

The Role of Social Capital on Political Socialization (The Case Study of Undergraduate Students of Public Universities in Tehran)

MOHAMMAD BAGHER KHORRAMSHAD

Associate Professor in Political Science,
Department of political science, Allame Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran
Email: mb.khorramshad@gmail.com
Tel: +989121442259

FARZAD SOURI

PhD Candidate in Political Science,
Department of political science, Allame Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran
Visiting Researcher at the Department of political science, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada
Email: farzad.s1364@yahoo.com
Tel: +15875992474

JAMES LIGHTBODY

Professor in Political Science,
Department of political science, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada
Email: jim.lightbody@ualberta.ca
Tel: +17804925815

Abstract

Despite decades of explanation in international academic fields, the concept of social capital is still an under-researched area in Iranian domestic fields. Therefore, it has become a controversial and multidimensional concept as each branch in the humanities, depending on their needs, have adopted and applied their own definition of the term social capital. Giving a functional explanation of the term, this research aims at evaluating the quantitative and qualitative situation of youth's political socialization process. The focus of this research is on the relationship between the concepts of 'social capital,' 'socialization' and 'political affairs.' For the case study, this research focuses on university as a government institution developing political socialization in the political system of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Specifically, the research tries to explore the effects of social capital on political socialization process of undergraduate students in public universities in the city of Tehran. The hypothesis of this research is that the higher the level of social capital in public universities in Tehran, the more successful the universities are in realizing the political socialization function of their undergraduate students. Eventually, this study will investigate effective contexts in the process of political socialization as one of the most focal effective areas on the survival of a political system and will highlight the political functions of social capital.

Keywords: Social Capital, Political Socialization, Undergraduate Students, Trust, Norms, Social Networks.

Introduction

Many theoretical and case studies have been conducted in the field of political science to understand the political functions of social capital including political development and political participation. However, there is a gap in research regarding the political functions of social capital in political socialization and its indexes including, specifically, political views, awareness and participation. The significance of this is that political socialization usually takes place through government institutions and its effectiveness is directly related to the status of social capital indexes in any of those institutions (including trust, norms and social networks).

Our case study in this survey is the institution of universities, as government organizations that are responsible for the political socialization process in Iran. Our aim is to understand the ratio between politics and social capital and uncovering its new functions. As a result, we measure the major indexes of university's social capital including trust, norms and social networks. Then we will evaluate students' political socialization indexes, including political views, awareness and participation. The question for this research is this: what is the effect of social capital on the political socialization process of undergraduate students at public universities in Tehran? Our hypothesis is that the higher the level of social capital in public universities in Tehran, the more successful the universities are in realizing the political socialization function of their undergraduate students.

Literature Review

A number of studies have done in the field of social capital status in Iran; however, none of them has elaborated on the role of social capital in political socialization. In their book, *The Cycles of Decline in Ethics and Economics: Social Capital and Developments in Iran*, Ranani and Moayed far (2012) have provided a conceptual framework to analyze dimensions of failure in the development process of contemporary Iran. This work significantly contributes to the issue of development and social capital. Abolhasani (2013) examines the most important political functions of social capital and identifies its related dysfunctions. In a qualitative study, Rafi (2008) focuses on the political culture and explains the role of social capital in political socialization process of pupils in schools. Hosseini, Mirzaei Malekian and Tavakoli (2010) address the effects of family and family relations on the political socialization of undergraduate students at the University of Tehran. To cover the gap in literature, this research conducts a quantitative study on political socialization process through social capital.

Research Questions

What is the effect of social capital on the political socialization process of undergraduate students at public universities in Tehran?

Theoretical Framework

This article approaches the concept of social capital using the seminal work of Robert Putnam (1993). His prominent work, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* has received much attention over the past two decades. His different arguments, methodology, and research schedule, represent an innovation in discussing on the relationship between society's political and social areas (Boix, C. & Posner, 1996).

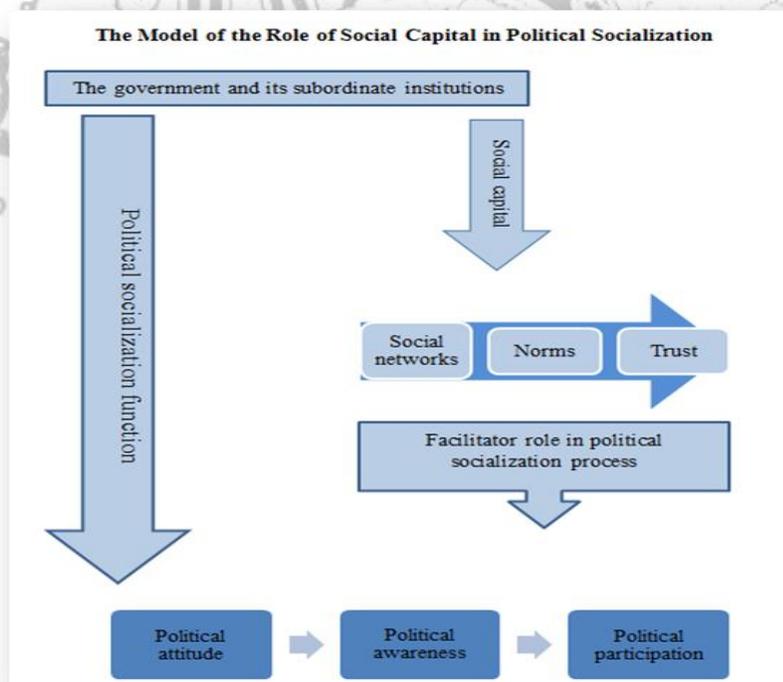
Putnam focused on the institutional performance of twenty Italian regional governments precisely and set various policy indicators. He concluded that the performance of these governments strongly reflected how

much the social life is vital in each region. In northern Italy, where citizens participate actively in sports clubs, literary guilds, service groups and choral societies, regional governments have efficiency in internal operation, creativity in policymaking and effectiveness in governing (Putnam, 1993). In southern Italy, by contrast, where patterns of civic engagement are far weaker, regional governments are more likely to be unprincipled and incompetent. Putnam uses the term "social to" explain relationship between strong networks of citizen participation and positive institutional performance. This term refers to the networks, norms of reciprocity and trust that promote society associations by virtue of their experience of social interaction. He believes in the instructive effect of social capital on governance. Putnam argues that social capital allows citizens to choose collective action on purpose and that this overrides those factors which would otherwise hold back their attempts to make social life better (Boix, C. & Posner, 1996).

In this study, a questionnaire was used to collect data from the participants. First, we checked the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha. Then, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to assess the normality of the data distribution. The relationship between the main variables, namely social capital and political socialization, was calculated using Pearson correlation. Linear regression model such as variance analysis of regression model, the coefficients of the regression model, and correlation table of obtained scores from regression model after elimination were calculated using SPSS 18.

Analysis

This study has used quantitative methods (survey) for data collection to measure the social capital level as well as the level of universities' success in political socialization. Statistical population of this research includes an approximate number of 100,000 undergraduate students in public universities in Tehran chosen through simple random or unlimited sampling method.



Discussion

Social Capital

Social capital has emerged as one of the most powerful and attractive of metaphors in the social sciences. This term refers to the community relations that affect personal interactions and explains a number of phenomena including voting patterns and economic success. Increasingly, a wide number of scholars in social sciences and humanities believe in social capital's importance in understanding individual and group differences and successful public policy (Durlauf & Fafchamps, 2005).

Specifically, social capital refers to the resources available in and through personal and business networks, such as information, financial capital, ideas, business opportunities, trust and cooperation. The word "social" in social capital points out that these resources are not personal assets and no individual owns them, because these resources reside in networks of relationships. The word "Capital" emphasizes that social capital is productive like other types of capital: It makes things valuable, and makes goals and missions achievable (Baker, 2000).

The high number of definitions for social capital can make this term and its components confusing. Using various words, such as social energy, bonds and resources to refer to this term exacerbates this situation (Office for National Statistics, 2001). Putnam (2000) defines social capital as one of the features of social organization, such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. Fukuyama considers this term as peoples' ability to work together for a common purpose in groups and organizations. He believes that social capital can simply defined as a set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permit cooperation among them (Fukuyama, 1995). Before 1981, the number of journal articles listing social capital as a key word totaled 20. Between 1991 and 1995, this number has increased to 109, and between 1996 and 1999, the total was 1003 (Baum, 2000). This trend shows the growing attention toward this concept.

Political Socialization

Political Socialization focuses on how citizens' political views and political culture are shaped. It also refers to how political culture can be carried on from one generation to the next. Political socialization can be direct or indirect. Direct Political Socialization involves explicitly transferring information, values or feelings to citizens. Indirect political socialization happens when political views are not shaped intentionally by our experiences as when an individual is a young child and obtains experience through relationships with parents or teachers. Agents of political socialization include school, family, mass media and direct contact with governmental structures. In this paper, our focus is on the last item.

Political socialization's scientific and systematic study began with Plato. In *The Republic* in the 4th century BC, he advocated education and training from early childhood onward to develop guardians of the city-state, Athens (Landtsheer, 2014). In the contemporary era, Merriam (1931) presented a series of comparative monographs promoting formal civics instruction that emphasized obedience to legitimate institutional authorities as a means of maintaining stable democracies. The landmark studies Hyman (1959), Greenstein (1965), Hess and Torney (1967), and Easton and Dennis (1969) are guided by this assumption, which emphasized the study of children, in keeping with the belief that what is learned first is learned best (Owen, 2014).

Political socialization is a learning process that begins in early childhood and continues throughout life. In early stages of life, political socialization begins to constitute and it is an ongoing process. Through

political socialization, people acquire their perceptions and feelings about their political environment. It accounts for both the commonalities and diversities of political life. This process shapes our political views that can include our level of patriotism, faith in democratic system, and opinion regarding public policies (Prewitt, 1977). Furthermore, "Knowledge is a product of the socialization process. The level of knowledge in a society has important implications for the development of what type of political system exists" (Landtsheer, 2014). This is the reason why this paper considers public universities as a main agent in the political socialization process.

The Role of social capital in political socialization

Management of available resources in a nation depends on the quality of institutions and the incentive structure that directs the sources (Brunner, 1985). In fact, advancing the process of political socialization, and consequently success in the efficiency of resource management in any society, entails an acceptable level of social capital. The most important agent in advancing the process of political socialization, especially in developing countries, is the political system and its affiliated institutions such as public universities. However, this idea may not be compatible with western democracies' attitude toward the political socialization process as there are other intuitions that are notably responsible for that process; e.g. family and schools. So having a compatible and social capital-friendly political system is essential for flourishing the prosperity of society. In connection with the political system and its affiliated institutions, social capital is simultaneously effective and impressionable. Therefore, every action of the political system and its institutions can affect social capital in a positive or negative way. For example, trust, as a part of social capital and perhaps the most fundamental one, is an indicator of the potential readiness of citizens for cooperating and engaging in civic efforts (Rothstein and Stolle, 2002). Public trust, the existence of trust in the whole society, is a successful stimulator of political socialization process and increases political and civic participation (Warren, 2003).

Therefore, when we say that social capital in a society is high, on the one hand, the sense of public trust, cooperation, and adherence to contracts among the society's members is high; and on the other hand, the tendency for opportunism is low. As a result, collective action becomes possible with the least cost. Affluent societies and efficient political systems need to have a proportionate level of social capital to become successful in the process of political socialization. Maintaining, strengthening and accumulating this invaluable resource will enable societies to benefit from the achievements of development and good governance. Hence, a political system and its affiliated institutions not only are obliged to evaluate the consequences of its measurements on social capital, but also are committed to provide a trust-making social environment. As a result, reliability, the desire to maintain and operate within the norms, the desire to cooperate and engage in social networks (as major indexes of social capital) will become useful and meaningful for the members of the society.

As Levi (1996) and Tandler (1997) argue, the most important neglected point in social capital is the role of government and political institutions in promoting horizontal associations and their corresponding activities. Foley and Edwards (1996) criticize Putnam for ignoring the importance of political organizations in the creation of associations that rely on. They continue that Putnam also does not consider other forms of civic engagement in America, to the extent that politics is literally subject to complete removal. They observe that the activities of social networks and political institutions can be either supportive of a positive government or can act as a tool for resistance against an oppressive one.

As mentioned previously, social capital plays a significant role in improving the performance of government and its affiliated institutions, including public universities, in advancing the process of political socialization and political development in society. Governments and institutions that benefit from higher levels of social capital accumulation will benefit from greater achievements in this field. Therefore, in a

situation where such a valuable asset erodes within an institution, achieving qualitative and quantitative objectives, including success in the process of political socialization, will fail (Whiteley, 2000). Several factors can help generating or destroying social capital and consequently providing a basis for increasing success in advancing the process of political socialization. In this regard, governments and their institutions have the most influential role. Governments and their subfolder institutions, as a part of the political system and main stimulus of political socialization process, contribute to the production of social capital by creating trust. An institution must provide necessary contexts to stimulate and encourage its audience to cooperation and collective action. This process can be done through social, individual and institutional improvements. In social improvement, the government increases the capacity of the society's members in developing cooperative relations with its institutions through policies such as provision of public health and education, unemployment insurance, and a comprehensive social security system (Khezri, 1384).

The role of university in political socialization

One of the most important institutions in which political socialization process takes places is the university. Universities train people to live in the political environment of the society and foster their talents and creativity through practical and theoretical methods and approaches. The process of political socialization in the form of academic education and interaction between educational communities with other agents of political sovereignty can contribute to stabilizing the political system. This planning will shape students' dynamic political identity that can lead to deep attitudes and institutionalized and stable political behaviors. Accordingly, political training as a target in the curriculum planning can have a lasting impact on political participation and students' political understanding and attitudes. This process will lead to promoting political literacy, sustainable political development and good governance in the society (Mohseni, 2008).

Therefore, curriculum planning in an academic field must be based on the realization of unitizing and participatory behavioral patterns of student's national identity. Political socialization through academic education relates to the relationship between students, politics and power. This process leads to the distribution of patterns of orientation (Cognitive, affective and evaluative). Political upbringing in a society must rely on the political content of courses that can contribute to improving the political insight of young generations and their active political participation. In fact, the process of political socialization in universities will cause the formation of different aspects of the political character and political behaviors of the society's learner generation in the future (Tavassoly & Mousavi, 2005). Sociologists examine the impact of the university on political system both as a means of controlling and legitimizing, and as a potential source of political discontent. Therefore, successful advance in the political socialization process in a society depends on this issue that university, as an institution, continuously considers political development as one of the great objectives in educational planning (Sharepoor, 2007).

Research Findings

Survey of reliability in different sections of questionnaire based on variables' indicators

Reliability is a scale that shows the degree of trust and consistency of a questionnaire in measuring a concept. In this paper, Cronbach's alpha coefficient that measures the internal consistency of a model was used to evaluate different sections of the questionnaire. After revising some questions to achieve a consistent reliability factor for different sections of the questionnaire, the following results were achieved for the final version of the questionnaire.

The trust section included 19 questions, and the Cronbach alpha was 57%, that represented medium reliability. The norms section included 17 questions and Cronbach alpha was 57% that again represented

medium reliability. Cronbach alpha for social networks section, that included 14 questions, was 76% that represented high reliability. Cronbach alpha for political view section, that contained 14 questions, was 72% that represented high reliability. Cronbach alpha for political awareness section, which included 12 questions, was 84% that represented high reliability. Cronbach alpha for political participation questionnaire, which contains 12 questions, is 84% that represents high reliability. After considering the confirmation of validity of discussed questions by expert professionals, we proceed at the end of this section with analyzing the goals discussed in the first part.

Descriptive Analysis of Data

In this section, we explain the demographic characteristics of the study sample size.

General indicators of participants

The participants in the survey included individuals between 20 and 25 years old with 67%; individuals under 20 years old with 29%; and individuals between 25 and 30 years old and over 30 years old respectively with 3% and 1%. Reviewing the status of participants in terms of academic group showed that the maximum number of participants was engineering students (45%) students in Humanities (32%), Medical and Health (9%), Science (8%), Foreign Languages (5%), Unknown (0.8%), and Physical Education (0.3%). About 92% of participants were single and 6% were married. The status of 2% of participants was unknown. 37% of participating students did not follow the news. Students interested in political issues were 32%; sports (15%) and criminal events (13%). 2% of the participants did not respond to this section of the questionnaire.

Mean and standard deviation

Mean and standard deviation show the general characteristics of data. The mean is the "total values" divided by the "number of values" which explains where the distribution happens. Based on the information provided in table (1), Political view index with mean of 2.81 and standard deviation of 0.51 had the highest mean compared to other indexes. Norm's index had the lowest with the mean of 2.64 and standard deviation of 0.36.

Indexes	Mean	Standard deviation
Trust	2.80	0.34
Norms	2.64	0.36
Social Networks	2.70	0.50
Political view	2.81	0.51
Political awareness	2.76	0.56
Political Participation	3.03	0.71

Inferential analysis of data - Hypotheses test

Presumption of normality in data

In inferential analysis, the researcher calculated the statistics using sample values and then extended statistics to population parameters by estimating or testing statistical hypothesis. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed a normal distribution of data by comparing the distribution of an attribute in a sample with the

distribution that was given to the society. According to the results obtained from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, (Table 2) the distribution of the questionnaire answers was normal.

Table (2): Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of Presumption 1
 One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Data
N		34320
Normal Parametersa	Mean	2.7857
	Std. Deviation	1.13472
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.179
	Positive	.179
	Negative	-.154
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		33.086
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.000

a. Test distribution is Normal.

Presumption of similar responses in different age groups

Null and contrary hypothesis:

{	H0: $\mu_{20} = \mu_{20-25} = \mu_{25-30} = \mu_{p30}$	The mean of answers is equal.
	H1: $\mu_{20} \neq \mu_{20-25} \neq \mu_{25-30} \neq \mu_{p30}$	The mean of answers is not equal.

The significance level, displayed in the SPSS statistical reports as sig.value, is a value or criterion recognized as the significance base and is also known as the Type I error. This value is considered 5% in Humanities researches and 1% in Medical Sciences. If the difference in the results of the survey or the relationship between the variables is less than 5%, (Table 3), it is unlikely that the difference or the relationship is accidental, hence meaningful. If it is more than 5%, the results are most likely accidental and the difference or the relationship of the variables is not meaningful. The results of the survey of this part of the study are as follows:

Table (3): Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of presumption 2
 ANOVA

Data	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	50.127	3	16.709	12.995	.000
Within Groups	44009.580	34228	1.286		
Total	44059.707	34231			

Given that the obtained significance level is smaller than 0.05, the assumption of the equality of all means is rejected, and therefore, we deal with their pairwise comparison (Table 4). Obviously, opinions in the age group of 25 to 30 years old are different from the age groups of under 20 and between 20 and 25 years old:

Table (4): Pairwise comparison of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for presumption 2

Age group	Significance level	Low level of confidence interval	High level of confidence interval
Less than 20 and between 20 and 25	.953	-.0424	.0279
Less than 20 and between 25 and 30	.000	-.3125	-.1162
Less than 20 and more than 30	.032	-.3259	-.0098
Between 20 and 25 and between 25 and 30	.000	-.3027	-.1116
Between 20 to 25 and more than 30	.041	-.3171	-.0042
Between 25 to 30 and more than 30	.913	-.1348	.2278

Testing the hypotheses of research using correlation coefficient

Testing the main hypothesis

Using Pearson's correlation coefficient, the value of correlation coefficient of the research variables was evaluated. Since the calculated level of significance of alpha (0.025) is smaller than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis of the research is confirmed (Table 5). Therefore, the obtained correlation coefficient (53%) shows that there is a direct and meaningful relationship between social capital and political socialization of the students. In other words, when the first variable increases, the second variable increases as well.

Null and contrary hypothesis:

- H0: $\rho = 0$ There is no relationship between social capital and political socialization.
- H1: $\rho \neq 0$ There is a relationship between social capital and political socialization.

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	Sample	Significance level	Pearson correlation
Social capital	2.71	0.32	390		
Political socialization	2.87	0.49	390	0/000	0/53

First subsidiary hypothesis

Using Pearson's correlation coefficient, the value of the correlation coefficient of research variables was evaluated. Since the calculated level of significance of alpha (0.025) is smaller than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis of the research is confirmed (Table 6). The obtained correlation coefficient (42%) shows that there is a direct and meaningful relationship between trust and political view of the students. In other words, when the first variable increases, the second variable increases as well.

Null and contrary hypothesis:

- H0: $\rho = 0$ There is no relationship between trust and political view.
- H1: $\rho \neq 0$ There is a relationship between trust and political view.

Table (6): The correlation coefficient between trust and political view

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	Sample	Significance level	Pearson correlation
Trust	2/8	0/34	390		
Political view	2/81	0/51	390	0/000	0/42

Second subsidiary hypothesis

Using Pearson's correlation coefficient, the value of the correlation coefficient of the research variables was evaluated. Since the calculated level of significance of alpha (0.025) is smaller than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis of the research is confirmed (Table 7). The obtained correlation coefficient (21%) shows that there is a direct and meaningful relationship between norms and political awareness of the students. In other words, when the first variable increases, the second variable increases as well.

Null and contrary hypothesis:

- H0: $\rho = 0$ There is no relationship between norms and political awareness.
- H1: $\rho \neq 0$ There is a relationship between norms and political awareness.

Table (7): The correlation coefficient between norms and political awareness

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	Sample	Significance level	Pearson correlation
Norms	2.64	0.36	390		
Political awareness	2.76	0.56	390	0.000	0.21

Third subsidiary hypothesis

Using Pearson's correlation coefficient, the value of the correlation coefficient of the research variables was evaluated. Since the calculated level of significance of alpha (0.025) is smaller than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis of the research is confirmed (Table 8). The obtained correlation coefficient (48%) shows that there is a direct and meaningful relationship between social networks and political participation of the students. In other words, when the first variable increases, the second variable increases as well.

Null and contrary hypothesis:

- H0: $\rho = 0$ There is no relationship between social networks and political participation.
- H1: $\rho \neq 0$ There is a relationship between social networks and political participation.

Table (8): The correlation coefficient between social networks and political participation

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	Sample	Significance level	Pearson correlation
Social networks	2.7	0.5	390		
Political participation	3.03	0.71	390	0.000	0.48

Based on the obtained correlation in table 9, the model has a low smoothness and can make a linear fitting from the real scores to 33% that is a weak estimate. Based on the obtained Durbin–Watson statistics that is a number between 1.5 and 2.5, independence of the residuals is proven and shows that we can use the linear regression.

Table (9): The correlation of the scores obtained from the regression model

Model	Durbin-Watson statistic	Standard error of estimate	Determination coefficient	Correlation coefficient
1	1.607	0.40172	0.33	0.57

Likewise, according to the obtained significance level (Table 10), we can use the regression model instead of the estimate by mean.

Table (10): Variance analysis of the regression model

Model	Sum of squares	Freedom degree	Mean of squares	Fisher statistics	Significance level
Regression model	30.220	3	10.073	62.419	.000
Residuals	62.294	386	.161		
Total	92.514	389			

As shown in table 11 and the obtained significance levels, the role of norms can be removed from the model. This hypothesis was confirmed in the weak relationship between this factor and political awareness.

Table (11): The coefficients of the regression model

Model	Non-standard coefficients		Standard coefficients	t	Significance levels
	B	Standard error	Beta		
Fixed number	.810	.187		4.339	.000
Trust	.351	.072	.244	4.887	.000
Norms	-.047	.071	-.035	-.670	.503
Social networks	.445	.047	.452	9.466	.000

Therefore, after removing this index, the results are as follows (Tables 12 and 13):

Table (12): the correlation of scores obtained from the regression model after removing the index

Model	Correlation coefficient	Determination coefficient	Standard error of estimate
1	0.571	0.33	0.40144

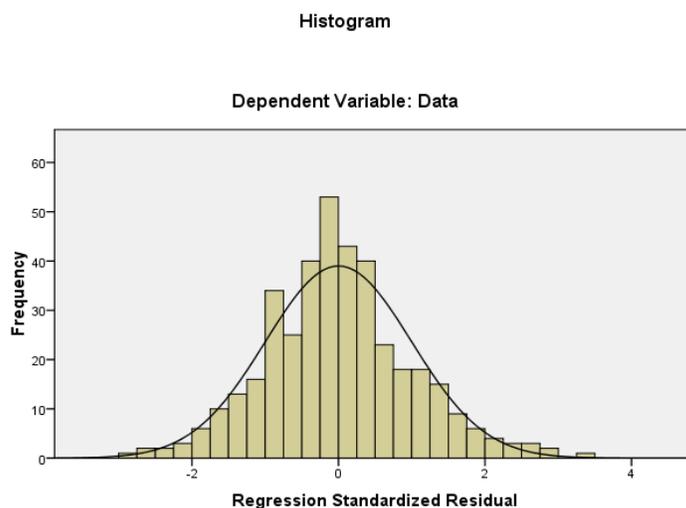
Table (13): coefficients of the regression model

Model	Non-standard coefficients		Standard coefficients	t	Significance levels
	B	Standard error	Beta		
Fixed number	.769	.176		4.362	.000
Trust	.330	.065	.230	5.084	.000
Norms	.435	.044	.442	9.774	.000

Using the scatterplot of the residuals helps us examine the relationship between the two variables (plot 1). In this research, the scatterplot of the residuals shows a normal distribution. The plot of the obtained residuals from the model shows an almost normal distribution with a zero mean. It means that the difference between the actual scores of political socialization and fitted scores by regression model has a zero mean that indicates the proper fitting of the model. Based on the coefficients of the previous table, the model will be as follows:

$$\text{Political socialization} = -0.769 + 0.330 (\text{trust}) + 0.435 (\text{Social networks})$$

Plot (1): Residuals scatterplot



Conclusion

The complex and multi-dimensional process of political socialization should be considered to better advance the field. Adopting one-dimensional policymaking approaches and programs and focusing on a particular aspect or time period in the studies will not have successful results. Hence, considering that the process of political socialization is pursued in the social context as the fundamental layer of the society, it is necessary to consider the status of social capital in the society. The higher the level of social capital in a political system and related institutions, the more successful the political system is in advancing the process

of political socialization and shaping citizens' views and attitudes toward politics and its phenomena. Testing the hypotheses of this study showed that social capital is the most important software principle in advancing the process of political socialization.

Therefore, understanding the views, attitudes and behavioral characteristics of citizens in general and target populations in particular can be effective in a more successful advance of the political socialization process. According to the research results, testing the main hypothesis of the research showed that by increasing the level of social capital at the university, the process of political socialization would have a higher level of success. Regarding the research's first subsidiary hypothesis, by increasing the level of students' trust toward the university, their impressionability in the process of political view will be more.

Consequently, the following measures for the university are recommended:

- Improving the qualitative level of scientific and laboratory hardware facilities;
- Improving the qualitative level of welfare, sports and accommodation facilities;
- Continuous monitoring of qualitative and quantitative levels of academic tests and assessments;
- Conducting field studies on measurements to increase students' trust toward the university;
- Adopting a meritocratic approach in appointing officials and university authorities
- Organizing training courses to develop personal and social skills which lead to increasing individual self-esteem and consequently trust toward others and institutions.

Moreover, testing the research's second subsidiary hypothesis shows that due to widening the circle of resources and facilities in receiving political news, analysis and knowledge, qualitative status of norms which are considered within the universities, has very little impact on shaping students' political awareness. Hence, it seems that considering measures that strengthen media activities at the universities, establishing attractive media for the students, promoting interaction between the university and the prominent and well-known media can provide necessary context for the proper exploitation of the media in the process of growing students' political awareness.

Finally, testing research's third subsidiary hypothesis shows that qualitative and quantitative growth in using social networks will lead to the expansion of political participation. Consequently, the following measures in the university are recommended: a supportive approach in establishing students' institutions and associations and delegating part of university's executive affairs to the students and focusing on the organizing collective activities, such as functional and attractive conferences and seminars for the students, industry and labor market.

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