

The role of the government's attractive or repulsive factors in social participation for environmental protection

Mahsa Saeedi Vafa [0009-0009-1834-3590](#) 

PhD Candidate in Sociology, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Bahram Ghadimi¹ [0000-0002-3223-8932](#) 

Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Mehrdad Navabakhsh [0000-0002-3028-7458](#) 

Professor, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Mansour Sharifi [0000-0002-4946-4963](#) 

Associate Professor, Department of Demography, Faculty of Humanities, Garmsar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Garmsar, Iran

Extended Abstract

1- Introduction: The purpose of the present study is to investigate the role of the government's attractive or repulsive factors in social participation for environmental protection. The environment, as a social issue, is one of the most important natural phenomena, and a crisis poses a problem for human and even non-human life. Environmental phenomena are external conditions that affect a living being, such as a human, throughout its lifetime. Water, soil, and air are the three major components of the human environment, and pollution of any of them is environmental pollution and must be addressed. The increasing population, the rising demand for food and other basic human needs, the development of the tourism industry, the expansion of urbanization, and the intensification of environmental pollution (water, soil, and air) have posed a serious threat to the health and lives of creatures, especially humans. On the other hand, cultural capital refers to specific cultural practices that have been established in individuals through formal and family education (environmental education) and also includes the capacity of individuals to recognize the use of artistic tools, such as waste recycling, so the role of cultural capital in realizing ecological citizenship is of great importance. The increasing frequency of climate change and its consequences, such as floods, heat stress, and water scarcity, puts the environment at the forefront of researchers, citizen groups, and decision-makers seeking to mitigate and adapt to it. One of the proposed solutions is environmental modification, an intentional intervention using natural features of ecosystems, which is used worldwide to provide diverse sustainability benefits. One reason for the importance and necessity of environmental research is that social participation has evolved to help humans adapt to their environment. Since humans have a social life and many of their cultural manifestations are also related to collective and group actions, the government's attracting and repelling factors can affect the amount and quality of participation and collective spirit as intervening factors. The overall goal of the present study is to examine the role of the government's attracting and repelling factors in social participation for environmental protection, and to examine the causal and interfering conditions, measures, and programs implemented to date, and the consequences of those programs for the country's environment. The main question of the research is: what solutions are proposed to increase the government's role in attracting social participation in environmental protection?

2- Literature review: The environmental issue is of particular importance both within Iran and globally. The strength of this research, which distinguishes it from previous studies, lies in its focus on attracting and repelling factors, on government support in combating environmental degradation, and on its participation in its preservation and maintenance.

3- Methodology: The method of this research is the grounded theory method. The study population, selected purposively, consists of 24 university professors and researchers with knowledge, research, and awareness in the field of the environment. The researchers collected and analyzed the data qualitatively. The number of participants was determined until the theoretical and, to some extent, conceptual data saturation stage was reached. Analysis and coding of the interview texts were conducted using MAXQDA 2020.

To create theoretical sensitivity, the researcher reviewed theoretical and empirical literature (some relevant theories, articles, and books related to the subject). Also, in this study, to build confidence in the research findings, methods

¹ Corresponding Author: dr.b.ghadimi@gmail.com

such as participant evaluation, control and review of conceptual and theoretical findings by professors and other researchers, and analytical comparisons were used.

1- **Validation by participants:** In this study, by validating the extracted categories with the opinions of respondents (16 people), they were asked to evaluate the general findings obtained and comment on them. The participants confirmed the correctness of the extracted concepts.

2- **Analytical comparisons:** The field findings of the research were reviewed by reviewing and returning to the theories and raw data, and moving from analogy to induction, to verify the accuracy of the abstract findings.

3- **Use of auditing technique:** In the coding stages, the opinions of professors as well as experts familiar with the method were used. In implementing the three stages of coding, first, considering the similarity of the feature and feature dimensions in the first round coding (open coding), in the form of one of the common schools in grounded theory (Glazer school), first round coding was carried out with all its steps, and appropriate matrices and tables were drawn. Then, in the second round of coding, focused codes or central categories were created, and the researcher practically achieved abstract concepts (blocks). In the inductive approach, the process of moving from detailed information to general concepts is carried out to develop a theory through hypothesis construction, the development of new and novel methods, and the scientific criticism of previous methods. The open coding process in this research was as follows: each interview was written down as soon as it arrived home, and then all its essential points were entered into the open coding table. In the second stage, all data referring to a common concept were arranged in sequence, and a subcategory encompassing all such concepts was selected. In the next stage, the obtained subcategories were placed in a more abstract, inclusive category called 'categories'. These stages involved going back and forth to the field during data collection.

4- **Research findings:** After coding the interviews, selecting concepts, and proceeding from induction to analogy and reaching the main subcategories and categories, the central category of "functional decay" was finally chosen. The central category of functional decay refers to the current situation in which the government plays the role of attracting and repelling factors in creating social participation in environmental protection, in which in these conditions, the measures taken are without careful, expert, and continuous planning, and these measures themselves have negative consequences for the environment and reduce social participation and social capital in the environmental field from citizens.

5- **Discussion and Conclusion:** The results of the research show that the environment in any country is one of the most critical assets of that country, which can play a significant role in the development of that country. Excessive exploitation of natural resources, destruction of forests, and excessive use of underground and surface resources can cause irreparable damage to a country's environment. The participants in the research consider the need to build a culture in the field of environment and how to preserve and protect it, fundamental reforms in environmental laws and structures, institutionalization of the problem and attention to solving it, use and replacement of renewable energies instead of fossil fuels, and government support and efforts to attract and attract public and local support as the best solutions to overcome the current situation.

Keywords: environment, social participation, government support, environmental destruction