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**Original article**

## The impact of sociological study of social and cultural factors on social participation in Yasuj

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### ABSTRACT

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**Purpose:** It is not possible to develop without participation in the social and cultural activities. Participation makes a good opportunity for people to be involved in decision making Process, planning, implementation and evaluation. Today social participation is seen as an important tool which plays role in social development. Kohgiluyeh and YASUJ are underdeveloped, so social participation can be used to provide a condition for economic prosperity. Although, several factors are involved in the economic growth of a region, the social participation is determinant factor in the economic growth of YASUJ and Kohgiluyeh BoyerAhmad. Be developed successfully, has direct relationship with the social participation and its effective factors .Therefore, this study investigates the impact of sociological study of social and cultural factors on social participation in YASUJ and individual characteristics. Age, sex, education level, annual income, employment status, are the most important contextual variables in this study. These variables are supposed the individual characteristics of the respondents and they are investigated to understand the situation of respondents better. In addition to demographic variables, variables like interpersonal trust, institutional trust, institutional trust (organizational), the use of mass media, fatalism, empathy, family-oriented, economic – social base of

family, dependency on government power, new oriented, housing type and car ownership are independent variables and the social participation is as a dependent variable which has been measured in this study. Design/ methodology/ approach: This study applied a survey questionnaire for data collection. This study was conducted in Yasuj among people of 18 to 60 years. Based on the last Census Population in this city, population were 71613. A random sampling was done and the questionnaire was distributed among 382 persons. Sampling group was remained 377. SPSS was applied to analyze the questionnaire. To analyze data, Pearson correlation coefficients, T-test, ANOVA, simple linear regression and multivariate regression were used. Finding: The results showed independent variables like mass media usage, institutional trust, respondents age, education level and fatalism, have managed % 27 / 9 of the total influencing factor on social participation., and 72/1 depended on other factors that are outside of this range. The conceptual model included five independent variables; the use of media, institutional trust, respondents' age, education level and fatalism, and a dependent variable; social participation .This model is considered as a good one and the dependent and independent variables are capable of justify social participation.

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## **1. Introduction**

participation is defined as a directive act in the interactive process between actors and the social environment to achieve predetermined and certain objectives. In this process, individuals participate consciously, voluntarily and together. They have specific and given goals which lead them participate in social resources (Ghaffari, 1380:42).voluntary, involuntary and conscious participation is a presence that is based on a rational and conscious decisions relying on the knowledge of the data and the effects of social and cultural participation. Therefore the definition of social and cultural participation is limited to the voluntary, in voluntary, conscious participation features .These features separate it from other daily activities which they follow tradition and social, political, historical and cultural constrains blindly (Fathi, et al, 1389:6). The necessity of the social and cultural participation of individuals, groups and organizations in society indicate the diversity of the participants as well as the collective nature and extent of social participation.

Different aspects of a Social and cultural life of society as one of the key concepts imply the various associated aspects of social and cultural life that individuals participate in such various aspects consciously and voluntarily. Sustainable development, balanced and comprehensive social and cultural life of the community is the other key concepts in defining social and cultural participation. this concept indicates the goal and purpose of participation. If development is a complicated and comprehensive process, this development leads to the modernization and renewal of the economic, social, political and cultural context of society. Therefore, membership in and cooperation with groups, organizations, associations, unions, regardless of the nature or type of relationship, called social and cultural participation. Voluntary participation would be voluntary and conscious (ibid: 7).

Furthermore social participation is one of the most important aspects of social and cultural development, economic and political development in any society, especially the growing community of Iran. Some of the structural and performance problems of development program caused by some

inadequacy in this part. What adds to the existing issues is that there isn't comprehensive survey about participation concept and reinforcing factors, even about weakening factors (Mohseni 1382:11). Respectively the prosperity and development of a community requires special atmosphere in which people with different attitude can participate in different areas and individuals and groups have closer relationship with each other. Participation is a key element in achieving development, Whether we consider participation as a mean to reach development or consider it as a goal of development. To achieve comprehensive and sustainable development in society, social participation is necessary. Growing concern by experts and administrators shows this issue. Today participation is the dominant contribution to the development ideas and the lack of attention to participation in the development process will lead to inefficient development. Thus, understanding the social and cultural factors that influence the social participation has been brought up as a research problem. This problem in developing and traditional societies like Iran is very important, especially in communities like YASUJ where its people uphold their tradition and culture or their tribal culture. So this research investigates these issues: the extent of social participation in YASUJ, understanding social and cultural factors affecting social participation in this city, what strategies are needed to solve this problem in Yasuj as well as the extent of impact of cultural factors (fatalism, innovation, level of aspiration, futures, Dependency on government power, localism, empathy) and social factors (trust, socio – economic base, mass media).

## **2- Literature review and theoretical background**

A number of studies with different work setting and sample population have examined social participation. For example, Farhad (1385) focused on the effect of social factors on students. In this research, participation is considered as an action and its important variables are social capital, economic capital, cultural capital, and a sense of powerlessness. The research showed that social capital and social trust are the most important contributing variables. Actors' reactions depended on the trust which he or she faces in different situation. Bakhtiari (1388) studied "Social participation and its contributing factors" and found that social- political participation in Khodabande city is low. Also there is a significant correlation between the independent variables (age, gender, social classification, habitat, universalism, providence, socio - political alienation, trust, family structure, education, group media, Fatalism and dependent variables (socio - political participation). Mousavi (1384) investigated " social participation in Tehran (subculture peasant). This paper discusses about two approach; psychological and sociological approach. This study practically examined the idea of Roger, one of the famous expert in psychological approach. This idea was examined based on the dominant situation in Iran over the past decade and geographical, historical, social, cultural and psychological condition practically. Mousavi tested whether this theoretical approach explains the realities of community participation in Iran or not? He concluded there is a significant relationship between personal characteristics of individual (peasant subculture) and social participation. As the result shows people with less peasant subculture, more desire they have for social participation. Hip and Max conducted a study which compares Swedish minority with Finnish majority in Finland. The results show that social participation is significantly related to individual health. Age, trust level, and individual communication network influence social participation. In this study, Swedish minority were more active than Finnish majority in social participation (Abas Zadeh, 1387).

### **2.1. Participation**

Approaches which are associated with social participation can be in a wide range of social, psychological and sociological perspectives. Social psychologists believe individual participation in society is the process of reciprocal communication of social and psychological factors. From the psychological point of view, Wales wants to show the contributing factors of participation. He believes individuals are surrounded by social forces (dignity, education, religion, etc.). Wales thinks that three main variables; social forces, personality differences and social environment are strongly related to each other and they are integrated. Their variables can reduce or increase the participation, so if the analysis is based solely on one of them, it surely is misleading and incomplete (Mohseni-Tabrizi, 1369).

According to Cooley, sociology-oriented development, the development is originated from social structure. He focused on the mental readiness and personal motivation to achieve participation and

development. The effective participation requires personal motivation; in other words, participation is subjective phenomenon that it should be in our thoughts, beliefs, behavior and culture then it turns into objective phenomenon. To internalize the participation culture, we should change most of pre-built mental templates and this is not possible without cultural affairs (Vatani, 1386).

Parsons is the theorist of structural – functional school in the form of social action theory, however, he has not spoken publicly about community participation. Social action has been induced from his famous theory. Parsons believed that community participation is a conscious, creative targeted process which occurs in a social system. In other words, he thought if the structure and function of a subject forms, it will occur. Parsons thinks that the contributing factors of participation are culture (values and norms), individual belief system, requirement tendencies and individual socialization.

Weber also contributed to the participation explanation based on the subjective manner. He believed participation could be done in relation to others' actions and he assumed the subjective concept for the actions agent. He believed that if we want to realize social action, we should search about factors and motivation. Most of people likely make sense of their predictable behaviors. This sense may be found in regulations, or hidden in habits or included social values and beliefs how each one has

According to this view, individuals act is controllable and changeable according to the principle of reward and punishment (Alafian, 1379).

Eisenstadt (1970) argues that "the process of modernization starts in the tribal groups, Jva shortcomings, different rural communities and societies with different levels of urbanization ", based on the adjusting capacity of more complex relationships between different components of society or the willingness or ability to integrate in a new society in a broad social context ,such groups may be not the same (karami, 1373).

Inglehart studied social and cultural rebuilt in the West. He found three factors in increasing participation; the level of education and political information, change of dominant norms on participation and changes in value priorities, which emphasize less on the immediate natural needs and more on expressing right (Inglehart, 1374). In his opinion, formal education, social and economic breakthrough, skill and information level, communicative skills, work experience, organizational networks, reduced sexual abilities in social and political duties can have impact on the increase of participation. He also considered the relationship between trust and participation. He believed that trust each other is one of the factors influences on people's participation. (Inglehart, 1374).

Rogers conducted a survey about participation. He emphasized on the individual variables and the elements of the personality systems in the form of a peasant subculture . According to Rogers, the peasant subculture elements such as lack of reciprocal trust in personal relationships, lack of innovation, Fatalism, low level of aspirations and desires, disability in ignoring the immediate benefits for future benefits, inattention to the time element, family-oriented, dependency on government power, localism and lack of empathy, hinder innovation, change and participation.

## **2.2. participation**

The dependent variable of this study is community participation. Community participation is defined as those administrative activities through which members of a community participate in rural and urban areas and directly and indirectly involved in shaping social life (Mohseni Tabrizi, 1369:108). In this study, to measure participation of individual in activities voluntarily and consciously such as the Basij, Elections, parents association, social and cultural centers; red Crescent, financial fund, and Social, Scientific and Cultural Forum.

Framework of community participation includes social factors and cultural factors which social variables are: trust factor based on the Fukuyama's theory, Socioeconomic base according to Mylbrat's theory and group media based on Lerner's theory and cultural variables apply Roger's peasant subculture theory.

## **2.3. Social factors**

Social trust: Fukuyama believes that differences between countries in terms of their industrial structure related to social trust but the level of trust among people and their community participation in making groups and citizen committee are related more to social trust. In other words, the higher level of

trust in a society depends on their trust on each other and high level of trust is more efficient to improve the performance and economic institutions.

Social trust can be defined as goodwill of a person in relation to other members of the community to facilitate the development of social relationships of that person with others. (Avjaqlv and Zahedi 1384:109). To measure social trust in this study, trust in personal relationships and trust in community are used.

H1: There is significant relationship between social trust and social participation.

H2: There is significant relationship between trust in personal relationship and social participation.

Social -Economic base - Mylbrat explains the level of participation with its surrounding concept; factors such as the higher level of education, to be urban, more social involvement on the basis of union membership, participation in voluntary associations, age, marital status and gender . These factors are associated with higher participation and give people a proper position in the social system to be more involved.

Socio-economic base includes a group of people who are part of the objective indicators such as education, jobs and wealth or income which they are relatively in the same situations and follow the same lifestyles more or less as a result they have relatively equal status (Hiller, 1380:388).In order to assess the economic - social base according to the research theoretical framework ,indicators such as income, occupation, education level, the enjoyment of the accommodations such as cars and housing are used.

H3: There is significant relationship between social- economic base and social participation.

H4: There is significant relationship between income and social participation.

H5: There is significant relationship between housing type and social participation

H6: There is significant relationship between automobile type and social participation.

H7: There is significant relationship between social status and social participation.

Group Media: Lerner believes that the media is constantly expanding, this variable is closely related to the other variables, it needs to education and increases it . The nature of urbanization essentially demands that mass media increases, because this is a new type of communication that is specific to the modern times. Also, the mass media promotes participatory institutions, raises the interlocution among citizens and this is the fulfillment of social participation. Lerner believes that today media devices communicate more than other devices.

Mass Media are impersonal communicative means by which audio and visual messages are transferred (Gould and Dahlia, 1376:436). In fact, they are used to transfer concepts, information and convey messages and thoughts. Information, education, entertainment, media are special role and function of media (Granpayh, 1378:34). In this study, the purpose of mass media is the respondents' usage of media, including local and foreign television and radio networks, local press and Internet.

H8: There is significant relationship between usage of mass media and social participation.

#### **2.4. Cultural factors**

Peasant subculture: Rogers explains about the peasant subculture that is the lack of reciprocal trust in personal relationship, lack of innovation, Fatalism, the low level of aspirations and desires, the inability to ignore the immediate benefits due to future benefits, lack of attention to the time element, family-oriented, dependency on government power, localism and the lack of empathy. This sociologist believes that elements such as motivation, values and views - Peasant subculture – are the key elements for understanding the behavior. In his view, the peasant subculture elements are the elements that hinder the adoption of innovation and change in communities; in other words, they are obstacle to modernization, renovation and participation or non-participation.

H9: There is significant relationship between cultural factors and social participation

H10: There is significant relationship between fatalism and social participation.

H11: There is significant relationship between innovation and social participation.

H12: There is significant relationship between empathy and social participation.

H13: There is significant relationship between family-orientation and social participation.

H14: There is significant relationship between dependency on government and social participation.

H15: There is significant relationship between men and women participation.

### **3. Research methodology**

Method is the approach of data collection that are common to all or part of sciences (Miller, 1380:151). We adopted survey and documentary method. Survey as a method of investigation is a set of structured or systematic collection of data and it mainly based on the questionnaire, but the other techniques such as structured interviews, observation, content analysis are used (Dvvas, 1376:130). The advantage of the survey compared with other methods is the effectiveness and appropriate description of analysis feature and precise comparison of their features by causal inference. This method search for scientific objectives, with an emphasis on better performance and optimized activities. A feature causes people effort to gain knowledge to lead to be practical research is goal and purpose. This method is one of kinds of descriptive research. Collecting data is done directly from individuals (Javed, 1390:53).

#### **3.1. Sample and procedure**

This study was conducted in Yasuj. A random sampling was done from the population of Yasuj. A survey questionnaire was distributed among 377 people of 18-60 years living in Yasuj. They were selected randomly.

#### **3.2. Measurement Scale**

The items of instrument taken for this study are highly validated from the previous established literature. The sample in this study is determined on Cochran formula and with regard to Yasuj population, 382 citizen were selected.

#### **3.3. Data analysis**

Descriptive and inferential statistics is used in this study. Descriptive statistics is a set of procedures for organizing, summarizing, drawing tables, charts, and interpreting data collected from the sample.

Descriptive statistics highlights important features by summarizing the data. It provides necessary ideas for the second phase of analysis (statistical inference) (Habib - Poor Gtaby and Safari Shali, 1388: 162-161). Inferential statistics determine whether the patterns and processes found in the sample are applicable in the sampling group or not (Dvas, 1381: 138).

### **4. Result**

#### **4.1. Descriptive analysis**

A random sample was applied from the population of Yasuj. Age, sex, education, income, employment status are the most contextual variables in this study. These variables clarify the individual characteristics of the respondents. The total sample of 377 respondents, the highest frequency of the respondents were an age range of 31-18 years that is 241 persons (9/63 percent). The minimum frequency of respondents were 32-36 years old that is 52 persons (8/13). The average age of the respondents were 30/77 years this represents most of respondent are young. The most respondent frequency belong to female (57/3%). Thus the most respondents were women. The highest frequency of the respondents belong to respondent with bachelor degree (157 persons) Or (41/6%), 80 (21/2) of respondent had medium education and 1 person (3%) was illiterate. 220 respondents were jobless and 157 persons were employed. 206 persons (54/6) had personal car and 171 (45/4) persons had no car. 266 (70/6%) of the respondents have personal housing and 104 (6/26) of the sample had rental or mortgage home. The highest frequency of the respondents in terms of annual income range from 1350000 to 50000 Toman, they were 278 persons (7/73) of the sample. The average annual income of the respondents was 1063196 Toman. Average score of interpersonal trust (16/13), fatalism (85/24), empathy (59/29) and modernism of respondents (95/9) were slightly higher than the actual average. The results showed that the mean score of respondents in the media usage (12/94), the level of institutional trust of respondents (14/01), community participation (78/30), family - oriented (7/31), generalized trust (14/72)

and the level of dependency on the government power (34/8) were lower than the actual average score. Consequently the respondents hadn't favorable social participation.

For examining the hypothetical path relationships shown in figure 1, author used regression method, which facilitates to observe the negative or positive relationship between independent and dependent variable.

Table 1 Regression analysis of social factors on Social participation

the results of the regression coefficients directly impact on social participation				Analysis of variance		The results of model		Correlation coefficient Pearson	Variables		
Sig	T	Beta	B	Sig	F				Independent	Dependent	
0/013	2/51	0/130	0/379	0/013	6/28	0/014	0/017	0/130	Trust between Personal	Social trust	Social participation
0/774	0/288	-0/015	-0/043	0/774	0/083	-0/002	0/000	0/015	Trust Generalized		
0/000	4/48	0/225	0/578	0/000	20/05	0/048	0/051	0/255	Trust Institutional		
0/001	3/36	0/069	0/233	0/001	11/27	0/028	0/030	0/174	Total		
0/000	8/52	0/403	0/659	0/000	72/51	0/160	0/162	0/403	Use medium collective	Social participation	
0/000	4/297	0/368	0/44	0/000	18/46	0/128	0/135	0/368	Base of economic Social	Social participation	
0/000	7/46	0/365	0/369	0/000	55/68	0/131	0/133	0/369	Factors Social	Social participation	

Table 2 Results of regression analyzes of cultural factors on community participation

The results of the regression coefficient for the variable impact on participation social				Analysis of results Variance		The results of the model		The correlation coefficient Pearson	Variables	
Sig	T	Beta	B	sig	F				Dependent	Independent
0/425	0/798	0/041	0/058	0/425	0/637	-0/001	0/002	0/041	Participation	Appreciation
0/005	2/81	0/144	0/419	0/005	7/91	0/018	0/021	0/144	Participation	Empathy
0/008	2/66	0/136	-0/444	0/008	7/099	0/016	0/019	-0/136	Participation	Family
0/936	0/080	0/004	0/013	0/936	0/006	-0/003	0/000	0/004	Participation	Dependence to power
0/007	2/69	0/138	0/636	0/007	7/25	0/016	0/019	0/138	Participation	Modernism
0/185	1/33	0/068	0/069	0/185	1/76	0/002	0/005	0/068	Participation	Cultural factors

**Table 3**

Test results of multiple regression analysis of factors affecting community participation.

Sig	F	R <sup>2</sup> .a dj	R <sup>2</sup>	R	Sig	T	Beta	Predictor variables	Stage
0/000	35/95	0/149	0/153	0/391	0/000	5/99	0/391	Use of mass media	1
0/000	29/46	0/222	0/229	0/479	0/000	6/34	0/395	Use of mass media	2
					0/000	4/43	0/276	Institutional trust	
0/000	22/20	0/241	0/253	0/503	0/000	6/41	0/395	Use of mass media	3
					0/000	4/15	0/258	Institutional trust	
					0/014	2/48	0/154	Age	
0/000	18/62	0/261	0/275	0/525	0/000	6/01	0/370	Use of mass media	

**5. Discussion**

The main aim of this research was to examine the impact of social and cultural factors on community participation and to determine to what degree these factors influence community participation. A series of theoretical issues raised and then review them, finally a synthetic approach selected for analysis and theoretical justification of the problem ,then hypotheses were formulated and tested by inspiration of them and some of other ideas. the results indicate a relationship between interpersonal trust, institutional trust, Social trust, the use of mass media, empathy, economic - social, family, family-oriented, modernism, vehicle ownership, gender, education, and social factors all contribute to the social component .But the relationship between generalized trust relationship, age, income, fatalism, reliance on government power and all cultural factors with social participation rejected. Analysis of the findings related to personal characteristics of respondents indicate that the social participation of respondents has a significant relationship with gender and education level.The findings in this study are consistent with the results of Wilson (1377), Bakhtiari (1388) and Aylyzn and London (1980).There isn't a relationship between age and income with work culture. The findings in this study is not compatible with the results of Aylyzn and London (1980). It seems that due to the traditional context of the studied population ,there are many social and cultural similarities among people . These similarities prevent the various impact of some features like the age of the respondents on social participation.

The review of framework and analysis of research findings related to the independent variables indicate thatthere isrelationship between institutional trust, interpersonal trust, social trust, the use of media ,empathy, economic – social base of family, family - oriented, modernism, vehicle ownership, and all components of social factors with social participation .The findings in this study are consistent with the results in Bakhtiari research (1388). Based on theoretical base of this study,individual goals depend on family goals in traditional societies. People of such societies consider family as a reference group. Obviously traditional texture of YASUJ ,there is a significant relationship between family-oriented and community participation . Development and participation can be achieved if there are creative, sympathetic, responsible and collaborative persons, so each of these variables can have significant relationship with social participation. Results of this research confirm such relationship. Trust in relatives and other community members in this study indicates that the declarative interactions of respondents limited only to the initial group and it didn't extend to the community context and it caused the gap between them. Thus, only interpersonal trust has a significant relationship with social participation.



There isn't relationship between generalized trust, age, income, fatalism, reliance on state power, type of housing, and cultural factors with social participation. Since these variables has not been examined in previous research ,it's impossible to compare these findings with the previous findings. This study measured Intergroup trust more than others,Because in traditional societies like YASUJ, Traditional groups are delimited and these groups are based on the shared norms and relied on them they achieve common goals .The trust radius is limited ,so the intergroup correlation prevents collaboration with other groups. This correlation has negative effect on other persons. It causes low level of trust among people and the radius trust will occur. when the radius of trust occur, positive social trust will be less and trust within the group will be more. consequently, the generalized trust variable is not capable of explaining community participation. Given that most respondents were unemployed, according to Marx's theory, job worries and concern about unemployment has its own consequences. As long as such economic problems of the citizens (housing, employment, income, etc) are not resolved, we can not expect people to participate in civic affairs, or any kind of social activity. Thus, age and income is not capable of explaining community participation. Spirit of fatalism among respondents is one of the factors that prevent accepting renewal, change and eventually becomes a barrier to participation. However, this assumption has not been verified.

Results of stepwise multiple regression showed that in general, the media variables, institutional trust, respondents' age, education level and fatalism,are the most important variables affecting social participation, respectively.These findings are consistent with previous results of Hypa and Maki (1387)and Farhadi (1385) respectively. As is evident from the record and findings, components and variables affecting social participation have different effects on different research. So that the same variable in some research on a specific variable has a positive effect or a negative effect or has no effect. This may have several causes; such research can be carried out in different times, in different communities, different Practices and approaches of operational methods of sampling. . However what can be deduced from the results is that, social phenomena are caused by several factors, and in particular the complexity of social factors can be seen, the results of each study will change according to the time and place. What can be said is that the community participation can be explained with regard to other social factors besides the variables examined in this study and demographic characteristics of respondents . Empirical findings of this research study will confirm the theoretical literature.

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