A Study of the Relationship between Social Capital and Traffic Awareness with Pedestrian's Tendency towards Disorder in Yasouj

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Introduction

Although disorders of drivers constitutes an important portion of traffic disorder but pedestrians also have a considerable role in traffic violations, a role which has gone unnoticed for the most part. Pedestrians have a significant role in traffic system and they are usually the most vulnerable unit in traffic events. The importance of provision of traffic regulations by the pedestrians, for promoting of traffic system, is not deniable because pedestrians are the most users of streets and have a considerable share in traffic accidents. It is clear that pedestrian's traffic behaviors is one of the most important reasons that endanger their own lives. Pedestrian's disorder is an important social problem, which causes traffic chaos and accidents. Therefore, paying attention to them as one of the major causes and victims of traffic disorders is necessary. For explaining pedestrian's disorder, a large number of factors could be involved. Based on the social capital theory, it appears that there is a significant relationship between social capital and pedestrians' tendency towards disorder. In general, social capital is a capacity for collective action based on trust, norms and networks. Increased social capital can reduce operating costs of organizations. According to Putnam and Fukuyama, increase in social capital, if other variable are equal, will reduce the amount of deviation. As a result, the erosion of social capital can explain traffic disorder as a deviant behavior. In addition, it seems that there is a significant relationship between awareness toward traffic regulations and pedestrians' tendency towards disorder. Ogburne believed that cultural behaviors take time to catch up with technological innovations, and social problems are caused by this lag. On the basis of Ogburne's theory, we can say that today, because of increasing technological innovations in traffic areas, pedestrians, particularly in developing countries, have not been able to adapt to these technological innovations. Relying on Ogburne theory, one of the basic assumptions of this study is that increasing of pedestrians' awareness toward traffic regulations can reduce traffic disorder on their behalf.

Materials and Methods

This research is a survey study. Research population is all 18 -60 years old citizens of Yasouj. Sample size is 479 individuals that were selected by means of random multi-stage sampling method. The measurement tool is a three-scale questionnaire including social capital, traffic awareness and traffic disorder of the pedestrians. Social capital scale was divided into six dimensions of social contact, trust, cooperation, supportive community, information and communication networks and groups. Validity of the scales was measured by content validity technique, and reliability was calculated by cronbach alpha coefficient for social capital scale and Kuder-Richardson coefficient for awareness and traffic disorder of pedestrians' scales.

Discussion of Results & Conclusions

In total, 479 individuals answered the questionnaire. On the basis of the scales results, the mean traffic disorder of pedestrians with range of 0-7 is 2.6 and the mean traffic awareness scale with range of 0-9 is 6.8 and the mean social capital with range of 0-175 is 88.7. In order to investigate the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable and determining to what extent independent variables are able to explain the disorder and which one is a stronger predictor, stepwise linear regression method was used. The results are presented in Table 1. On the basis of the Table 1, the strongest predictor of traffic disorder of pedestrians is social capital variable. This variable alone explains about 20% of the variance of the dependent variable. In Second step, after entering awareness toward traffic regulations into the model, the coefficient was reached to 24%, indicating that this variable can adds 4% to the prediction of the dependent variable. In the third step, the regression coefficient after entering age into the model, is 27% that specifies this variable can adds 2.7% to the prediction of dependent variable. As a result, social capital, traffic awareness and age are able to explain almost 27% of the variance of pedestrian's traffic disorders.

Table 1- Relationship between Independent Variables and Pedestrian's Disorders

step	Variables	B	Beta	t	Sig	R	R²	S.E	F	Sig
1	Social Capital	-.063	-.450	-11.01	0.000	.45	.203	1.65	121.34	0.000
2	Social Capital	-.05	-.360	-8.311	0.000	.496	.246	1.60	77.58	0.000
	Traffic Awareness	-.210	-.226	-5.213	0.000					
3	Social Capital	-.049	-.351	-19.053	0.000	.522	.273	1.58	59.345	0.000
	Traffic Awareness	-.218	-.235	-5.50	0.000					
	age	-031	-164	-4.18	0.000					

The main goal of this research was to investigate the relationship between social capital and traffic awareness with pedestrians' tendency towards traffic disorders in Yasouj city. Based on the descriptive research findings, pedestrians' tendency towards traffic disorders is high in Yasouj. This situation is not satisfactory for a town such as Yasouj with an increasing population and motor vehicles, and also with many difficulties in urban facilities. Inferential findings show that social capital has an inverse significant impact on pedestrians' tendency towards traffic disorders. In other words, increasing social capital means a decrease in

pedestrians' tendency towards traffic disorders. This research finding theoretically confirms the relationship between social capital and decreasing violations that presented by Putnam and Fukoyams. There is an inverse significant relationship between traffic awareness and pedestrians' tendency towards traffic disorders and with arising traffic awareness, pedestrians' tendency is decreased. In the framework of the demographic variables, the results show that there is an inverse significant relationship between age and pedestrians' tendency towards traffic disorders and there is no relationship between other demographic variables such as sex, marital status and ethnicity with pedestrians' tendency towards traffic disorders.

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