

# Social trust and social factors affecting it among students

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## Abstract

Social confidence is a form of social relationships that means social interaction and action of all people of the society in all political, economic and cultural social different fields. The aim of this study is the sociology survey of students' social confidence in two teacher training centers (TTC) and its effective social factors. The study was conducted on two TTC were 230 students. A researcher-made questionnaire was used for collecting the data that its validity and reliability was determined. Different ideas (social capital, social confidence, human relations, behavioral habits, justice, security and so on) have been used in conducting the study and the research main factors have been derived based on them. The results showed that social confidence level on students was on average and higher level and its relationship with some of social factors has been shown by using chi-square and bi-dimensional tables and bar diagram. Frequency tables and diagrams were also used to describe sociology information of the students. A significant relationship was not observed between sex and social confidence variables. The effect of feeling social security and religiosity have been more than the other factors and also feeling of social justice, their social and economic status and trust on social mass media task has showed a meaningful relationship with the students social confidence level. In general with social justice level increasing social trust increased as well.

**Keywords:** Trust, Social Security, Social Justice

## Introduction

Since the human is a social creature and have tendency to social life rooted in his nature is forced to communicate with others, a communication in which he will be successful to overcome his problems and shortcomings and mutually be effective to fix several other people problems and deficiencies. No doubt one of the

most essential elements for communication between people is to trust each other. Trust in the context of human behavior, can especially be seen among those actions that are oriented toward the future [1]. The social trust is a concept of social relationships that is the concept of social action, social interaction of community members in various areas of

social, political, economic and cultural areas [2]. Considering social trust is not a new idea, but it is an ideological current of several centuries. According to theoretical studies it must be said that trust has many meanings. The earliest conception of this concept is related to faith or "confidence in a supernatural power that human being feels dependence to it". This kind of trust is shown in most of the religious beliefs, because they trusted in God as the source of salvation. Here in the trust is the basis of all religions. In Persian language trust is synonymous with rely on; leave the work to someone, reliability, trustworthiness, belief that is being used. In Amid Persian dictionary it also means relying on, rely on someone to entrust to someone or something else. In Latin language, trust is equal to have confidence and trust. In sociology culture, trust concept is equal to individuals characteristics, social communication and also social systemic characteristic with emphasize on mutual communications between individuals. The basic point in trust concept is multi-concepts emerged of trust word and also lack of consensus on its core [3]. The word, Trust is defined in the Oxford dictionary as reliance or confidence as a quality or attribute of a person or a thing, or ensuring the truth of a statement [4]. Social trust can mean, having good thoughts on others in social relations for both of the Trustee and the trustier, as individual or as a group that is the facilitator of social interaction and it has possible gains or losses in itself [5].

Studies have shown that trust is an important aspect of human relations and it plays a significant role in social and group interactions as a social mechanism with multiple functions of social, political, cultural, and economic. Many sociologists believe that confidence reduces stresses and increases consistency [6]. One of the most important components of social capital is social trust; social capital as theorists believe has the vast and multi-dimensional approach that incorporates structural and cognitive dimensions. The structure dimension show how to have social relationships that are more objective and its characteristics is the

people network's relationships. The cognitive dimension implies on aspects of mental in social relations [7], although there is no clear consensus on that, but the cognitive social capital is mainly on values, norms and behaviors and in different studies may result in elements such as trust and norms of reciprocity, and some is considered to community involvement, social support, sense of belonging to the community [8]. In various domestic studies social trust is emphasized because of its importance on public health, so that Rajablou et al. reported lack of reliability prevalence in adolescents 56% [3]. Amir Kaffi also reported social trust 29.8% of boys and 17.5% of girls [5]. Besides this, since the liberation of the people's distrust is a result of public health, this issue speaks of prevention, people education and elimination or reduction of this problem. Education is an important and key factor of health promotion programs in improvement, and unsanitary behaviors changes. Recent attention to the social capital relation and its components with health goes back to 90s. Richard Wilkinson in 1996 was able to show that social cohesion through other factors such as material deprivation has an effect on mortality. Then, Kavachy a well-known researcher in this field, along with colleagues at the 1997 was able to observe that there is a positive linear relation between the lack of confidence and mortality rates in different states of America, even after controlling variables such as age [9].

Students as one of the most important segments of society have a significant role in the development of present and future of a country. Social trust, particularly high levels of social trust can cause participation increase and cooperation among them to also increase the social capital that in turn its outcomes will be the development and growth of the country [10]. Confidence subject achieved an important place in social thought in the eighties with wide intellectual efforts of Nicholas Luhmann and Bernard Barber [11]. In 1979, Luhmann [12] published an in-depth

analysis of the trust that had related the trust to growing complexity, uncertainty and risk with which contemporary society are detected. The proposal was put forward for the first time that trust is important not due to obsolescence of traditional society, but for the development of new social forms that is unavoidable facts in the modern period Barber [11] surveyed aspects related to confidence in various institutional and professional fields of modern society and designed useful typology based on the trust related. Eisenstaedt and Rangier. [13] surveyed trust as a central element in the attorney-client relationship, appearing in different forms from antiquity to modernity. Gambta [14] put a number of authors who had of different perspectives on trust and mistrust in a variety of collections together and closed, and presented an analysis of trust in closed and exclusive community like the Mafia.

James Coleman [15] devoted two seasons of his whole work in social theory to the issue of trust and presented a model for analyzing trust as a trade, purely logical in a framework for the rational choice theory. The track in the 1990s with the writings of Russell Hardin [16], who recently developed, has been followed with a mistrust of the rational choice framework. Anthony Giddens [17] a contemporary English sociologist first alone and then with Ulrich Beck and Scott Lash have developed trust as a characteristic trait of the modernity end idea that is the development of Luhmann complexity, uncertainty and risk. Francis Fukuyama [18] presented a detailed and thorough defense of the trust as a crucial element of dynamic economic systems and did his more emphasis on the experience of China, Japan and other Southeast Asian countries. Adam Seligman [19] also presented an interpretation of confidence as a special phenomenon of the new division that is linked to differentiation and proliferation of roles and expectations outcomes. Now, despite all the differences in attitudes about trust, sociologists have sought the simple fact to identify that without faith everyday life is impossible [20].

Encouragement of health support behavior:

Since social capital relies on relatively stable social relations network that follows cooperation and trust, can be a good vehicle for information dissemination and diffusion of innovation related to health, social capital can lead to the adoption of appropriate lifestyle, healthy behaviors and procedures of health backup, such as encouraging physical activity (exercise), adopting healthy food habits and health cares. Also, greater social cohesion and the groups can lead to more oversight over the conduct of the members. So, if that behavior be inconsistent with the norms of the community, the members would support health, social control mechanism will be activated and prevents (and even promoting) such that behaviors. For example, performing social control can coordinate a person with norms related to any other's position. The individual through adaptation process and admissions of the existing norms is benefited in the society in which they live through coordinated social control and social relations.

- Psychological processes: Kavachy and Berkman [9] argue that social capital by providing more reliability in interpersonal relations, and the formation and spread of norms of reciprocity leads to the formation of intimate relationships to improve the various forms of support. This issue directly by providing resources (goods and services) promotes individuals physical health and can protect a person against mental tensions and help his mental health. It also reduces the possibility of developing to mental disorders such as depression and anxiety. Poor relation of involvement in community and voluntary organizations, to provide a sense of belonging, security, identity and self-esteem, and instill a sense of purpose is associated with the promotion of psychological well-being from sociologist point of view [9]. However, it may be thought that the more intimate relationships closer, more powerful dependency have a more positive effect on individuals' mental health, but Kavachy and Berkman [9] believed that the traditional commitment can

simultaneously protect and damage mental health because high commitment can distress a person. Also, because of the severe social cohesion and severe social control can cause anxiety disorders. That is why they are told that mental health may be achieved from a balanced blend of security resulted from associated relations (or strong) and weak relationship flexibility [21]. Trustfulness that is located in the heart of the concept of social capital may reduce anxiety and fear on the behavior of others as Ghaffari quotes from Wilkinson. Then, trust can reduce the effects of chronic stress and psychological harms [22]. There are several types of trusts included of basic trust, interpersonal trust, public trust or generalized trust, trust in expert systems, credit trust, and social interaction trust. Basic trust is a fundamental attitude toward him and the world around us, affecting the behavior and actions and can strengthen our thinking [4]. Interaction trust is a section of the public trust toward government and public organizations since it has an interpersonal form is always different than the credit trust (2). And finally that social trust is a form of social capital that the society gradually over time and through person to person interaction with people, can achieve it and then it will change to "more public" that is placed as the basis of trust between other people. Therefore, trust is one of the important aspects of human relationships and is predisposing factor of collaboration and participation among community members. Trust speeds up exchanges in various fields. On a reliance-based space, instruments such as the force to ensure its effectiveness on market interactions and transactions has lost its efficiency and instead, the people intention is increased to pay back and are believed more to work properly [23]. Apparently in the current conditions there may be little evidence that examines the causes and characteristics of social trust in students and addresses its related factors. With regard to the above statements, this study aims to examine the sociological level of social trust in students as a cortical landmark in the community and social factors

that affect it.

## Method

This is a cross-sectional and descriptive study performed by quota stratified sampling method on two groups of students of teacher training centers in Shahid Bahonar and Shahid Sherafat of Tehran, Iran. Who were educating in 2011. A researcher-made questionnaire was designed to assess students' social confidence and to collect data a questionnaire and interviews were used. The total samples were calculated 230 by Cochran's sampling size formula and Morgan based on student population.

Considering the proportion size of each center, it was calculated to select 140 students from Bahonar center and 90 students from Sharafat center to perform the process. In this case, referring to the centers and doing office coordination, list of the students was taken and the total numbers of the students were used. To develop a questionnaire based on a review of the various sources, the use of library documents and consultation with faculty experts, the initial questions were designed and inappropriate questions were recognized, modified and finalized with professors, advisers and experts' consultation and its final reliability and validity was approved. To determine the reliability of the questions, the students performed a pilot study on 30 students using Chronbach's alpha coefficient and internal consistency. The coefficient value was determined 0.766. And also to confirm the final reliability, the questionnaire was performed on students with an interval of 4 weeks, and the correlation coefficient was approved. Before the pilot study, the questions were read for some students, and then some questions that were identified ambiguous and inappropriate were excluded of the questionnaire items that the following amounts have been included: the students' social confidence questionnaire items was created with the assistance of relevant experts in the field of social trust. The questionnaire included 25 questions and 15 questions related

to other items that 5 questions were considered for each component. Behavior-based trust (questions 1 to 5), willingness to work (16 to 20), precision (11 to 15), honesty (16 to 20), trust on press (21 to 25), to feel safe (26-30), equity (31-36) and religiosity (36-40) were developed. The subjects answered on a Likert scale of 5 degrees, and at the end, 8 questions were designed to obtain personal information [24].

After completing the questionnaires, the data were collected, coded and analyzed using SPSS-17 software. After determining the data properties, using descriptive statistics by bivariate analysis, the relationship between all independent variables and the dependent variable using Pearson's correlation coefficient, chi-square test and the test-T (independent) review were determined. In multivariate analysis also multivariate regression was used. To determine the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable Path analysis was used, the significance level was considered less than 0.05 in all the above tests.

## Results

The students were studying in five different disciplines (fields) in different colleges of Teacher Training Center (TTC), or University in Tehran city. Mean age of the participating students in the present study was  $21.3 \pm 0.62$ , and 22.7% of them were married. The 14.3% of the students reported that there is a lack of trust among their close friends. There was no significant difference between male and female students from the said variables as well as variables such as parental education, parental employment status and residency. In this research to determine 5 social trust properties such as honesty, openness, cooperative tendencies, ensuring and confidence were assessed by the questionnaire [24].

Our findings showed a significant relationship between socio-economic of the students, and their social trust. There was a significant difference between two variables, namely social trust and social-economic of the students, so that the lower the social trust came, their socio-

economic status showed lower and the higher their socio-economic status was, their social trust was increased as well ( $X^2 = 64.696$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). It was also identified that there is a significant inverse relationship between students age and social trust, so that 55.9% of the students under 22 years of age had a low social trust, 62.4% of the students of 22-30 years had moderate social trust and 10.3% more than 30 years had the highest levels of social trust, it means that trust levels were declined with the age increase ( $P < 0.001$ ). There was also a significant relationship between genders, being religious with social trust ( $P < 0.001$ ), so that social confidence was higher in men, and the 3.56% of the students' social trust, was low and they were lower in religiosity and 51.6% of the students that had a moderate social trust had a moderate religiosity, and 59% of the students with high social trust have had moderate religiosity. In conclusion, we could say that along with the rise of increasing of social trust, students' religiosity also increased.

The results showed that there is a significant relationship between social security and social trust ( $P = 0.024$ ), so that the 52.5% of the students who had low social trust had higher security and 45.2% of the students who had moderate level of social trust had an average social security and 47.4% of students were with high social trust. The results showed that along with the rise of social trust the safety of students also increased. In this study there was a significant relationship between social justice and social confidence ( $P = 0.001$ ), so that 35.6% of the students with low social trust, had lower social justice and 54.8% of the students who had a moderate social trust showed a moderate social justice and 47.4% of the students with high social trust, had moderate social justice. As a result, with increasing the students' social trust, the students' social justice also increased. A significant relationship was observed between trust in the media and social trust ( $P < 0.0001$ ). The lowest level with 16% among students, with low confidence had less trust to mass

media, and the highest rate among them with 53% with moderate confidence, had the highest level of confidence in the media. So, we say with students confidence increase, confidence level was increased in media. The Pearson correlation coefficient showed a significant relationship between socio-economic and social confidence level ( $P < 0.0001$ ,  $r = 0.95$ ), between religiosity and social confidence level ( $P = 0.002$ ,  $r = 0.98$ ), between age and level of social trust ( $P = 0.002$ ,  $r = 0.96$ ), between the sense of security and social trust ( $P = 0.002$ ,  $r = 0.96$ ), between the properties of the sense of social justice and social confidence

level ( $P < 0.0001$ ),  $r = 0.97$ ), and finally the reliable performance Mass media and social confidence level ( $P = 0.002$ ,  $r = 0.87$ ) was observed that in general indicated significant and positive relationships.

In this study, simultaneous multiple regression method has been performed included social security variables, socio-economic status, and social justice, a sense of trust in mass media, age, religiosity and trust variable. The coefficient of determination rate was 97.0, respectively, which is a measure that determines social trust by the independent variables that in humanities in general is a

**Table 1** The comparison of Regression line and residual Variance

Statistical index	Total of squares	degrees of freedom	Mean	F	P-value
Regression coefficient	23519.622	6	3919.9	1537.3	.0001
residual Variance	568.6	233	205.50		
Total	24088.2	229			

reasonable value.

Given the significant result with 0.00

significance level means that the regression line over the ability of the residual variance can explain the variance of dependent

**Table 2:** Determination of Regression coefficient for relations between variables

Model	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	P-value
	B	Standard error	Beta		
Stable coefficient	-.182	.388	.252	-.469	.460
Sense of Security	.606	.114		5.333	.000
Justice	-.037	.049	-.019	-.391	.696
Religiosity	.601	.109	.328	5.505	.000
Mass media	.068	.143	.016	.473	.637
Social status	.572	.107	.204	5.331	.000
Age	2.252	.345	.226	6.523	.000

variable. We will refer to the next table below to write the regression equation.

According to the regression table results in the last column, significant level showed significant. Writing a prediction regression linear equation is done from the coefficients of non-standards B's that is placed in the

regression linear formula which is as follows:  
 $Y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + \dots$

Overall regression coefficients for predicting dependent variable as the above table is as follows:

(Age) + 2.252%, (socio-economic) 572%, (religiosity) 601% + (social security) 606%

$$+182 = Y$$

The intercept (constant rate)  $a = -182$ .

Coefficient impact of social security is equal to 606%, in other words, according to one unit of change in standard deviation of social security, social sense of security is changed equal to as much as 606%, and also the coefficient impact of religiosity variable is equal to 601 %, in other words, according to one unit of change in standard deviation can change social trust to 601%. The socio-economic impact is equal to 572%, in other words, standard deviation can change to 572% in changing one unit of variable standard deviation change. The impact factor of age variable is equal to 2.252, in other words, with one unit of standard deviation change in the standard deviation, social trust standard deviation can change to 2.252. Standardized regression coefficient formula is as follows:

$$Z_y = 328\%(\text{religiosity}) + 252\%(\text{social security}) + 204\%(\text{Socio economic status}) + 226\%(\text{age})$$

$$Z_y = b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 \dots$$

According to the standard linear equation, the maximum effect has been by religiosity variable on the dependent variable or social trust and has a far greater share than the other variables, and then it is security impact that was safe and effective, then age and socio-economic status has had the greatest effect. According to the research literature, such a conclusion has also been expected.

## Discussion

The results suggest that in students with high socio-economic level, the maximum level of high social trust was 59%, Medium social trust 18.3%, and the highest level of low social trust was 18.6%. The students at the high level of education (70 percent) had the highest social trust level, but social trust was increasing up to bachelor degree and with higher education social trust was decreasing. The analysis also showed that there was a significant relationship between socio-economic variable, age, sex, religiosity, social security, social justice, trust in the students' mass media and their social trust. Multivariate regression analysis showed that

the variables such as sense of social security, socio-economic status, age and religiosity were good predictors for social trust level.

Rafipour research on anomie and social turmoil showed that among those with a bachelor's degree or higher and those with primary education or less, there was a significant difference in terms of trust. Efe points to different sources of people in order to obtain a higher socio-economic status in the community [25]. From his perspective if a person makes it easier to trust to other sources such as power, money, and information ....., the less will be vulnerable in trust loss. Also Rajablou [3] in his research knows their socio-economic status very effective. According to him, if the people have a higher base level in the society; they will have a higher level of confidence, because in these conditions they can easier trust to people.

Nouroozi in a research in the field of social commitment and its influencing factors suggest that high levels of socialization is associated with their facilities and when living levels goes up, their socialization also goes up and this increases their trust in the community [26]. Kabiri in his study entitled: "A study of social factors effective on people participation rate in education" showed that there was a significant relationship between economic and social status and participation in school affairs [27]. Based on our findings, there is a correlation between social trust and students' age. In other words, high social trust level in students under 22 years is equal to 29.5%, in the students of 22-30 years 60.30% and more than 30 years was 20.3%. As a result, average and high social trust was observed among the students of 22-30 years and low social trust was observed below 22 years. Generally, it must be said that social trust increases with age up to 30 years and then decreases.

From Zotomka perspective [20] social classes can be placed at the interface between social trusts. In this study a significant and positive relationship was observed between the students' age and their social trust. This is expected, since men are more dependent in

matters relating to themselves and it is rooted in family roles and men are more engaged in outdoor activities than women and women are more pessimistic because of gender inequality prevalent in the community, which is not unexpected according to the structure and culture of Iran.

Nouroozi also in his research entitled "social commitment" concluded that the amount of socializing between men and women are different and men are hoping to achieve their objectives about 4.2% more than women, however, both groups have a social commitment at the same level that men with 81% have more social commitment than women. This result is the same of our research outcomes [26].

In this study, it was found that there is significant correlation between social trust and students' religiosity and with higher levels of religiosity, social confidence was increased. From the perspective of Giddens [28] one of the most important of trust is religious that provides trust to the natural and social events. Ritzer also stated that trust or lack of trust occurs according to the information, knowledge and predictability of people behavior. The level of trust in society and religion has a major role and more influence than economic development level [29]. The present study states that there is a correlation between social trust and social justice of the students. In other words, in low social justice, social trust is lower and in average social trust, social justice is more moderate, and in high justice, social trust is also high. It can be said generally with increase of social justice level, social trust is increased. Youjoung-Sung in a study showed that income inequality causes certain skewness in the community that it creates a sense of injustice and loss of social trust that is more important. In another study in South Korea on the Philippines and Taiwanese people, it was concluded that differences that exists in inequality levels in different situations and failures of reform and industrial policy is the best explanation of the difference between the deviations of social trust in countries [7]. The other results of Giddens study demonstrated the significant relationship between social trust

and confidence on the media. It was found that with increasing in the level of trust in the media, social trust is also increased [28]. Zotomka believed that trust or lack of trust approaches to special abstract systems, are approved well by our experience in accessible places and daily knowledge that are accessible for ordinary people and specialists through mass media and the other sources. The fact that the location of the access points of tension between suspicion are for ordinary people and those specific skilled, these points will become the sources of vulnerability for abstract systems [20]. In the present study, according to the standard linear equation it was determined by regression analysis that the most impact on the dependent variable of social trust was by sense of social security and has a far greater share than the other variables and then the religiosity variable are effective and later age and at last socio-economic status has had the most effect that the researcher according to the results of the research literature had expected.

### Conclusion

Students are a large segment of the population and their health has a high value to society. However, social trust as an important factor can help students in their life satisfaction and psychological capital of them. Social capital (and the most important component, trust) is known as the most powerful factor to fight and confront easily to deal successfully in stressful situations for individuals and facilitate the problem tolerance for individuals. Meanwhile, the promotion of investment in the community is the capability of social system. This ability is considered practicality thorough assessing the individuals living. So, it seems that policy makers and planners should promote the quality of life for individuals based on existing tools and facilities and create an active balance and integration in the community and with an advertising system strengthen the trust of people, relationships and social cohesion.

- Establishing a communication network base

between the community population in order to build emotional relationships instead of tool and profit-seeking relations for creation of a dominant culture by using mass media.

- Establishing non-formal institutions in the community especially universities, including the NGO for young people, especially students for social links between them, and thereby increase the level of social trust in society as a source of social control.

- Creating an open space in the society, especially the universities to participate and express their views, especially in academic communities to boost their perceptions and knowledge towards their community and world affairs, in order to increase insight and knowledge to participate more in community affairs.

Limitations of the study:

- Young population and being fresh in the field of study, lack of access to English and Persian resources on the subject and lack of all resources and also lack of cooperation of some officials in the libraries and research institutes, low accuracy of some students to fill questionnaire, the sensitivity of the study subject.

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### Contributions

Study design: MP, AA

Data collection and analysis: MP, HP

Manuscript preparation: PBG, ZP, ARA

### Conflict of interest

"The authors declare that they have no competing interests."

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