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The Relationship between Social Capital and Delinquency of 2nd Grade High School Students of Sari, Iran

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Abstract: This article aimed to study the relationship between social capital and delinquency of 2nd grade high school students of Sari, Iran. This is an applied, descriptive-correlational study. The statistical population consisted of 10045 2nd grade high school students. A total of 375 students were enrolled as the sample using gender-based stratified random sampling with the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table. Data were collected using two questionnaires: 42-item researcher-made Social Capital Questionnaire in seven dimensions (Social Trust, Social Networks, Social Cooperation, Social Relationships, Values, Mutual Understanding and Commitment) and 25-item Delinquency Questionnaire. The face and content validity was verified by the experts. The reliability was verified using Cronbach's alpha for Social Capital Questionnaire (0.85) and Delinquency Questionnaire (0.79). Pearson correlation, t independent test, and regression were employed for the data analysis. The results showed that social capital and its dimensions (Social Trust, Social Networks, Social Cooperation, Social Relationships, Values, Mutual Understanding and Commitment) had a negative, significant relationship with delinquency of 2nd grade high school students. The regression results showed that social relationships ($\beta = -0.413$) was found to be the most correlated item with delinquency. No significant relationship was found between social capital and delinquency according to gender.

Keywords: Social Capital, Delinquency, Students.

INTRODUCTION

Social capital is a new concept in today's economic investigations of modern societies. It refers to the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively through the creation of norms and mutual interactions (Nava Bakhsh and Vahedi, 2010: 84). Lynch and Kaplan (1997) believe that social capital is a combination which determines the level of norms in

a certain society at certain time (Tajbakhsh, 2010). According to the content of social capital, it is capable of being used in theoretical analyses in various fields. Social harm is one of these fields. From this perspective, social capital, as a fundamental tool, is capable and efficient to determine and explain problems especially social harms. It is, in fact, known as the solution to social problems. Therefore, if social capital is well investigated, it is well capable of identifying and analyzing harms. It can also provide a proper preventive solution (KarimiMazidi et al., 2013: 112). Throughout the history, social norms have always experienced change. Social norm changes have increased as the rise of economic modernization and industrialization. Iran has also faced changes in social norms in recent years as the loss of informal norms has led the elimination of life importance and reduced life satisfaction. On the other hand, alternative institutions have not been established to produce such norms and mutual social relationships in society's new conditions. This has caused some social consequences such as increasing delinquency, crime, poverty, etc., creating a critical condition in the society (Share Pour, 2001: 104). Fukuyama (1997) believed that social capital can be used to measure social deviation statistics. According to this point of view, social problems indicate lack of social capital. Increasing social deviation statistics mean reducing social relations, considered social capital. Optimal social capital enables actions in actions in social life (Karimi Mazidi et al., 2013: 113).

Qolami Koutnaee and Qorban Nejad Shahroudi (2014), in their study entitled "the Effect of Family Social Capital on Addiction of Youth of Ghaem Shahr, Iran", showed that family social capital and its dimensions (internal, structural social capital; external, structural social capital; internally cognitive social capital; and externally cognitive social capital) had a negative, significant relationship with addiction. The study by Habibi (2014) showed that social capital and intrinsic motivation had a significant relationship with academic progress in high school students of Noshahr, Iran. Social capital and intrinsic motivation were not found to be significant in male and female students. The results of the study by KarimiMazidi et al. (2013), entitled "the Relationship between Social Capital and Deviance of male students aged 15-18 years old in Tehran, Iran in 2011-2012", showed that social capital and all of its dimensions including participation, trust, support, and social cohesion and interaction with others had a negative, significant relationship with deviance. The study by Abbas Zadeh et al. (2012), entitled "the relationship between social capital and anomia", showed that the elements of social capital (institutional trust, social participation, and social cohesion) had a significant impact on social anomia. HeidarNejad et al. (2012) compared social capital among addict and non-addict youth. The results showed that addict's social capital is significantly lower than that of non-addict. Addicts' social participation, social trust, and social relationship network were significantly lower than those of non-addicts. BagheriYazdi (2011) studied the relationship between social capital and risk-taking of college students studying in Allameh Tabatabaee University of Tehran, Iran. The results showed that social capital had a negative, significant correlation with risk-taking. The mean scores of female, married, and employed participants were significantly greater than other groups. Inversely, the mean scores of male, single, and unemployed participants were significantly greater than other groups concerning risk-taking. Areekul et al. (2015) studied a developed model to strengthen the social capital as a lifelong learning sustainable community. The results showed that social-capital strengthening model for a lifelong learning sustainable community verified the relationship between the elements of social capital. The study by Dufura et al. (2013), entitled "Does capital at home matter more than capital at school? Social capital effects on academic achievement", showed that social capital was significantly effective in academic progress. Social capital is helpful in every field. Social capital is more influential in families than schools. OzdenAzbay (2008) studied the relationship between social capital, cheating, alcohol use, and violence on

450 Turkish university students. He concluded that social capital had a negative effect on deviant behavior. Rosenbaum and Rochford (2008) studied the relationship between social capital and academic performance of students. They concluded that social capital had a positive, significant relationship with academic performance. Wright and Fitzpatrick (2006) studied the correlation between social capital and violent behaviors in adolescents as well as conflict and use of weapons in students. The results showed that social capital is an important source moderating violent consequences, especially parent-child relationships and attachment to school. Studies have shown that the access of adolescents and youth to social capital can reduce social and behavioral problems. Therefore, preparing the ground for social interactions, social skills and team work reduce social harms and risk-taking, bringing about academic progress and health promotion (Kreuter and Lezin, 2002). Therefore, since high school students account for the society's adolescent class, are considered the spiritual capital of every community, and their physical and spiritual health guarantees the society's future health, on the one hand, and adolescents are one of the most vulnerable classes human community physically, mentally, and socially and they are faced with different delinquent consequences, it is essential to study adolescent affairs, especially delinquency. Therefore, this article aimed to study the relationship between social capital and delinquency of 2nd grade high school students of Sari, Iran. The hypotheses outlined here are as follows:

- Social capital had a relationship with delinquency of 2nd grade high school students of Sari, Iran.
- Social capital dimensions had a relationship with delinquency of 2nd grade high school students of Sari, Iran.
- Social capital had a relationship with delinquency according to gender.

METHOD

This is an applied, descriptive-correlational study. The statistical population consisted of 10045 (5665 female and 4380 male) 2nd grade high school students. A total of 375 (211 male and 164 female) students were enrolled as the sample using gender-based stratified random sampling with the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table. Data were collected using two questionnaires:

1. *Researcher-Devised Social Capital Questionnaire*: The questionnaire was devised based on Vilanova and Jose (2003) model concerning social capital. The questionnaire has 42 questions in seven dimensions (Social Trust, Social Networks, Social Cooperation, Social Relationships, Values, Mutual Understanding and Commitment). The items are scored on a 5-option Likert scale: Items 1-7, social trust; Items 8-13, social networks; items 14-19, social cooperation, Items 20-25, social relationships; Items 26-30, values; Items 31-36, mutual understanding; and 37-42, commitment. The validity was verified by the experts. The reliability was verified using Cronbach's alpha (0.85).
2. *Delinquency Questionnaire*: This 25-item questionnaire is based on 5-option Likert scale (Akhlaghi Kaley Bani, 2012). The validity was verified by the experts. The reliability was verified using Cronbach's alpha (0.79)

As per descriptive section, mean and standard deviation were employed. As per inferential section, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used for data normality. For hypothesis testing, regression, Pearson correlation, and t independent test were employed using SPSS 19.

Findings

Data Normality Test

Table 1
Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test for Data Distribution Normality

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>	<i>Sig. Level</i>
Social Capital	3.41	0.594	375	0.089
Delinquency	1.437	0.347		0.073

As shown in table 1, since Sig.>0.05 for all variables at 95% confidence level and measurement error of $\alpha = 0.05$, the data follow a normal distribution. Therefore, parametric tests are used.

Hypothesis Testing

Social capital had a relationship with delinquency of 2nd grade high school students of Sari, Iran.

Pearson correlation test was used for this hypothesis. Table 2 shows the results:

Table 2
Pearson Correlation Test for the 1st Hypothesis

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Delinquency</i>	
	<i>Indictor</i>	<i>Value</i>
Social Capital	Correlation (r)	-0.687**
	Significance level (Sig)	0.0001
	Number (n)	375

As shown in table 2, since the significance level was >0.05 for social capital and delinquency, null hypothesis is verified and the research hypothesis is not verified. Therefore, at 95% confidence level, social capital had a negative, significant relationship with delinquency. Following this stage, each of social capital dimensions is investigated to see whether or not they are capable of predicting delinquency of students. Here, regression is used. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3
The Results of Regression for the 1st Hypothesis

<i>Predictor Variable</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	β	<i>T</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Fixed					-	37.041	0.001
Social Trust					-0.148	-2.667	0.008
Social Networks					0.025	0.56	0.576
Social Cooperation					-0.187	-3.431	0.001
Social Relationships	64.046	0.0001	0.742	0.55	0.413	-6.852	0.0001
Values					-0.182	-3.07	0.002
Mutual Understanding					-0.151	2.428	0.016
Commitment					-0.1	-1.957	0.051

According to table 3, since $F < 0.05$ (Sog. = 0.0001), it indicates the regression model validity. According to findings, since significance level is less than 0.05 for social trust, social cooperation, social relationships, values, and mutual understanding at 95% confidence level and measurement error of 0.05, it is, at 95% confidence level, concluded that social capital dimensions (social trust, social cooperation, social relationships, values, and mutual understanding) were capable of predicting delinquency of students. Yet, social networks and commitment could not predict delinquency. According to the regression model, it is concluded that “social relationships ($\beta = -0.413$) was the most correlated item with delinquency.

Social capital dimensions had a relationship with delinquency of 2nd grade high school students of Sari, Iran.

Pearson correlation test was used for this hypothesis. Table 4 shows the results:

Table 4
Pearson Correlation Test for the 2nd Hypothesis

<i>Social Capital Dimensions</i>	<i>Delinquency</i>			نمونه
	<i>Correlation</i>	<i>Sig. Level</i>	<i>Sample</i>	
Social Trust	-0.562**	0.0001	375	375
Social Networks	-0.392**	0.0001	375	375
Social Cooperation	-0.622**	0.0001	375	375
Social Relationships	-0.693**	0.0001	375	375
Values	-0.593**	0.0001	375	375
Mutual Understanding	-0.481**	0.0001	375	375
Commitment	-0.383**	0.0001	375	375

As shown in table 4, since the significance level was < 0.05 for social capital and delinquency, null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is verified. Therefore, at 95% confidence level, social capital dimensions (social trust, social cooperation, social relationships, values, and mutual understanding) had a negative, significant relationship with delinquency.

Social capital had a relationship with delinquency according to gender

Considering the equality of variance in two groups, t independent test was used. Table 5 shows the results.

Table 5
T-independent test results for the 3rd Hypothesis

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std.</i>	<i>F Sig. Level</i>	<i>T value</i>	<i>Freedom Degree</i>	<i>Sig. Level</i>
Social Capital	Female	211	3.599	0.584	0.35	-1.891	373	0.059
	Male	164	3.476	0.602				
Delinquency	Female	211	1.424	0.329	0.055	-0.809	373	0.419
	Male	164	1.453	0.369				

As shown in table 5, since the significance level was >0.05 for social capital and delinquency at 95% confidence level measurement errors of 0.05, and $df = 373$, null hypothesis is verified and the research hypothesis is not verified. Therefore, at 95% confidence level, no significant relationship was found between social capital and delinquency according to gender. In other words, male and female students had no significant difference in social capital and delinquency.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

One of the main goals of each country's development programs, reduction of social harms which requires the identification of effective factors. Today, researchers believe that social capital is one the most important factors for preparing the ground for social health and reduced delinquency. Lynch and Kaplan (1997) believe introduced social capital as capital accumulation and networks which lead to social cohesion, social commitment, and self-esteem and health. Therefore, this article aimed to study the relationship between social capital and delinquency of 2nd grade high school students of Sari, Iran.

Concerning the first hypothesis, findings showed that social capital had a negative, significant relationship with delinquency among 2nd grade high school students of Sari, Iran, meaning that increasing social capital reduces delinquency and vice versa. This is consistent with the results of the study by Qolami Koutnaee and Qorban Nejad Shahroudi (2014) who concluded that family's social capital had a negative relationship with youth addiction; Karimi Mazidi et al. (2013), Heidar Nejad et al. (2012), and BagheriYazdi (2011) who showed that social capital had a negative, significant relationship with deviance, addiction, and risk-taking; and OzdenAzbay (2008) and Wright and Fitzpatrick (2006) who showed that social capital had a negative, significant relationship with violent behaviors of adolescents. It is claimed that social capital is considered a source of trust, cooperation, and collaboration which connects the members of a group or community like an effective social link. It makes interaction fast, easy, and cheap. Coleman (1998) has emphasized the usefulness of social capital as a source of trust, cooperation, mutual relationship, social movement, social development, and reduction of abnormalities. In other words, one of the positive consequences of social capital is the promotion of performance and reduction of abnormalities. Therefore, the negative relationship was expected between social capital and delinquency of students.

In terms of the second hypothesis, findings showed that the dimensions of social capital (Social Trust, Social Networks, Social Cooperation, Social Relationships, Values, Mutual Understanding and Commitment) had a negative, significant relationship with delinquency among 2nd grade high school students of Sari, Iran, meaning that increasing social capital reduces delinquency and vice versa. Many philosophers such as the Hush and Tocqueville believed that trust is the basis of social order. It reduces social stresses and increase cohesion. It has something to do with the fact that trust in each other and trust in social institutions can have positive effects on individual's physical and psychological health and reduce behavioral abnormalities (Share Pour, 2009). Therefore, the negative relationship was expected between social trust and delinquency. Networks facilitate the cooperation and collaboration by facilitating the relationships and interactions. This way, individuals get to know each other and promote their performance by creating new opportunities; ultimately leading to reduced social abnormalities. Concerning the relationship between social cooperation and delinquency, greater correlation among students for team and group activities make them interested and involved in school and other acceptable activities. Those with greater acceptable beliefs and traditional and desirable worldviews are less likely to become delinquent. As far as the relationship

between social relationships and delinquency is concerned, according to Sigel's (2001) theory of interaction, individuals with stronger social relationships, especially family ties, are less likely to become delinquent because dependency on parents and schools, the likelihood is far lower for delinquent behavior and social harms and vice versa: Weak relationships cause deviant behaviors. Concerning the relationship between values and delinquency, when students are consistent with school objectives and values, they become interested in education and this prevents the abnormal behaviors. For the relationship between mutual understanding and delinquency, the former improves social relationships and causes supportive behaviors towards each other. At the same time, individuals make friendship as the link becomes stronger and they become involved in groups, ultimately causing reduced delinquency. Finally, in terms of the relationship between commitment and delinquency, when principals are committed towards the values, students display more interest in teacher and schools which can be effective in reduction of delinquency.

Findings of the third hypothesis showed that no significant relationship was found between social capital and delinquency concerning gender. In other words, male and female students were not different in social capital and delinquency. The result was consistent with that of the study by Habibi (2014) who showed that social capital was not significant among male and female students and consistent with the study by BagheriYazdi (2011) who showed that social capital was significantly greater in female students than male students. The inconsistency might be associated with different statistical population.

Finally, according to the findings, it is recommended that education principals and authorities in Sari prepare the ground for social interactions, social skills, and team work to promote the social capital. Accordingly, social harms and delinquency would decline.

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