

# Measuring the Status of Young Women's Social Capital in Tehran and the Effect of Individual and Psychological Factors

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**Abstract:** Considering the importance of conducting studies on youth, young girls in particular, and also the importance of paying attention to social capital and its role in development process of a society and decreasing social problems and loss; the present study is an attempt to investigate the structure of social capital and its constructing components (solidarity, social participation, ethical values and social trust).

In addition, the mental factors affecting social participation are considered at the subjective dimension and micro level of social capital. To this end, a survey was conducted using a questionnaire, and 386 single women ranging in age from 15 to 40 participated.

The sample population was identified using a stratified multistage method. The validity test used in this study is construct validity ( $KMO > 0.60$ ) and face validity. The reliability is tested using Cronbach Alpha test ( $r > 0.7$  for all variables).

The results imply an average condition for social capital in the sample population and this situation is observed in almost all of the 22 districts of Tehran. Among the constructing components of social capital, the status of social participation in these regions is better than other variables, but the status of solidarity is weaker and lower in comparison to other variables. Among the mental factors affecting social capital, only the correlation between the variables 'feeling of worthiness' (directly) and 'feeling of lack of power' (indirectly) are confirmed, which is a weak correlation. In other words, this correlation does not play a major role in explaining the variance of the variable 'social capital'.

**Keywords:** Social capital. Social participation. Trust. Social solidarity. Ethical values.

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## **Introduction**

One of the issues rarely studied, especially in the Iranian society, is the social status of girls. Although there have been studies on the youth in general, in many cases the emphasis has been put on the difference between the mean of gender difference and their corresponding social variables under investigation. Scientific and systematic understanding of girls' social status is very important because they constitute a large proportion of the Iranian society.

Social capital is one of the integral components of a society. Some scholars (e.g. Putnam, 2005) refer to social capital as the essence of a democratic government and civil society. Others like Fukuyama (2005) who believes that the civil society is the result of this capital. Social capital, however, is one of the concepts that underwent radical development and became one of the most applied concepts in social sciences. Iranian government, according to article 98 of the Fourth Development Plan Law, is bound to take some measures to improve and increase social capital. Undoubtedly, one of the most important reasons for welcoming such measures, both by politicians and policy planners and academia, is the efficiency of these social networks in helping a society develop, reduce the inflicting problems, and as a result, reduce mental and social damages. Besides this instrumental view, and from a purposeful and goal-oriented perspective, many scholars emphasize on the role of social capital in encouraging individuals' development in social networks.

This paper is an attempt to show the status of girls' social capital with its constructing components in 22 districts of Tehran, thus evaluate and determine the extent of mental factors, in particular, which can have an effect on social capital.

## **Background**

### **Theoretical Background on Social Capital**

The concept of social capital was first mentioned in the writings of Lyda J. Hanifan in 1916, a state supervisor of rural schools in West Virginia, U.S at that time, who referred to social capital as an impalpable capital which is important in the daily life of people (Ferlaner, 2003). After her, John Sally, an urban sociologist in the 1950s, and Jean Jacob, a trade theorist and an expert in urban issues in the 1960s, elaborated on this concept (Woolcock, Narayan, 2000). Jean Jacob used this phrase to emphasize the

aggregate values of informal neighborhood relationships in big modern cities (Putnam, 2002). As an economist, Gellen Lori used the term social capital to describe urban economic development problems just as the sociologist Evan Light did (Fukuyama, 1999). He regards social capital as a set of resources that exist in the nature of family relationships and the social structure of the society, which is useful for cognitive and social development of a child or youngster (Coleman, 1998).

The concept of social capital was published in some of the preliminary notes of Pierre Bourdieu, but initially did not attract a lot of attentions because it was hidden within the pages dealing with the sociology of education (Portes, 2005). Baom puts the emphasis on the roles different types of capital play in reproducing unequal power relationships (in Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2001). In fact, James Coleman was the first to address social capital in a principled and coherent way, such that as Putnam puts it, he established the theoretical and basic foundations of social capital (Coleman, 2005). Fukuyama (2005) also believes that Coleman is the one who established the term 'social capital'. Coleman had a great impact on the sociology of development by his paper 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital'. Robert Putnam, also drew the public attention to social capital by writing a book titled 'Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy' in 1993 and publishing the paper 'Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital'. Fukuyama has also had a determining role in developing the idea of social capital. He studied the role of social capital in economy, and enriched the literature on social capital by publishing several books on the subject.

### **Conceptual Framework of Social Capital**

Social capital is a combination of two concepts: 'social' and 'capital'. It is a relatively new and complicated concept in sociology, which has extended into other disciplines and become increasingly popular (Piran, Mousavi & Shiani, 2006). The concept of social capital does not go long back in history and its use has gradually increased since the 1990s onward in academic papers written by James Coleman, Pierre Bourdieu, Robert Putnam, and Francis Fukuyama, especially papers in fields of sociology, economics, politics, and education (Wall, cited by Mousavi, 2006).

Yet, one can find concepts similar or close to social capital in the works of classical sociologists like Emil Durkheim and George Simmel (cited by Abdollahi, 2007).

There have been many definitions provided for the concept of social capital. In some cases, there are ambiguities, and even conflicts between these definitions. One of the most popular definitions is the one provided in 1988 by the World Bank, an internationally reliable and formal institution, in which social capital refers to the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions. Increasing evidence shows that social cohesion is critical for societies to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable. Social capital is not just the sum of institutions that underpin a society; it is the glue that holds them together.

Social capital is at the same time inclusive of the needed joint values and norms for social behaviors, and is reflected in the relationship between individuals, their trust in one another and in the joint feeling of civic responsibilities. It makes a society more than a simple community of people. "Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development" also conceives social capital as a network which facilitates inter-group and intra-group cooperation through joint values, norms, and understanding (OECD, 2001). Putnam (2000) also regards valuable networks as the main essence of this concept and states that social capital can be considered as the features of social organizations such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit (Putnam, 1992). Rose (1999) defines social capital as a collection of formal or informal social networks which are employed by individuals to allocate goods and services for different uses. Scheiff defines it as a set of elements in social structures that affect the relationship between people (cited by Piran et al., 2006). Social capital has been also defined as a set of moral virtues and social relations compatible with the developmental changes (Dini Torkamani, 2006).

Among these definitions, the one by Francis Fukuyama, who is one of the authorities in this field, may be one of the most complete and appropriate ones. Fukuyama (1999) defines social capital as reflecting people's ability to work in groups and organizations, and a set of informal norms or values members of a group believe in. According to him, social capital is a tangible form and example of an informal norm which promotes cooperation between two or more people.

The component norms of social capital may range from the mutual relationship between two friends to complex teachings. These norms should be reflected in the actual relationship between people. Norms exist potentially in the mutual relationship we have with other people, but it is in the relationship with our friends that they are implemented in practice. Accordingly, trust, networks, civic society and the like which are related to social capital are all the peripheral products of this phenomenon, and are created as a result of social capital, but do not constitute it. It is not the case that any set of norms may result in forming social capital. These norms should lead to cooperation between the members of a group. Therefore, they are related to traditional virtues such as honesty, fulfilling one's promise, trustworthiness in one's job, mutual relationship, etc. (Fukuyama, 2005).

### **Dimensions of Social Capital**

Social capital has two dimensions. One is cognitive (relational), which is subjective and includes rather abstract manifestations such as trust, norms and values that affect the mutual interactions between people, such as expectation of reciprocation, trust, trustworthiness for cooperation, sympathy and awareness. The other dimension is the structural (institutional) dimension, which includes the visible and more objective and tangible aspects of social capital, such as local constitutions, organizations and available networks among people which follow cultural, social, political and economic goals (Chalbi & Mobaraki, 2005; Mousavi, 2006).

### **Levels of Social Capital**

Three levels can be considered for social capital.

The micro level, which deals with the behavior of a network of individuals and families. Based on the level of intimacy between people, social capital is divided into two types:

Informal (within group or intra-group): Between those who have an intimate and close relationship, such as between members of a family, friends and neighbors.

Generalized (between groups or inter-group): Between those who have a less friendly relationship and have less in common, such as members of social and political groups.

The meso level, which includes bonds and vertical relationships, such as the relationship existing between the members of groups, organizations and institutions.

Macro (Institutional) level, which is the most extensive level of social capital, and includes the most formal relationships and institutional structures (Hosseini, Elmi & Share'pour, 2007).

#### The Need to Emphasize the Mental Dimension and Micro Level of Social Capital

It seems that in the definitions provided for social capital, the objective aspect of social capital and the macro and meso levels have been mainly focused upon, and the mental (subjective) and micro dimensions have not been paid attention to as much as they should. This can be related to the fact that the macro and objective meanings of this concept are more widespread and more tangible. This explains why when people start talking about social capital, the first thing that comes to their mind is the network and independent social groups and, in one word, civic society. It appears that there is a notable lack of research studies with a sociological, especially socio-psychological orientation in this connection.

There is a need for studies that not only consider the prospects and outputs of social capital, but also the roots and the conditions necessary for achieving an appropriate level of social capital, especially the role of those who establish these institutions and networks. In this regard, the present research is an attempt to achieve this goal by considering the relationship between some of these variables or individuals' personal-psychological characteristics on one hand, and social capital and individuals' desire to promote and increase it on the other. In other words, the question of what norms and values an individual should conform to, and what personal and psychological characteristics they should possess so as to be able to promote social capital, has been addressed.

The need for this kind of studies is evident from the fact that the objective-social and biological-psychological characteristics of active individuals provide them with a conceptual-personal sense of themselves and others. These senses gradually form the person's system of beliefs and values, preparing the ground for adopting special attitudes. These attitudes will show up in the interactions related to social capital.

### **Personal Characteristics Influential in Social Capital (with a Focus on Mental Factors)**

In this paper, there has been an attempt to consider the relationship between social capital and six characteristics of an active individual. These characteristics are listed below:

A. **Feeling of worthiness:** At the micro level, feeling of worthiness is a social norm (Abdollahi & Mousavi, 2007). People, who have a positive feeling and a sense of worthiness towards and within themselves, are more inclined to participate in cooperative actions and activities than those who do not have this feeling. Therefore, it is this feeling of worthiness that makes life more beautiful for an active person, and encourages one to create better life conditions. Such a person is very likely to feel responsible for improving living conditions in his/her hometown and society, and having an inclination towards collaborative activities.

B. **Self-confidence:** Self-confidence can play an effective role in increasing social capital, as it makes people feel that they can communicate with others and successfully deal with matters through which social network is generated.

C. **Ambitiousness:** Parallel with other factors, the desire to make progress, or a feeling that can be called positive ambitiousness, is one of the mental characteristics that drives an active person towards achieving higher levels of desirability and promoting his/her life conditions. It generates the required motivation for a person to interact with others in order to achieve this goal. People who have confidence in themselves and their abilities have a feeling of worthiness and a power to change, are always interested in changing their lifestyle and the surrounding environment for an improved quality of life. Such people will not be content with little changes and always consider higher levels of success to achieve. Considering the important and unique role organizations and social networks play, those with this feeling of positive ambitiousness are likely to form or join these networks and groups, even manage these organizations, and encourage other individuals to join and accompany them in the attempt to achieve their goal. However, the other side of the coin is that the desire to make progress is also associated with negative ambitiousness and selfishness, which is exactly opposite of positive ambitiousness and has a detrimental effect on social capital.

D. **Constructive belief:** The belief in, and the hope of improvement and its

possibility is another mental and attitudinal characteristic of an individual, which prepares the ground for establishing and fostering the needed interpersonal and inter-group relations. It is the constructive belief that keeps an individual full of hope to resist and stand against the problems and difficulties, and to make an attempt to encourage others' involvement and concordance in avoiding disappointment without giving in to failure.

E. Feeling of powerfulness: Another attitude that helps generating social capital is the feeling of powerfulness (Abdollahi & Mousavi, 2007). This, in fact, is a feeling that is the exact opposite side of "alienation". Some sociologists believe that one of the characteristics of an industrial society's citizens is the feeling of alienation, a feeling owing to which a person feels isolated from other people and the society. Claude Fischer identified three types of alienation:

Feeling of lack of power (inability): The individual cannot, for different reasons, determine or foresee the result of his/her work, and things do not go as desired. One feels desperate, disillusioned, and loses his/her feeling of belonging to the society.

Feeling of anomie (breakdown): The individual feels exposed to social harms and dangers, and the social disorders always seem common, prevalent greater than what really exists in the real world, and generalized to him/her.

Feeling of social alienation: According to George Simmel, since in urban life, an individual has to choose the one to be with, they always feel that there is no one around them and they match no one. Therefore, they isolate themselves deliberately. Alienation may also happen because the individual has no chance to intermingle with others (Seddigh Sarvestani, 1999).

In other words, the feeling of social alienation at the micro level indicates a feeling of inability, futility, lack of criterion, seclusion and separation from others (Mousavi, 2006); but what helps an individual in these difficult conditions is the membership in subcultures or self-formed networks and groups. According to the definition, a subculture forms when a certain number of people with similar characteristics and features (ethnicity, occupation, beliefs and religion) become familiar and form a social group, though with values and norms different from those of the bigger majority. Membership in these subcultures or other forms of social networks has different functions for an individual. Some of the functions are as follows:

Satisfying the basic needs: In time of emergency and need, they fulfill the individuals' needs and provide assistance in different ways.

Giving identity: By membership in a group, and through interaction and communication with other members, an individual is respected and known by others, and also gets to know them. Hence, he/she develops a sense of identity.

Confronting the feeling of alienation: Membership in such networks fosters a sense of belonging and solidarity by giving members an identity and providing financial and spiritual support; thereby, decreasing the feeling of inability, social alienation and disorder.

F. Mental health: Now that societies have experienced a transition from a traditional status to a modern one, issues related to individuals' mental health gain more prominence. Entering a new society that has undergone structural changes has a great impact, from a mental perspective, on the lives of active people from a mental perspective. During recent years, these issues have also been raised in Iran, as a society passing from a semi-industrial to an industrial society. Meanwhile, population movements in the form of domestic immigrations has increased in line with these changes, and as a consequence of these movements, people's lives have been influenced and changed to a large extent. These changes have influenced not only these people, but also their norms and values. Certainly, all people do not react to these changes in the same way. Living in this new structure requires the development of a spirit of trust; emotional, social and financial support, cooperation, and membership in social networks. Mental health, as a psychological and social phenomenon, not only has a role in forming the mental state of every single individual, but also provides the conditions for a positive and healthy life for all people in the society, and the working environment as a result (Lahsayizadeh & Moradi, 2007). As Lahsayizadeh and Moradi (2007) explain, there is a significant correlation between mental health and the variables "social trust", "social support" and "social participation". The more social capital individuals have in this structure, the better their mental health conditions will be in the new society.

In their theoretical model derived from subjective and experimental analysis of social capital in Iran, Abdollahi and Mousavi (2007) also argued that an increase in the level of social capital leads to a decrease in human loss, and an increase in the feeling of health, satisfaction and happiness among people. Conversely, a decline in

social capital will reduce the feeling of health, satisfaction and felicity.

On the whole, the present study is an attempt to find the answers to the following research questions:

What is the status of social capital among girls in Tehran?

What is the status of girls in the constructing components of social capital (i.e., social trust, solidarity, social participation and ethical values) in the 22 districts of Tehran?

What follows are the tentative answers to the research questions:

There is a meaningful relationship between social capital and mental health.

There is a meaningful relationship between social capital and self-confidence.

There is a meaningful relationship between social capital and feeling of powerfulness.

There is a meaningful relationship between social capital and ambitiousness.

There is a meaningful relationship between social capital and feeling of worthiness.

There is a meaningful relationship between social capital and constructive belief.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The sample population included single women ranging in age from 15 to 40, all from Tehran. The sample size was determined to be 386 using Cochran's formula, but 190 participants took part in the study. The sample was distributed according to proportional allocation of the population in every district. Based on the population of the districts, some blocks were randomly selected in every district, and after finding about the characteristics of the inhabitants, the targets were chosen randomly.

### **Procedure and Instrumentation**

As survey is a common method for obtaining information about views, beliefs, behaviors and characteristics of groups (Edwardes et al., 2000), this is the instrument used in the present study which could best serve the purpose of the study. A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The questions were mainly in the form of Likert-type scale. Some items were standard; the remaining ones had been used in big national projects before and proved to be reliable.

First, items that have significant correlations with other items of the same scale are analyzed using internal consistency method, based on which items with low

correlations are eliminated. Cronbach's Alpha statistics are used separately for all dimensions. All of the scales are statistically significant and their coefficients are higher than 0.7, which shows the high reliability and precision of the measurement. Two types of validity are used: Face validity and construct validity. To examine face validity, the items are shown to teachers and researchers, reviewed and revised, and finally agreed upon. For construct validity, factor analysis results show that the scales selected have the conditions and characteristics required to generate social capital. In this case, the result of KMO Test is 0.72, and the degree of significance of Bartlett Test is 0.01, which is significant.

### **Analysis**

SPSS (version 13) is used for analyzing the data. Descriptive and analytic statistics are used. In descriptive statistics' frequency, mean, percentage and cumulative frequency are used. In analytic statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient test is used to examine the correlation between the data sets. Regression is also used to estimate the power to predict the dependent variable based on the linear combination of independent variables.

**Table 1: Variables, Dimensions and their Operational Definitions**

Variable	Dimension	Index	Operational definition
<b>Social capital</b>	Social participation	Subjective	Attitude towards: If everyone considers only his or her own benefits and does not care about others' business, things get better in the society./If an election is going to be held in my local area in order to find solutions to the local problems, I am ready to stand as a candidate./If an election is going to be held in my local area in order to find solutions to the local problems, I am ready to participate and vote in this election./Every citizen must allocate a portion of his or her income as tax to help solve problems in his or her local area./Cooperative and joint work rarely leads to a satisfactory result and is not worth the trouble.
		Objective	The level of cooperative activities and participation in parent-teacher associations, religious institutions, mosques, NGOs, city council, charity associations and organizations, scientific groups (e.g. physics, mathematics or astronomy associations), working gratis, arts and literature associations, sports associations, cooperation with municipality in issues such as, beggary, collecting rubbish, taking care of street children, etc., and helping neighbors.
	Social trust	Interpersonal	Trusting the acquaintances such as family members, neighbors, relatives, friends, etc.
		Generalized	Trusting people in the society (strangers, non-acquaintances)
		Guilds	Trusting non-governmental organizations, groups, and guilds
	Solidarity	Institutional Interaction	Trusting governmental institutions, offices, and centers Objective connection between people based on a close relationship with the members of their network (relatives, friends, and neighbors)
		Tendency	The level of acceptance and the sense of belonging among local people and acquaintances Loyalty to honesty and integrity
	Ethical Values	Honesty and integrity	
		Responsibility	Feeling responsible
		Loyalty	Loyalty to the society
		Tolerance	The level of tolerance towards others
			Avoiding ultra individualism

**Table 2: continue**

Variabe	Dimension	Operational definition
Mental Health	Anxiety	The feeling of anger, quiver, anxiety, sudden fear for no reason, permanent and strong feeling of fear, palpitations, feeling tense, excitation, horror and sudden fear, restlessness, premonition, appalling imaginations and thoughts
	Obsession	Undesirable, unwanted, and annoying thoughts one cannot get rid of, having difficulty remembering things, feeling upset about others' mess and carelessness in their work, knotty problems, slowing down deliberately in order to do things in a better way, an obsession to repeat and check, obsession to repeat some tasks such as washing and counting, difficulty in making decisions, a feeling of being empty of thoughts, lack of concentration
	Interpersonal sensitivity	A feeling that others do not interact with one in a friendly manner, feeling disdain for oneself and feeling inferior in front of one's friends and colleagues, feeling uneasy when others pay attention to him/her and talk about him/her, feeling obsessed not to make a mistake and being too careful about his/her behavior in front of others, feeling uneasy when having food in front of others
	Depression	Lack of interest in having sex and not enjoying sex, lack of energy and sluggishness, thinking of committing suicide, giving in to crying, feeling trapped, reproaching oneself for anything that happens, feeling lonely, upset, and too worried about something, lack of interest in everything, feeling disparate and disappointed about the future, feeling that everything is so difficult to handle, feeling worthless and useless
The feeling of inability	Attitude towards: I can (or cannot) change the course of events in the society if I will and want./I think that a person like me cannot have any influence on the society at the present conditions even if I want to./Reporting the existing problems to the government is of no use because the government does not care about people's demands, benefits and problems./Thinking about the government and the political structure in my country arouses in me a feeling of alienation and separation./Governing the society has been given to some powerful authority figures and normal people cannot be of any help.	
Self-confidence	To what extent I think I can decide on and solve my problems on my own? To what extent do I have confidence in my abilities and capabilities? When no one helps me in making a decision, I usually feel insecure. When no one helps me in making a decision, I feel anxious.	
Feeling of worthiness	To what extent do I feel that I am useful to others? that others are proud of me? that I am a worthy person?	
(positive) ambitiousness	Attitude towards: To what extent is it important for me to win at any cost? to make a success out of a work I have just started? To what extent do I think I am moving in the right direction towards my primary goals? To what extent do I like to improve my living conditions? How often do I think about my goals? To what extent do I try to make progress?	
Constructive beliefs	Attitude towards: To what extent do my beliefs help me keep calm in times of trouble and lessen my feeling of agitation? To what extent have my beliefs led me to success in my work? To what extent have my beliefs made me highly motivated and inspired to do my work?	



Social participation			Ethical values			District	Social participation			Ethical values			Degree	Strict
Low	Avg.	High	Low	Avg.	High	District	Low	Avg.	High	Low	Avg.	High	Row %	District 1
0	1.8	4.2	2	3	4.8	District 12	0	9.3	5.5	10.8	5.3	1.6	Row %	District 1
0	36.4	63.6	36.4	36.4	27.3	District 13	0	70	30	73.3	23.3	3.35	Column %	District 2
16.7	2.2	4.2	2.5	5.3	1.6	District 14	0	10.2	8.5	10.8	8.3	6.5	Row %	District 3
7.7	38.5	53.8	38.5	53.8	7.7	District 15	0	62.2	37.8	59.5	29.7	10.8	Column %	District 4
0	4	8.5	5.9	3	11.3	District 16	0	2.7	4.8	4.4	3.8	0	Row %	District 5
0	39.1	60.9	52.2	17.4	30.4	District 17	0	42.9	57.1	64.3	35.7	0	Column %	District 6
33.3	8.4	6.7	7.9	8.3	8.1	District 18	16.7	9.3	8.5	10.3	8.3	6.5	Row %	District 7
6.3	59.4	34.4	50	34.4	15.6	District 19	2.8	58.3	38.9	58.3	30.6	1	Column %	District 8
0	4.9	2.4	4.4	2.3	4.8	District 20	0	9.7	6.7	6.4	12.9	4.8	Row %	District 9
0	73.3	26.7	60	20	20	District 21	0	66.7	33.3	39.4	51.5	9.1	Column %	District 10
0	0.9	7.9	2	3	11.3	District 22	0	5.3	2.4	3.9	3	6.5	Row %	District 11
0	13.3	86.7	26.7	26.7	56.7	District 12	0	75	25	50	25	25	Column %	District 1
16.7	2.7	5.5	3	5.3	4.8	District 13	16.7	3.1	4.2	3.9	5.3	0	Row %	District 2
6.3	37.5	56.3	37.5	43.8	18.8	District 14	6.7	46.7	46.7	53.3	46.7	0	Column %	District 3
0	1.8	1.2	3	0	0	District 15	0	4	1.2	2	3	4.8	Row %	District 4
0	66.7	33.3	100	0	0	District 16	0	81.8	18.2	36.4	36.4	27.3	Column %	District 5
0	4	4.2	3.4	3	8.1	District 17	0	1.3	1.8	2	0.8	1.64	Row %	District 6
0	56.3	43.8	43.8	25	31.3	District 18	0	50	50	66.7	16.7	16.7	Column %	District 7
0	4	3.6	3	6.1	1.6	District 19	0	7.1	3	4.9	5.3	6.5	Row %	District 8
0	60	4.0	40	53.3	6.7	District 20	0	76.2	23.8	47.6	33.3	19	Column %	District 9
0	2.2	3.0	2.5	2.3	3.2	District 21	0	1.3	1.8	1	2.3	1.6	Row %	District 10
0	50	50	50	30	20	District 22	0	50	50	33.3	50	16.7	Column %	District 11

## Results

As Table 2 demonstrates, among the 22 districts of Tehran, the highest level of social capital is to be found in district 20 which constitutes 12.5% of the whole sample population. Districts 21 and 16 which form 6.7% (each or total) and district 10 which forms 6.8% of the sample population are next. Regarding average social capital, the highest level is to be found in district 9 which accounts for 100% of the respondents in this district. Following that are district 12 with 46.7%, district 17 with 40% and district 3 with 35.7%. Finally, regarding low social capital, district 1 with 56.7%, district 19 with 50%, and district 4 with 44.4% have the highest level.

Regarding social solidarity, as it can be seen from the table, the highest level of social solidarity among the 22 districts of Tehran is in district 11 which accounts for 16.7% of its whole respondents. Districts 13 with 14.3% and district 10 with 15.4% of its sample population are next. But the highest level in the hierarchy of average social solidarity belongs to district 21 with 46.7% of its sample population. It is followed by district 17 with 40%, and district 3 with 35.7% of its respondents. Concerning the low social solidarity, the highest level belongs to district 5 with 97%, after which comes district 4 with 91.7%, and district 19 with 83.3% of their sample population.

When it comes to social trust among young girls in Tehran, the highest level in high social trust hierarchy belongs to district 6 with 31.1% of its whole respondents. District 5 with 24.2%, and district 13 with 23.1% of their respondents are next on the list. For average social trust, the highest level is for district 18 with 68.8%, followed by district 14 with 60.9%, and district 5 with 57.6% of their respondents. Regarding low social trust, the highest level is found to be in district 2 with 78.4%, followed by district 1 with 70%, and district 4 with 69.4% of their respondents.

As the table shows, the highest level in the hierarchy of high ethical values among 22 districts of Tehran belongs to district 17 with 56.7% of its whole respondents, district 20 with 31.3%, and district 14 with 30.4% of their respondents. For average ethical values, the highest level is found in district 13 with 53.8%, followed by district 21 with 53.3%, and district 5 with 51.5% of their sample population. Furthermore, district 1 with 73.3% has the highest level for low ethical values, followed by district 9 with 66.7%, and district 3 with 64.3% of their respondent population.

One of the most important components of social capital is social participation. The status of this construct in different districts of Tehran is such that the highest level is in district 17 with 56.7% of its whole respondents. District 12 with 63.6%, and district 14 with 60.9% of their respondents are next. Regarding average social participation, district 8 has the highest level which includes 81.8% of its respondents, followed by district 10 with 76.2%, and district 16 with 73.3% of their respondents. Finally, the highest level for low social participation is found to belong to district 13 with 7.7%, followed by district 7 with 6.7% and districts 18 and 15 with 6.3% .

**Table 3** *The Results of Correlation Test for the Factors Affecting Social Capital*

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Type of test	Result of correlation test	<i>p</i> value	Type of relationship	Strength of correlation
Feeling of worthiness	Social capital	Pearson correlation	Confirmed	.006	Positive	.144
Feeling of inability	Social capital	Pearson correlation	Confirmed	0.00	Negative	.183
Mental health	Social capital	Pearson correlation	Not confirmed	--	--	--
Self-confidence	Social capital	Pearson correlation	Not confirmed	--	--	--
Constructive belief	Social capital	Pearson correlation	Not confirmed	--	--	--
Positive ambitiousness	Social capital	Pearson correlation	Not confirmed	--	--	--

Surprisingly, the statistics showing the level of social capital and its components in different districts of Tehran are not similar. Similarities could only be found between the statistics related to high social participation and high ethical values in districts 17 and 1, and also between the statistics related to low social capital and low social solidarity in districts 19 and 4.

## Results of the Regression of Independent Variables on Social Capital

According to Table 3, the direct correlation of social capital with the "feeling of worthiness" and its indirect correlation with the "feeling of inability" is confirmed, but its correlation with other variables such as self-confidence, mental health, constructive belief and ambitiousness is not proved to be statistically significant.

The coefficient of correlation between the dependent variable "participation" and linear combination of independent variables (in order of significance in explaining the dependent variable, that is "feeling of worthiness" and "feeling of inability"), is found to be 0.25. Its coefficient of determination is 0.055, meaning that the variance of the variable "social capital", as defined by the variables in the analysis, is 0.055, which is significant ( $p < 0.00$ ) though weak.

**Table 4: Results of Regression of Independent Variables on Social Capital**

Variable	B	Beta	t value	p
Feeling of worthiness	0.06	0.153	3.03	.003
Feeling of inability	-0.067	- 0.188	- 3.72	.000
Width of the Source	1.755	---	21.27	.000

Based on B value (coefficient of regression), the Multiple Regression Equation can be shown as:

$$\text{Social participation} = 1.755 + (0.06)(\text{feeling of worthiness}) + (-0.067)(\text{feeling of inability})$$

## Conclusion

Social capital has been one of the most useful concepts that has expanded not only to the universities, but also in executive and political arenas in the world. Considering globalization and the decreasing role of national governments, this concept has attracted the attention of policy-makers and social political authorities as a practical and necessary solution to the problems hindering the way to development (Wareny, 1999). Undoubtedly, if we become informed about the status of social capital and move towards increasing and operationalizing it, we can step up the efforts to

foster faster development more steadily, and empower the citizens more efficiently and effectively, especially in local and regional contexts.

The status of social capital for single and young women in Tehran is not very good, though there are grounds for hope. In fact, the level of social capital is about average. However, in most cases, the trend is below average rather than above. This seems to be the case in most of the districts in Tehran. Among the social capital components, social participation seems to be in a better status than other indices, and even in some districts, the level of social participation seems to be very high, which is a hopeful sign considering the important role it plays in forming social capital; but the status of solidarity is very low in almost all districts. Among the other components, social trust and ethical values have an average status, though social trust is at a better status than ethical values.

Despite the theoretical understanding and the existing body of research, which explain and elucidate the interaction between mental factors and social capital, in this study, the interaction between many of these factors and social capital is not confirmed, and in cases that the correlation is confirmed, it is not very strong. On the whole, only a small proportion of the changes in the variable 'social capital' is attributable to (and could be predicted by) the mental factors considered in this study. However, the variable 'feeling of worthiness' has a greater role in explaining social capital than the variable 'feeling of inability'.

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