

Social trust in the city of Birjand and the effect of religiosity on it

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Abstract

Social trust is one of the social phenomena that plays a vital role in social relations, so it is important to study the issue, especially since social trust has been significantly reduced in society for a long time. The goal of this study is to investigate the effect of religiosity on the social trust of the citizens of Birjand. The statistical population of this survey research includes all citizens aged 15 to 65 living in Birjand. Using the "Cochran" formula, 384 people are sampled and the sampling is done by multi-stage and simple random classification. Findings indicate that 50.6% of Birjand citizens have little social trust in political, economic, educational, religious and public institutions. There is also a direct and significant relationship between religiosity and social trust; According to the results, social trust is most affected by individual religiosity, which explains more than 31% of changes in social trust. In addition, the test results of the model in multivariate regression analysis show that the independent and contextual variables selected in this study explain a total of 32.2% of the changes in the dependent variable, ie social trust.

Keywords: social trust, religiosity, Birjand city

replaced this type of trust (ibid., 120). Eisenstadt rightly points out that the most important issue of social order for the founders of sociology is social trust and solidarity. That is, without lasting trust, social order is impossible (Chelpi, 1375: 12).

In fact, human life, without a sense of self-confidence, confidence in the future and confidence in the world around him, is accompanied by unbearable anxiety and conflict that may lead to the disintegration and destruction of the individual. Trust leads to human growth and the flourishing of his talents and abilities (Ghadimi, 2007: 327). In a world without trust, life become difficult and social order is destroyed. In the absence of trust, institutions that typically produce and strengthen social

problem statement

Trust is literally synonymous with reliance, assign work to another person, and trust (Amid, 1990: 201). Conceptually, it means a person's tendency to accept risk or danger in a social situation, based on the fact that others are expected to take a supportive approach (Sharepour, 2004: 72). Giddens considers trust as a factor of feeling of security, which strengthens the heart in crises and situations full of potential dangers (Giddens, 2005: 63). He also considers trust to be one of the main elements of modernity, and believes that the four domains of local community, tradition, and religious cosmology dominate pre-modern cultures. Whereas in modern times, trust in abstract systems, symbols and systems of expertise has

and 14.3% are high. In the next stage, the attitude of the citizens, in the whole country, in two periods of time, to the values that govern the society and their opinion about the discussed characteristics, and to what extent these values are prevalent among the people, are examined. The findings show; People's perception of other citizens about the prevalence of hypocrisy and pretense, fraud and theft, flattery has increased much and shows a growth of 20% (Office of National Plans of the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance, 2003).

Recent disorders in Iranian society and the increase in inequalities and economic and social crises, first of all, caused a decline in trust in macro-institutions, in other words, crises have not only severely damaged the current state of trust, but have also led to trust-building forces in the members of the society should become more and more ineffective. In addition to these inefficiencies, the unbridled trend of the economic crisis has not only reduced people's hope for the future, but also made the future extremely risky. For this reason, despair in society has become a kind of fear of the future. In this situation, increasing the risk and reducing the guarantee of mutual obligations between the individual and society to ensure mutual benefits, has practically shaken the foundations of social trust in Iranian society, including the citizens of Birjand. On the other hand, the decline of moral values has added to the decline of social trust. On the other hand, theoretically, social trust has a dialectical relationship with religiosity, which means that if religiosity increases, social trust will also increase, and conversely, if social trust is

regulation and supervision in society and provide organizational conditions for cooperation in society must perform rigidly and inflexible in order to establish social order (Afshani et al., 2009: 187). Trust is the foundation of life and mistrust is the source of many troubles and disorders. Political instability, public discontent, the prevalence of lies and hypocrisy, and a general lack of morality in society are caused by mistrust. If people fall into the abyss of hypocrisy and multipersonality, it is because public belief and trust have declined and they have become frustrated with the category of trust and try to do such actions (Amirkafi, 1996: 2).

Studies show that in the contemporary era in our country, Iran has a lower level of trust compared to Western countries. For example, Asadi's survey in 1974 shows that only 53% of respondents believe that most people are trustworthy; While in Western societies, more than 85% of respondents trust people (Sharepour, 2001: 11). In other studies that have been done in recent years, rates are lower than 40%. For example, Chalpi reported 33.8 and Amirkafi reported 37.6 (Amirkafi, 1997: quoted by Seyedzadeh, 2020: 8). And another study conducted by Idrisi and others at the Islamic Azad University, North Tehran Branch. The results of this study showed that 23% of respondents have high social trust (Idrisi et al., 2010: 18).

Also, based on data from national surveys of Iranian values and attitudes, the results of the second wave of findings on public trust and the question *how trustworthy you think people are* shows; 28.8% of responses are low, 56.9% are somewhat,

University of Behbahan" has examined social trust. The statistical population of this survey research includes all students of Islamic Azad University of Behbahan, the sample size is 346 people and the sampling method is proportional classification. Research findings show that there is a significant positive relationship between the doctrinal, consequential and ritual dimensions of religiosity and fundamental and interpersonal beliefs, and on the other hand, there is a significant relationship between the empirical dimension of religiosity and fundamental, interpersonal and institutional beliefs. Also, the results showed that there is no relationship between the doctrinal, consequential and ritual dimensions of religiosity and generalized and institutional trusts.

Kandvani-Asl and Taqi Lou (2011) in an article entitled "*Study of the relationship between religiosity and social trust among graduate students of the Islamic University of Tabriz*" has examined social trust. The statistical population of this survey research includes all students studying for a master's degree in the Islamic Azad University of Tabriz, the sample size is 345 people and the method is simple random sampling and appropriate classification. Research findings show that there is a positive and significant relationship between the three dimensions of religiosity and marital status with social trust. But the relationship between gender and educational field variables and social trust is not significant. Also, in the multivariate regression test, the variables of the three dimensions of religiosity and marital status explained a total of 15.1% of the variance of the dependent variable, ie. social trust.

strengthened, religiosity will also be strengthened. Therefore, despite the decrease in social trust in today's society, the issue of this article is whether the decrease in social trust is also the result of a decrease in religiosity in society or other factors other than religiosity have affected it? As the results of regression analysis and path analysis in this article have shown, religiosity explains a significant part of the changes in social trust. Therefore, the purpose of this survey study is to assess the impact of religiosity on the social trust of Birjand citizens by answering the following question:

What effect does religiosity have on the social trust of Birjandi citizens?

Literature review

Abbaszadeh and Mirzaei (2014) in an article entitled "*The role of religion in the development of students' social trust network (Case study: Tabriz University students)*" have examined social trust. The statistical population of this survey research are the students of Tabriz University in all educational grades. The sample size is 401 people and it is by stratified random sampling method. Research findings show that there is a positive and significant relationship between religiosity and social trust. In addition, the results showed a positive and significant relationship between the dimensions of social trust (institutional trust, interpersonal trust and generalized trust) and the variable dimensions of religiosity (ritual, experimental and consequential).

Bagheriani (2013) in an article entitled "*The relationship between religiosity and social trust in students of the Islamic Azad*

sampling. Research findings show that there is a direct and significant relationship between the level of religiosity and various dimensions of the level of social trust (except trust in the environment).

Charles (2010) in an article entitled *"Religiosity and trust in religious institutions: Stories from the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia)"* examines the factors affecting trust in religious institutions. This article is one of the few analyzes that uses a multidimensional perspective on religiosity that considers "religion privatization." Research findings show that there are low levels of religiosity and attendance, prayer and fasting and at the same time a high level of trust in religious institutions. However, the results show some differences between the three countries. Due to the two types of control of trust variables in secular institutions and social and economic factors, Georgia is the only country where interpersonal trust is a significant indicator of trust in religious institutions. It is noteworthy that there is a low level of religiosity in all three countries and more than half of the groups trust their religious institutions in each country.

Benjamins (2006) does a research entitled *"Investigating the Influence and Impact of Religion on Trust in Physicians and Care Systems"*. The purpose of this study is to examine aspects of the patient-physician relationship, such as trust in a variety of health behaviors, including following treatment regimens and the use of preventive health services. The statistical population of this survey research is of all adults in the United States, the sample size is 1274 people. Research findings show

Idrisi et al. (2010) in an introduction entitled *"Social Trust, the results of the Religious Norms, and Moral Values,"* he examines social trust. The statistical population of this survey research includes professors, staff and students of Islamic Azad University, North Tehran Branch. The sample size is 1212 people and the sampling method is random cluster sampling. Research findings show that there is a significant relationship between the three variables of religiosity, social acceptance and observance of ethics with social trust. Also, religiosity has the greatest effect on social trust, followed by social acceptance and observance of ethics, respectively.

Mahdavi et al. (2009) in an article entitled *"Study of the effect of religiosity on the social trust of Tehran citizens"* examined social trust. The statistical population of this survey research is all citizens living in Tehran. The sample size is 391 people and the sampling method is cluster sampling and disproportionate classification. Research findings show that there is a positive and significant relationship between the variables of social trust and religiosity, voluntary partnerships, and social personality type. In addition, the research findings indicate that there is a significant difference in social trust between groups and with different periods of residence in their neighborhood.

Afshani et al. (2009) in an article entitled *"Research on the Relationship between Religiosity and Social Trust"* examined social trust. The statistical population of this survey research is of all people aged 15 years and older living in Najafabad. The sample size is 244 people and the sampling method is multi-stage cluster

Putnam has introduced the increase of civic participation and the expansion of social networks as a mechanism for changing personal or specific trust to social or generalized trust. According to Putnam, as much as social trust is a personal opinion, it is also considered an essential asset of the social system (Putnam, 2001: 137).

The criterion of social trust can be measured by Putnam theory. According to this theory, the variable of social trust is converted into three dimensions of interpersonal trust, generalized trust and institutional trust and it is examined. According to this theory, social trust leads to social interactions, cooperation between members of the network and society, and creates mutual trust and partnership between individuals in a society, and thus helps society to achieve the common goal of maintaining essence and cohesion. While the weak social trust put different groups' relations and communication of various parts of the society and social cohesion at risk and danger and in some cases, it may cause the disintegration of the society; Therefore, the development of social trust and social participation strengthens social capital and creates optimal communication and participation in society. Therefore, the existence of social trust in social structures creates an environment in which there is a greater sense of security.

Religion is a concept that has been studied in different theories by different theorists in different eras. Among the theorists who have dealt with the concept of religion, we can point to August Kent, Emile Durkheim, Weber, Berger, Lockman, Giddens, Yinger, Nicholas, Luhmann,

that religious activists have a higher level of trust in doctors. For example, people who attend religious services frequently (42% of the sample) are more likely to trust their doctor. Religious sects, including Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish, are also compared, showing that Protestants had higher trust than other religious sects.

Theoretical Framework

From Putnam's point of view; "Social capital refers to the characteristics of social organizations such as networks, norms and trust that enable participants to pursue their common goals in a more effective way" (Field, 2013: 55). Putnam defines social capital in his various writings with three components as the characteristics of social organization which are networks, norms of cooperation and social trust.

Social trust is another component of social capital in Putnam's view. Trust is an essential component of strengthening cooperation; and the product of the predictability of the behavior of others that arises in a small community from the method of close acquaintance with individuals; But in a wider and more complex society, impersonal and indirect trust is necessary (Putnam, 2001: 292). In discussing trust, Putnam refers to the two forms of personal trust and social trust in terms of the radius of trust, and considers the second form, which is also called *generalized trust* in the social capital literature, to be more beneficial to society. In his view, this form of trust "extends the radius of trust beyond the list of those we know personally and leads to wider cooperation at the community level" (ibid., 136).

citizens. Assuming that the more social religiosity increases, the greater the social trust.

Research Methods

This research has measured social trust with a quantitative approach and with the help of a questionnaire. The statistical population of this study is all citizens aged 15 to 65 years living in Birjand and the sample size (using Cochran's formula) is 400 people and is performed through multi-stage and simple random sampling. The reliability of this study is measured by Cronbach's alpha (equal to 0.93) and validity is measured by face and structural validity (confirmatory factor analysis).

Research Findings

Findings show that 52.6% of the sample are men and 47.4% are women. 61.9% of the sample size belong to the age group of 15-35 years, 34% have a bachelor's degree and 42.1% have an income of less than one million to three million. Regarding interpersonal trust, the results showed that 22.5% have little trust in family, friends, neighbors, relatives, colleagues and acquaintances. 36% have some confidence in them and only 41.5% of people have high confidence in them. Regarding generalized trust, 67.2% have little trust in the public, 25.5% have some trust in them, and only 7.3% have high trust in the public. Regarding institutional trust, 34% have little trust in political, economic, educational and religious institutions, 34.2% have some trust in them and only 31.8% have high trust in them. The results related to individual religiosity show that 62.8% of the research sample have high religiosity. 18.6% have somewhat religiosity, 10.3% have low religiosity and

Clifford Geertz, Robertson, Carl Dobler, and so on. Most of these theorists have considered religion as a factor of cohesion, unity, development of personality and society and a factor for human well-being and security. From their point of view, religion has different dimensions based on which they have presented different models (Jamshidiha and Akhundi, 2016: 57). The predictor variable of religiosity can be measured by the theory of religiosity. According to this theory, the variable of religiosity is converted into indicators of theoretical dimension and practical dimension and is examined. According to this theory, adherence to religion eliminates norm-breaking, sin and deviation, and provides the basis for the survival and permanence of culture, and will strengthen endurance and stability against hardship and adversity, thus increasing cohesion, solidarity and ethnic and cultural ties. It will strengthen the personality and will cause not to have mental hesitation in difficult situations, and it will promote emotional and friendly relations, and finally it will create trust and peace in the individual and society. Hence, religion is one of the organizing tools of social trust. (Akhundi, 2016: 130).

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: It seems that there is a significant relationship between individual religiosity and social trust of Birjand citizens. Assuming that the more individual religiosity increases, the greater the social trust.

Hypothesis 2: It seems that there is a significant relationship between social religiosity and social trust of Birjand

including monthly expenses, level of education, and marital status, had the least impact on social trust. According to the obtained results, the amplitude of KMO indicator is 0.883 that is close to 1. This means that the measured variables are suitable for factor analysis; And in Bartlett sphericity test (Chi square value is 7480/175 and degree of freedom is 666) with respect to the significance level of 0.000 indicates that the results of factor analysis can be generalized to the statistical population. In fact, the meaning of model fit indicators is that the experimental model of the presented research, which is based on confirmatory factor analysis, regression analysis and path analysis, can be generalized to the statistical population.

Conclusion and discussion

The issue studied in the present study is the effect of religiosity on the social trust of citizens in Birjand. This research has been done with the aim of explaining social trust in the citizens of Birjand. According to Akhondi's model of religiosity measurement, there are two dimensions of religiosity which are faith and righteous deeds. He believes that as human's essence and nature are composed of two dimensions, the soul and the body, religiosity is also based on this, that is, religion and religiosity are not separate and they have a completely bilateral relationship with each other. According to this theory, adherence to religion eliminates norm-breaking, sin and deviation, and provides the basis for the survival and permanence of culture, and it will strengthen endurance and stability against hardship and adversity, thus

only 8% do not have religiosity. The results related to social religiosity also show that 33.2% of the research sample have high religiosity in the social dimension. 32.3% of people have somewhat and 26.1% have a low level and only 8.4% do not have social religiosity.

However, regarding the analysis of the findings and testing of the hypotheses, the results showed:

Hypothesis 1: Based on the results obtained from regression analysis, for one unit of change in individual religiosity, social trust increases by 0.479 units from 1; That is, the more individual religiosity increases, the greater the social trust.

Hypothesis 2: Based on the results obtained from regression analysis for one unit of change in the variable of social religiosity, social trust increases by 0.156 units from 1; that is, the higher the social religiosity in society, the more social trust.

In total, 32.2% of the changes in the social trust variable are explained by predictor variables including: individual religiosity, social religiosity, and contextual variables. On the other hand, the results of path analysis of predictor variables of social trust show that the first variable that has the greatest impact on social trust is "individual religiosity", which alone explains more than 46% of changes in social trust. The second variable that has the greatest impact on social trust is "social religiosity", which alone explains 15% of the changes in the social trust variable. The last variable that has a significant effect on social trust is the monthly income of individuals in the society, which explains 14.7% of the changes in social trust in reverse. It means that as income increases, social trust decreases. Other variables,

The present study's goal is to answer the question of how religiosity affects on the social trust of Birjandcitizens? Based on the findings of the present study, the researcher has concluded that religiosity is reported at an almost high level, but the results don't show social trust, while a high percentage of people have a relatively high level of trust in family members, instead the level of trust in government institutions and organizations are not in a good position and the lowest level of trust belonged to the cabinet and members of the Islamic Consultative Assembly. This shows that the decrease in citizens' social trust in the government and government institutions is due to the lack of transparency in various economic, political areas, and etc., because behaviorists believe that whenever transparency will fade or disappear in various areas of society for any reason, social trust will inevitably decline. Because subconsciously, people will feel that the government and government officials are not honest in providing services or performing their duties. As a result, the important point in this study is that as soon as we see a low level of trust in the study population, the relationship between the two main variables of religiosity and social trust should not be doubted, but the cause should be sought elsewhere. Therefore, the results of this study are important because in a religious society like Iran, the variable of trust should never be considered without considering religiosity, and incidentally, both religiosity and trust are equally important, and basically religiosity leads to trust, and in this society, trust will lead to religiosity too..

increasing cohesion, solidarity and ethnic and cultural ties. It will strength the personality and will cause not to have mental hesitation in difficult situations, and it will promote emotional and friendly relations, and finally it will create trust and peace in the individual and society.

Based on this, the variables of individual and social religiosity are measured in both practical and theoretical dimensions. The findings of the present study show the existence of a significant and direct relationship between the dimensions of individual and social religiosity and the components related to social trust, ie, interpersonal trust, generalized trust and institutional trust; Which is consistent with the results of research by Abbaszadeh and Mirzaei (2014), Bagheriani (2013), Kandovani-Asl and Taghilou (2011), Idrisi et al. (2010), Mahdavi et al. (2009) and Afshani et al. (2009). The research findings are in line with the theoretical framework of the research. Also, the results of path analysis show that more than 46% of the changes in the social trust variable can be explained by the individual religiosity variable. And more than 15% of the changes in the social trust variable can be explained by the social religiosity variable. 14.7 of the changes in the social trust variable can be explained inversely by the monthly income variable. And other variables including: variables of social religiosity (adherence to norms), level of education, marital status and monthly expenses do not have a significant effect on the variable of social trust; Finally, the model fit indicators show that the proposed experimental model can be generalized to the statistical society.

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