

The Study of Relationship between the Rate of Use of Media (TV and Internet) and Social Capital among Young Adults in Kermanshah City

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Abstract Introduction and aim: The relationship between social variables and social capital to improve the society should be examined increasingly, since in any society social capital can strengthen social relationships and sense of cooperation and increase social trust. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between the rate of use of media (TV and Internet) and social capital among young adult. **Materials and methods:** The outline of this research for data collection is descriptive and correlational. The statistical population of the research consists of all citizens (aged 20 to 30 years) in Kermanshah city. The sample size was 162 people calculated using Cochran formula and selected by random cluster method. To examine the social capital, Onyx and Bulent's social capital questionnaire was used. The rate of media use and the time spent using television and Internet within a week was also measured. To analyze the data, Pearson correlation coefficient and stepwise regression methods were used. **Findings:** The results of the research showed that there is a positive significant relationship between the number of hours of using television and Internet, and social capital and its components, that is, participation in local community, social functionality, the sense of security and trust, interactions with neighbors, interactions with family and friends, tolerance of diversity, and the value of life. Also, the results of regression analysis showed that the use of television and Internet could predict and explain 32.1 percent of changes related to social capital. **Conclusion:** With an increase rate of use of media (TV and Internet), social capital and its dimensions increase.

Keywords: media, television, Internet, social capital

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1. Introduction

Social capital is considered as a stock of sense of trust, cooperation and participation between members of a group or society which connects members of a group or society together as an effective social communication force, and at the same time, as a social liquid, makes exchanges between them fast, convenient and low cost [1].

Stone [2] recognizes social capital as a concept of multi-dimensional and consisted of several elements such as networks, trust and reciprocity. He emphasizes the quality of social relations and the structure of these relationships. He believes social capital is not just for certain types of social networks, but in all kinds of networks can be seen as follows: networks in informal realms, networks in extended realms, networks in institutional realms. Social networks and social norms are the main elements of social capital, and social trust is a part of it [3].

Onyx and Bulent have suggested elements to define and measure social capital as follows: participation in local

community, social functionality or forecasting and initiation in the social context, the sense of security and trust, interaction with family and friends, tolerance of diversity, the value of life, job interactions [1]. For Putnam [4] social capital implies the relationship between individuals and social networks, norms and trust, which facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefits. The basic idea of social capital is that one's family, friends and acquaintance are an important stock to get help from in a crisis, and they can be used to get benefits [5]. Strengthening and development of social capital in any community can be accomplished from many sources. One of these sources is the mass media, and the quality of utilizing them.

Researchers believe that by providing various information for audiences, media affect their knowledge and attitudes about different issues, and help them to shape the patterns of action to take action properly in different situations. Among them, television and the press as the most popular media are more effective in formation of ideas, beliefs and attitudes of individuals in a variety of fields along with social, economic, political, educational, religious and family institutions of the community. An

area which can be affected by media in any society is social capital [6].

Media cause the formation of social capital in different forms (increase or decrease) and shape people's perceptions of the environment. By providing a beautiful or an ugly image of the society, media can help the audience to shape patterns of action. These patterns can help individuals take actions which lead to the formation of trust or civic participation in different situations [7].

Findings suggest that television has put people together and is a contributing factor for strengthening the network of relations and interactions between the members of the family. Trusting in newspapers and TV is a factor in attracting audience and being influenced by their messages in order to strengthen social capital [6]. Also, Internet reduces social inequalities by cutting costs of information, increasing the abilities of social minorities to gain social capital, and it provides a competitive air to fill proper occupations or improve life opportunities for people [8].

Internet provides choices for audience including the choices of other media. In other words, Internet provides a collection of media as a whole and puts them together. Internet users share things they need in other media sources such as television, radio, newspapers, books and movies. Thanks to the multimedia features, Internet can facilitate and diverse all needs of users for productivity and satisfaction [9]. Social science researchers have studied in various fields to consider the changes caused by Internet and other new technologies in the lives of human beings. Because of its power to explain social issues, the concept of social capital has been focused on progressively [10]. A review of research literature shows that the mass media (television and internet) as a source of socialization play an important role in institutionalizing values, norms of trust and social capital among their audience.

Hosseinpur and Motamednejad [6] concluded in a study that there is a relationship between media consumption and social capital, e.g. by any increase in the rate of media use by individuals, social capital increases. Vosooghi and Rahmani Khalili [11] in a study on a sample of citizens in Tehran showed that there is a positive significant relationship between the amounts of time spent using television and Internet, and social capital. Ahmadi [12] also showed in a research that there is a direct and significant relationship between the amounts of time spent on using television, and social capital, and between the amounts of time spent using Internet and trust and social participation indicator. Garoosi [13] showed in a research on male police officers that there is a positive relationship between the rate of use of TV and components of social capital (trust in, cooperation with and information on the police).

TV can have a positive impact on the lives of people by increasing social capital and social order. Another research by Jafarinia [14] entitled investigating the relationship between the rate of media use and the amount of social capital of households in Khormoj showed that there is a significant relationship between the variable of social capital in both printing and electronic media and the four components of social capital (trust and reliability, the type of norms, membership in social networks and knowledge and attention to public, political and social

affairs). Javaheri and Bagheri [15] in a study entitled the impact of Internet on social and human capital in Tehran concluded that there is a positive and direct relationship between the rate of Internet use and the amount of social capital. Also, a positive significant relationship between the amount of using TV and the amount of social and human capital was observed. Razaghi and Amri Fazleh [16] in a study on young adults in Qaemshahr showed that the average social capital (trust and social networks) among young Internet users is more than among non-users, and Internet plays an integral part of social capital. Ebrahimpoor and Tavasoli [17] showed that those who - in viewpoint of consumption patterns- have qualitative viewpoint have higher social capital compared to those with national consumption Bauernschuster, Falck and Woessmann [18] have acquired a positive relationship between selected social capital indicators (informal interactions, interaction with friends, civic participation and political practice) and bandwidth at home. Neves [19] in a sample of 417 in Laibson, Portugal, achieved a positive relationship between social capital and Internet. Ahn [20] in a study showed that young adults who use Facebook and Myspace show more social capital in school and in their online relationships.

According to what mentioned above, strengthening social capital in any community can create a sense of participation and strengthen trust and social ties. So, investigating the causes of strengthening social capital is an important issue in societies.

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between the use of media (TV and Internet) with social capita among young adults. Accordingly, the following hypotheses were developed:

1. There is a significant relationship between the amount of watching TV and the amount of social capital.
2. There is a significant relationship between the amount of using Internet and the amount of social capital.
3. The amount of watching TV and using Internet can predict and explain social capital.

2. Methods, Population and Sample

From the viewpoint of data collection, this research is considered as a descriptive and correlational study. The population consists of all (20 to 30 years old) citizens in Kermanshah city. The sample size of 162 people was calculated using Coukrun formula with the error rate of 5%. For sampling and selecting respondents of the research, first, Kermanshah city was divided into three geographical clusters (west of the city, south of the city, and the downtown area). In each cluster three neighborhoods were selected (a total of 9 neighborhoods). Second, from every neighborhood, a block was selected. In the stage of field operations, researchers selected houses in every block of each neighborhood in a randomly systematic method. 18 subjects were interviewed in each neighborhood and they responded required tests. To analyze the data, Pearson correlation coefficient and stepwise regression methods were used.

2.1. Measuring Tools

A) Questionnaire of the rate of media use: To explore the use of media (TV and Internet), a research-

made questionnaire was used which included questions about the amount of time spent using television and Internet for over a week, and participants recorded their responses in terms of hours spent.

B) Social capital questionnaire: This questionnaire was developed by Onyx and Bulent and it consists of 32 items and is rated as a Likert spectrum of five options from very low [1] to very high [5]. Social capital questionnaire consists of the subscales of participation in local community, social functionality, the sense of security and trust, interactions with neighbors, interactions with family, tolerance of diversity, and the value of life. Amin Bidokhti et al [1] calculated the reliability of the above mentioned questionnaire by Cronbach's Alpha method with social participation of (82/0), social functionality (84/0), the sense of security and trust (79/0), interactions with neighbors (83/0), interactions with family (91/0), tolerance of diversity (90/0), value of life (87/0) and total social capital questionnaire (90/0). In this study, reliability of the total questionnaire according to Cronbach's alpha method was 87/0.

3. Findings

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by demographic factors

variable		N	Frequency
sex	boy	93	57.4
	girl	69	42.6
Marital Status	solitary	110	67.9
	married	52	32.1
age	Under 25	55	34.0
	25-30	107	66.0
education	diploma	17	10.5
	A.D.	38	23.5
	B.A.	71	43.8
	M.A. or higher	36	22.2

Table 4. Correlation matrix between the amount of using TV and social capital

Variables	Social capital	Participation in local community	Social functionality	The sense of Security and trust	Interactions with neighbors	Interactions with family and friends	Tolerance of diversity	Value of life
TV	0.455	0.253	0.292	0.187	0.159	0.381	0.202	0.278
P	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.017	0.045	0.000	0.005	0.000

According to Table 4, there is a positive significant relationship between the amount of using television and social capital and its components, that is, participation in local community, social functionality, the sense of security and trust, interactions with neighbors, interactions with family and friends, tolerance of diversity, and the

Table 5. Correlation matrix between the amount of using Internet and social capital

Variables	Social capital	Participation in local community	Social functionality	The sense of Security and trust	Interactions with neighbors	Interactions with family and friends	Tolerance of diversity	Value of life
Internet	0.442	0.314	0.307	0.155	0.163	0.161	0.176	0.228
P	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.047	0.038	0.040	0.025	0.003

According to Table 5, there is a positive significant relationship between the amount of using Internet and social capital and its components, that is, participation in local community, social functionality, the sense of security and trust, interactions with neighbors, interactions

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by demographic factors. Descriptive results of Table 1 shows that in terms of gender, 93 of the participants were males and 69 were females. In terms of marital status, 110 people were single and 52 married. In terms of age, 55 people were under 25, and 107 people were between 25 and 30. In terms of education, 17 people have got diploma degree, 38 A.D. degree, 71 B.A. and, 36 M.A. or higher.

Table 2 shows the use of media (TV and Internet) in terms of hours.

Table 2. The use of media (TV and Internet) in terms of hours

	M	SD
The rate of using TV	27.54	10.02
The rate of using Internet	10.11	7.78

Findings in Table 2 show that the participants use TV 27.54 hours and internet 10.11 hours on average per week.

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation of social capital and its impacts on participants.

Table 3. Mean and SD of social capital and its impacts on participants

	M	SD
Social capital	102.60	20.52
Participation in local community	24.24	9.24
Social functionality	22.08	8.50
The sense of security and trust	14.94	6.26
Interactions with neighbors	15.40	6.18
Interactions with family and friends	9.76	3.93
Tolerance of diversity	6.65	2.66
Value of life	9.60	3.57

According to Table 3, the average score of participants' social capital was 102.60 with SD of 20.52.

Table 4 shows the correlation between the amount of using TV and social capital.

value of life. The results show that by increasing the amount of using TV, social capital increases and vice versa.

Table 5 shows correlation matrix between the amount of using Internet and social capital.

with family and friends, tolerance of diversity, and value of life. The results show that by increasing the amount of using Internet, social capital increases and vice versa.

Table 6 shows stepwise regression analysis of the amount of using television and Internet and social capital.

Table 6. Regression analysis of using television and Internet with social capital

Model	R	R2	R2 Change	F	P	B	β	t	P
1	0.455	0.207	0.207	41.40	0.000	.929	.455	6.44	0.000
2	0.567	0.321	0.115	37.42	0.000	.910	.350	5.17	0.000

According to the results of Table 6, F observed in variable of social capital is significant. Based on the total amount of 32.1 percent of the coefficient of criterion variable, in the first step of regression analysis and model 1, predictive variable i.e. the rate of television use exerted in the equation. With beta coefficient of 455/0, the amount of 20.7 percent of variance of criterion variable was explained, and then in the second step and model 2, variable of rate of Internet use added to the equation. With beta coefficient of 350/0, the amount of 5/11% percent of the social capital changes was explained.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to identify the relationship between today's two effective and most frequently used media that is, TV and Internet and social capital and its components. The results of the first hypothesis suggest that there is a positive and significant relationship between the amount of watching TV and social capital and its components. Accordingly, an increase in the amount of watching TV increases social capital and its components. These findings are consistent with the results achieved by studies of Hosseinpour and Motamednejad [6], Vosooghi and Rahmani Khalili [11], Ahmadi [12], Garoosi [13], Javaheri and Bagheri [15], Liu [21] and Bordio [22].

Social capital and its major components and dimensions are connected with the values, norms, institutions and social practices of actors. Strengthening social capital depends on factors that can be used as a precursor to the development of social trust, social participation, and social cohesion. Development and dissemination of attitudes, values and social norms will build generating social structures of social capital in the society. Mass media especially television are good sources of developing social structures [17]. Bordio [22] believes that mass media are effective in strengthening social capital since they provide the actors with environment and conditions in order to make rational choices. Making rational choices and selective rationality in a public atmosphere of actors are really important and strengthen the trust between people, and increase public participation.

The results of the second hypothesis showed that there is a significant positive relationship between the amount of using Internet and social capital and its components so that an increase in using Internet increases social capital and its components. This result is consistent with other researchers' studies including Vosooghi and Rahmani Khalili [11], Ahmadi [12], 14 Jafarina [14], Javaheri and Bagheri [15], Razeghi and Amri Fazleh [16], Bouchester and et al [18], Neves [19], Ahn [20] and Levinsen [23]. Katz and Rice [24] in their studies have found that Internet increases social interactions rather than reducing them, and it develops a new kind of social capital. Leung and Lee [25] showed that heavy use of computer network and Internet dramatically affects the formation of social capital.

Totally, thanks to the technological equipment offered to its users, Internet helps them to enhance their control over communications. With the aid of Internet, users are no longer passive to spend their time just on watching media content, but they have acquired an ability to react to contents quickly, influence the framework and style of content production, and even produce contents by themselves. Thanks to this equipment, groups and movements who haven't been able to reproduce themselves and to participate in producing contents and were always secluded by existed authority relationships in the past, now they are somehow able to express their thoughts and abilities [26]. It seems Internet in our country (Iran) is supposed to have a communicative function, the sense of participation and trust for young adults.

The results of the third hypothesis test showed that both TV and Internet are able to predict and explain social capital and can influence it. These findings are consistent with those of Hosseinpour and Motamednejad [6], Vosooghi and Rahmani Khalili [11]. The content of television programs in Iran makes a powerful sense of trust in young adults. Internet and cyberspace are also admitted to provide a proper air for young adults to practice trust, building trust, participation and collaboration in various affairs.

In theory, the findings of this research can help to develop knowledge and prepare a kind of background for further upcoming studies on the use of media (television and Internet) and their impact on social capital. Scientifically, since a significant relationship between the amount of using media and social capital has been confirmed, it reveals the need to improvement and more perfect functions of media (television and Internet).

The limitations of this study are that it was conducted only on young adults in Kermanshah city. There was no chance to work on other social variables related to variables of this research. According to the results of the research, it is suggested that in future researches, variables would be considered and carried out in relation with other social variables, and among other age groups and young adults of other cities.

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