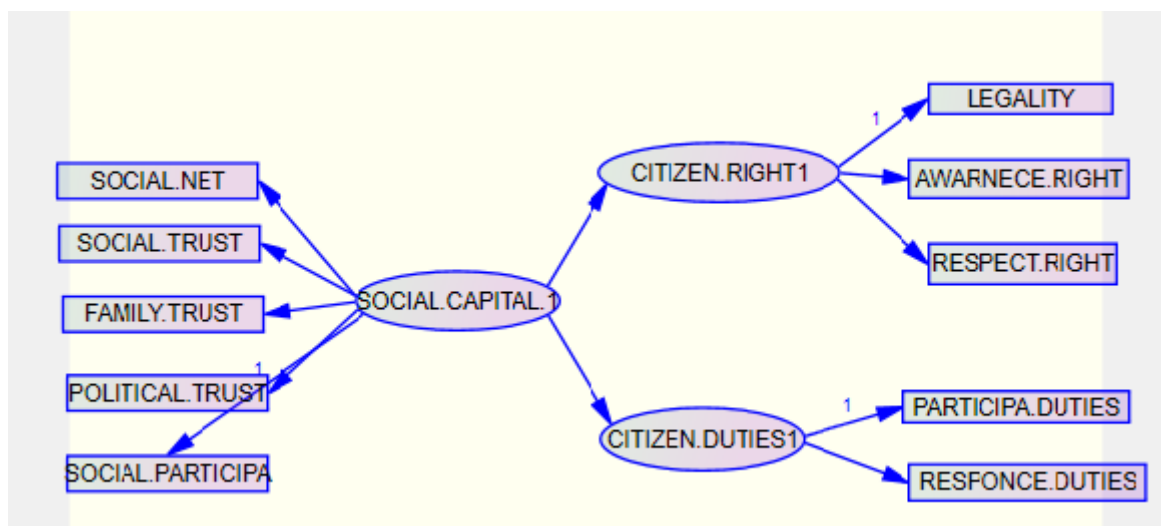


Figure (1): Theoretical Model

### Methodology

This study is an applied research. It made use of survey method along structural equation modeling. Participants of the study were selected among Master students of Marvdasht Azad University. The data were collected from 353 participants through cluster sampling in which the colleges, field of studies and classrooms were randomly selected respectively.

### Instruments

#### Social Capital questionnaire

Social capital is defined as the accumulation of actual and spiritual resources that engage an individual in an institutionalized lasting network of acquaintance, mutual respect and attachment. Social capital characteristics include the relationship between people, social networks, norms of participation and the trust that arise from it. The concept of social capital was suggested to describe the mechanism of social solidarity and affinity as well as the social institutions. Social capital has two major dimensions. The first one concerns the subjective and qualitative dimension that is about the within-group solidarity, mutual trust among actors and positive feelings. The other one considers the objective and quantitative dimension of friend network, membership in voluntary activities and participation in communities (Sahami et. al., 2013; Sahami & Keshtkar, 2014; Sahami & Arbabi, 2014). Social capital questionnaire has elements of influential friends (6 items), social trust (6 items), social participation (6 items), political trust (3 items), having trust family (4 items). It follows a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5), very agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), strongly disagree (1). To assess the validity of the questionnaire, exploratory factor analysis was used which account for 61% of the total variance of the social capital. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity appeared to be 2.249 with  $p=000$  and a KMO value of .832. To test the reliability, Cronbach Alpha was employed and indicated the following results: influential friends (.82), social trust (.83), social participation (.83), political trust (.76), having trust in family (.65) (Sahami, 2013:255).

#### Citizenship rights and duties questionnaire

Citizenship is a complicated and multidimensional concept. In order to evaluate this concept and gain a deep understanding of the construct, first it was tried to review the definitions and theories which are presented in this paper. Afterwards, citizenship rights and duties were analyzed. Citizenship duties index contains participation in citizenship duties and sense of responsibility in citizens' duties. Citizenship right index considers the awareness of law and respecting others' rights. A five-point Likert scale (very much, a lot, quite a lot, little, very little) was used in this case. A number of experts confirmed the face validity of the questionnaire. Furthermore, the construct validity of the questionnaire was analyzed through exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. First, in order to investigate the

appropriateness of the collected data Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were employed. The value of KMO test for correlation matrix of the designed questionnaire was calculated to be 0.89. The Bartlett test regarding the adequacy of the content of the questionnaire appeared to be 4.99 at a = .001 (p-value = .001). After making sure of the adequacy of the two indices using principal component analysis, it was used for questionnaire items as well. Drawing on the screen plot and the percentage of the variance, the best combination of content yielded 6 factors.

After varimax rotation, item loadings on each factor was specified in the form of citizenship rights (Factor 1 with 5 questions accounting for 12/76 percent of the variance), participation in citizenship duties (Factor 2 with 6 items accounting for 11/75 percent of the variance), respecting others' rights (Factor 3 with 6 items accounting for 11/22 percent of the variance), sense of responsibility (Factor 4 with 5 items accounting for 9/80 percent of the variance), respecting law (Factor 5 with 4 items accounting for 9/17 percent of the variance), citizenship rights (Factor 6 with 4 items accounting for 7/91 percent of the variance). In general, the six factors accounted for 66/16 percent of the variance in citizenship questionnaire. It is also notable to report that after the employment of factor analysis, 33 items that did not load on any factor were omitted. Using structural equation modeling, five out of six factors in the form of two models (citizenship rights and duties) were conformed (Sahami, 2017:551). Eventually, 30 items were selected for analyzing the two dimensions of citizenship culture including citizenship rights and duties.

**Data Analysis**

The collected data was analyzed by means of SPSS and AMO software.

**Findings**

First hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between social capital and citizenship rights and duties.

To test the first hypothesis, Pearson product-moment correlation was employed. The findings are summarized in Table 1.

*Table (1): Correlation between social capital components and citizenships' rights and duties components*

	Sense of responsibility	Participation in citizenship duties	Respecting rights	Awareness of rights	Law-abiding
Social network	.249**	.186**	.155**	.144**	.105
Social trust	.313**	.255**	.175**	.212**	.145**
Having trust in family	.436**	.332**	.72	.173**	.096
Social participation	.436**	.322**	.072	.173**	.096
Political trust	.306**	.406**	.119*	.194**	.100
Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level=*					
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level=**					

As it can be inferred from the table, social network has direct relationship with all components of citizenship expect for law-abiding. All components of social trust have significant relationship with citizenship dimensions. Having trust in family has significant relationship with sense of responsibility and participation in citizenship duties. Social partnership has significant relationship with sense of responsibility, participation in citizenship duties and awareness of rights. Finally, political trust has significant relationship with all components of citizenship except for law-abiding.

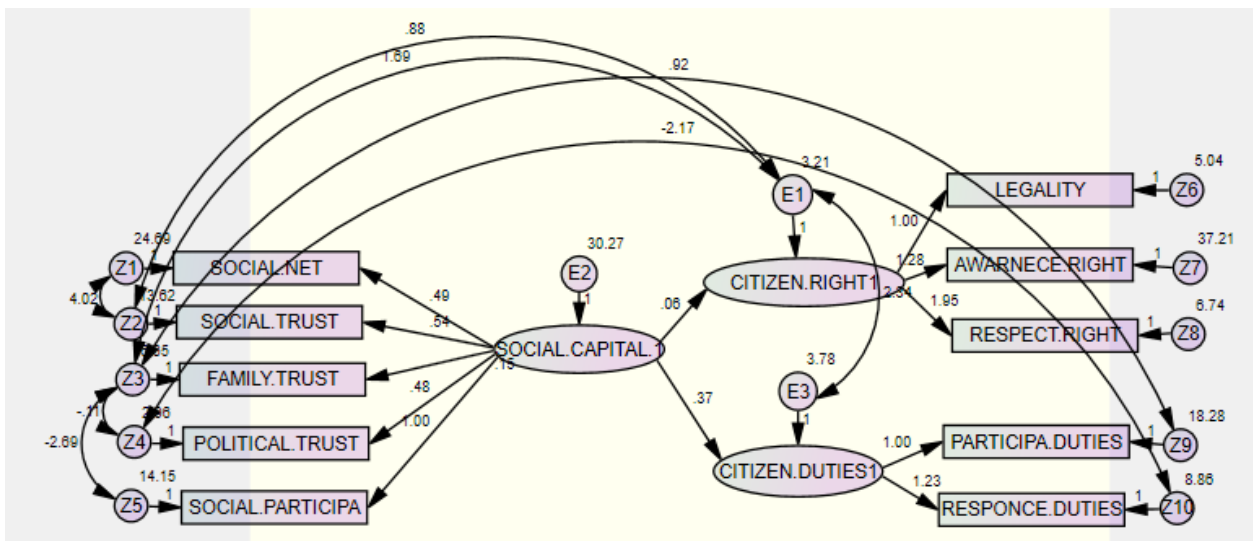
Second hypothesis: The statistical model of the effect of social capital on citizenship rights and duties fits the data.

Structural equation modeling including measurement error is presented. To test the hypothesis, the goodness of fit indices for the model was assessed by using the maximum likelihood estimation technique. Three factors namely social capital, citizenship duties and citizenship rights have been considered as latent variable and ten components (5 components of social capital, 3 components of citizenship laws and 2 components of citizenship duties) were chosen as an index.

Table (2): The goodness of fit indices

Model	X <sup>2</sup>	DF	P	X <sup>2</sup> /DF	NFI	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Default model	27.669	24	.274	1.153	.970	.984	.996	.666
Saturated model	.000	0			1.000	1.000	1.000	.000
Independence model	935.951	45	.000	20.799	.000	.560	.000	6.232

The goodness of fit of the three models (default, saturated, independence) is presented in Table 2. As the table illustrates, absolute fit indices of Goodness of Fit Index (CFI) with cut off value of >.90 and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of <.01 indicated the goodness of fit for the default model. It was found out that the default model has goodness of fit with the population as well [  $\chi^2(x^2=27.669, df=24, p=.274)$  ]. In addition to GFI, which is used to evaluate the model's overall fit to the data being examined, Not Normal Fitness Index (NNFI), Normal Fitness Index (NFI) and CFI should also be examined. If the mentioned indexes are (>0.9), then it can be concluded there is fitness of model with the data. Sometimes NFI is influenced by sample size and its value becomes less than 0.9, therefore GFI will be used which is not affected by the sample size. The indices appeared to be GFI = 0.56, NFI = 0.000, CFI = 0/000 in the default model and GFI = 0/1.000, NFI = 1.000, CFI = 1.000 in the saturated model which indicated the fitness of the data to the second model. The mean square error in the independent model was calculated to be RMSEA = 6.232. It was RMSEA = 0.666 in the default model.



Chi-square = 27.669 Degrees of freedom = 24 Probability level = .27

**Discussion and Conclusion**

The central question of this study investigated the relationship between social capital and citizens' rights and duties. As it was pointed out, among the evolutions that has been occurred in our country, the active presence of youths in the universities is considerable and as leading university, Islamic Azad University was chosen for this study. According to the existing literature and theories, it was expected that by enrichment of social action and increasing the quality of the goal and concept of life, social capital became a vital element in facilitating and drawing attention to active and informed citizen. The findings

indicated that social capital has a significant relationship with citizenship rights and duties which means that social capital increase among university students cause social and political development. In addition, social networks, social participation, within-group/out-group trust as development indexes in civil progression of citizens (citizenship rights, citizenship duties, respecting others' rights, awareness of citizenship laws, and sense of responsibility), have significant relationships. In general, social capital can be regarded as the medium chain between the private and public sector which is related to attitudes and behaviors of a modern citizen.

Strong social networking, social participation and trust develops individual's sense of responsibility and participation in fulfilling citizenship duties, respecting other's rights, awareness of rights and observing the law (Armingeon, 2007:358; Badescu & Neller, 2007:159, Marc & Jennifer,2015:332). These findings are in line with previous studies that have been conducted in Iran (Rastegar & Azimi, 2013; Ghafouri, 2008; Roshanfekar et. al., 2006). In other words, as social capital leads to economic development, it has the potential to create citizenship values and behavior in terms of developing citizenship culture. Therefore, the role of social capital in developing active citizens is notable and its dimensions (social participation, trust and social networks) appeared to be influential in extending civil communities and institutions to inform university students as a conscious and dutiful citizen. It is worth mentioning that the latent variable of social capital had the most significant relationship with citizenship duties. Differently said, in order to have dutiful and responsible citizens, there is a need to emphasize the facilities within the country. In conclusion, equality and political security are among the key elements in the growth of prominent human values. Furthermore, the importances of university students' roles in social and familial arena cause their citizenship rights and duties. It also creates a space and guarantees appropriate socialization which corresponds with the improvement of future generations.

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