

INVESTING ATTENTION RATE TO SOCIAL CAPITAL COMPONENTS IN FAMILY-TYPE TV SERIES

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ABSTRACT

Main goal of this paper was to identify attention rate to social capital components in family-type TV series broadcasted in Iranian TV. This research attempted to specify the social capital components (cooperation and participation, social trust, and social integrity), on which the broadcasted Iranian series have emphasized. Social capital has been seriously considered as one of the components of growth and development in general and social development in particular by the research fields of social sciences in order to measure the quality of social interactions. Generally speaking, social capital rate in each group or society indicates trust level of people in each other. Existence of a considerable rate of social capital also facilitates social actions so that social capital can be used as the main source of problem-solving and correction of the existing processes at critical times. In this paper, descriptive, documentation, and review studies were used to review the findings obtained from other studies in order to investigate and identify attention rate to social capital components in family-type TV series. This paper was extracted from a Master's thesis in social communication sciences.

Keywords: *Social Capital, Cooperation and Participation, Social Trust, Integrity and Network of Social Relations*

INTRODUCTION

Social capital: Social capital refers to any relation which is considered a source for people. In other words, social capital is a set of material or spiritual sources which allows a person or group to have a stable network of somehow institutionalized relations based on familiarity and mutual recognition (Bourdieu and Kokoant, quoted by Field, 2007).

Social capital increases efficiency of people and groups and improves their relations through trust, development of cooperation field, and formation of networks. Therefore, social capital practically means social trust, social relations network, cooperation, and participation among people (Putnam, quoted by Field, 2007).

Cooperation and participation: Participation means mental and emotional involvement of people in group positions which stimulate them to help each other achieve group goals and share work responsibility. Based on the above-mentioned definition, involvement, assistance, and responsibility-taking are three main features of participation (Salehi Reihani, 2001).

Social trust: Trust is a requirement for the formation of social bonds and conventions, which develops cooperation and collaboration and, only in this case, will be able to solve problems and fulfill social obligations despite the existence of differences. Social trust is derived from justice-equality and social security is also originated from it. Anthony Giddens believes that trust and its effect on development process are the main cause and infrastructure in modern societies; wherever social trust level is high, there will be more participation and collaboration of people in social fields and less social damage (Akbari, 2004).

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Integrity and network of social relations: There are formal and informal networks in a society. Informal networks are related to social capital. Regarding informal networks, it should be mentioned that any person has a number of informal bonds. In other words, most people have bonds with their relatives, acquaintances, and non-acquaintances. Therefore, there is considerable diversity in informal networks among people and these networks increase trust and cooperation among people. Networks are so important that some people believe that what you know is not important; instead, those whom you know are important, since when people intend to perform a work, they mostly do not pay attention to formal procedures and refer to those whom they know (Field, 2007).

Regarding the reflection of social indices and social conditions in films and series, a research was performed by Homayoun Pour entitled "Relationship between social conditions and films made by Bahram Beizaei" and a work was done by Davoud Rad on the interaction between Hatamikia's works and his contemporary social conditions (Yarahmadi et al., 2010).

There are abundant content analyses of TV series and films. In fact, in the domestic research, presence of woman, gender stereotypes, and religious identity have been more investigated. One of the studies on the content analysis of TV series is "Gender stereotypes of Iranian TV series in 2004" which was conducted by Soheila Sadeghi Fasaee and Shiva Karimi (2005). Method of this research included simultaneous quantitative and qualitative content analyses of the series and its results lead to the identification of five traditional personality stereotypes including manipulative, stupid, unfaithful, passive, and subordinate women. In other words, these women characters were identified in the series (Sadeghi Fasaee and Karimi, 2005).

Hosseinpour and Motamednejad (2011) conducted a research entitled "Relationship between consumption rate of the media and social capital of Tehrani citizens". Main issue of this paper was to recognize whether watching TV and reading newspapers were change factors for social capital. They studied this relationship based on the theories of the media effect such as foregrounding and planting and also Putnam and Stone's social capital theory using survey method. Statistical population of this work included literate Tehrani citizens with the age of above 15 years old, among whom a sample of 600 participants was selected and studied using probability method. Results showed that television caused people get together and also was a factor for strengthening the network of relations and interactions between family members. Trust in newspaper and television was found to be a factor for attracting the audience to these media and being influenced by their messages in terms of strengthening social capital. Findings demonstrated a relationship between consumption of the media and social capital; i.e. the more the use of the media by people, the more their social capital would be. Finally, television as the main media within the country with its high coverage was found to be able to positively affect social capital and its components via different programs.

Rasouli and Pak Tinat (2011) conducted a research entitled "Studying role of the mass media in formation of social capital among citizens of city of Yazd", which aimed to study the role of the mass media in the formation of social capital among citizens of city of Yazd and measured the correlation between variable of using the mass media and social capital and its dimensions (social trust, social participation, and social norm). The research method was survey in terms of implementation, applied in terms of target criterion, and cross-sectional in terms of time criterion. Data were collected using a questionnaire. Sample size was specified as 370 people using Cochran's formula at the confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 5%. Validity of the questionnaire was measured using content analysis. The calculated Cronbach's alpha for the independent variable (the mass media) and dependent variable (social capital and its dimensions) indicated high internal correlation between the items or desirable reliability of the research instrument. Research findings demonstrated a correlation between application rate of the mass media and social capital. Since both variables (i.e. the mass media and social capital) were measured at the interval scale, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used. Moreover, there was a direct correlation between the independent variable, i.e. use of the mass media, and social capital and its dimensions (social trust, social participation, and social norm).

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Jafarinia (2010) performed a research entitled "Relationship between use of the mass media and social capital of the heads of households in city of Khormoj". This research used survey method and questionnaire instrument to personally interview 400 heads of households in city of Khormoj who were selected using Lin sampling table in a systematic random sampling method and information was collected. To obtain validity and reliability of the research instrument, face validity and Cronbach's alpha were used. To study the research hypotheses, correlation test and mean comparison were used and to investigate the research model, regression was applied. Results of this research represented that variable of social capital at two dimensions of print and electronic media had a significant relationship with four dimensions of social capital (trust and reliability, type of norms, membership in social networks, and awareness and attention to public, political, and social affairs).

Firouzabadi (2005) undertook a study on social capital and factors affecting its formation in city of Tehran in order to define the concept of social capital, factors affecting social capital, and social capital status considering different developmental zones in Tehran. Factors affecting the formation of social capital in multivariate regression equation included religious commitment, education, formal participation of one of the family members, generation, immigration (immigrant/non-immigrant), gender (female/male), and religiosity in the order of importance. General goal of the research was to investigate factors affecting social capital in city of Tehran and prioritize them in terms of effects on the desired concept and its conceptual elements. One of these effective factors was the media.

In a research on the effect of the mass media, new communication technologies, and personal communication on the political awareness of Bachelor students at University of Tehran or the relationship or correlation between trust of respondents to each of these resources and their political awareness, Sardarabadi et al. (2003) concluded that quantitative and qualitative expansion of the mass media and communication technologies was considerably effective in the increased political awareness of the audience. Numerous content analyses of TV series and films have been undertaken. In fact, among the domestic works, the issues of presence of woman, gender stereotypes, and religious identity have been studied. One of the works which has been conducted on the content analysis of TV series is "Gender stereotypes of Iranian TV series in 2004" performed by Soheila Sadeghi Fasaei and Shiva Karimi (2005). Method of this research included quantitative and qualitative content analysis of series and its results led to the identification of five traditional personality stereotypes including manipulative, stupid, unfaithful, passive, and subordinate women. In other words, these characters of women were identified in the series (Sadeghi Fasaei and Karimi, 2005).

Rafipour (1999) conducted a research entitled "Mass media and change of social values using content analysis and survey methods, in which the bestseller films of 1981-1993 and also three TV series of 1986-1993 were examined. The most important findings of this research indicated that the bestseller films of 1986 and series of 1986 aimed to promote and stabilize revolutionary values and films of 1981 were religious, aiming to reduce inequality. Also, the bestseller film of 1991 and series of 1991 greatly promoted materialistic values, profiteering, and inattention to humanistic, revolutionary, and religious goals. Accordingly, the media is effective in the change of value and also adapts itself to the values spread in the society, instead of controlling and directing its values.

In his Master's thesis, Rahmati (1996) performed "Investigating effect of Iranian TV series *Pedar Salar* on the youth and adolescents of city of Takestan". Considering that cinema and television communicate with people in both artistic and information perspectives, their importance is highlighted. With the progress and development of sciences and replacement of machinery with humans, an opportunity has been provided for humans to have more free time; thus, these media (cinema and television) are among the most important and effective instruments for covering leisure time. Today, there are several radio and television channels in most countries of the world and huge forces and capital try to produce better and more useful films and present them to people in order to fill their leisure time. To reflect social indices and conditions in films and series, the research by Homayoun Pour entitled "Relationship between social conditions and films by Bahram Beizaei" and Davood Rad's work regarding the interaction between

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Hatamikia's works and his contemporary social conditions can be referred to (Yarahmadi et al., 2010). Mac Kaye and Wilson (2007) in a research entitled "Identification and observational learning from films" studied the seventh-grade adolescents using an experimental method. In this research, these adolescents watched a movie and the sample was tested after one week. This investigation demonstrated the identification of children with the main character of their own gender. This issue holds true in terms of social class; i.e. an audience becomes similar to the character which is close to him/her in terms of social class. Adolescents completely remember the behavior and speech of the characters with which they have been identified; in contrast, they do not remember the behavior and speech of those with whom they have not been identified.

William Schramm (2002) in a research entitled "TV in life of our children" measured the effect of TV among North American children. Statistical population of this research included the first to twelfth year students of San Francisco schools and local community of Rocky Mountain. Statistical sample also included 6000 children, 2000 parents, and 300 teachers. Some findings of this research showed that TV enters the effect pattern which already exists. In practice, television has a less effect than home environment, peer group, school, church, and culture in general, and rarely a situation can be found to be solely related to television. Television either plays a mediating role or has a share in the emergence of special behaviors. Findings have also shown that, in order for television to systematically affect learning, it should establish a relationship with the organization(s) that perform the same activities in the society. These organizations include schools, adult training departments, children's organizations, libraries, aptitude groups, etc.

In the research by Krishna and Uphoff (2002) in Rajestan region, social capital was considered a dependent variable and different factors and variables for the formation and effect on this variable were studied. Age, gender, residence duration in the village, training, and family size had no significant relationship with social capital.

In a study entitled "Imaginations of the youth: Content analysis of (personality of) the youth in Prime Time entertainment program", Heintz Knowles and Katharine (2000) demonstrated that the research analyzing the characters of children and youth in TV programs have shown that these characters have limited and almost adulthood-reinforcing roles, instead of illustrating suitable methods for children. This study demonstrated that the image of youth presented in the American TV was mostly related to love and friendly relations and family issues. Even one case of the issues with sociological features (such as homelessness, poverty, and environmental issues) has not been presented.

METHODOLOGY

In this paper, attention rate to social capital components in family-type TV series was investigated and identified using descriptive and documentary methods and by reviewing the findings from other works.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Today, concept of health is related to social components and many physical and mental diseases have a strong relationship with social factors. In recent years, the term "social capital" has entered the fields of sociology, social sciences, economics, and health sciences. Such a focus on the issue of social capital can be based on the role that social capital plays in the production and increase of human, economic, spiritual, organizational, and other capitals. Social capital is discussed as a factor for success in social welfare and health programs. Thus, it has a special stance in studying and formulating social and development indices by internationally accredited organizations.

Besides physical, welfare, and environmental components, social specifications such as social capital plays an essential role in health promotion. Concept of social capital is based on two personal and collective levels; however, its collective aspects are more considered. Social capital includes features of social organizations such as communications network, norms, and interpersonal trust which is mutual among people and considered a source for people to facilitate their collective activities.

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