

Trust; A Dimension Beyond Economic Solutions?

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Dear Editor;

It was reported that the First Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran had emphasized public trust beyond economic solutions in implementing economic programs and emphasized the role of the elite in raising social capital (1).

Trust is an essential component of social capital. It is defined as belief or confidence in the reliability and truthfulness, of a person or thing (2).

There are different views on the relationship between social capital and the economic situation (3,4). One group defines social capital as unrelated to economic concepts, and the other group identifies it as the foundation of healthy economic opportunities. In the second perspective, social capital in public health also has an impact in the areas of economic redistribution and political performance in the public and private sectors (5).

Due to its unique circumstances, Iran has always witnessed the economic impact of the situation over the past few decades (6). The economic problems associated with the eight-year war in Iran, the severe economic recovery afterward, and the widespread economic sanctions that have intensified over the past few years have always caused many economic problems for Iranian society.

In addition, Iran's specific climatic conditions have caused natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods at many times and added to the burden of problems. These external conditions, along with some economic policies, have raised concerns about the future economic stagnation of Iranian society. This feature, in many situations, has abandoned many of the common theories.

In one of the latest academic studies in Iran, the amount of social capital and trust in Iran was above average (7). But aside from these academic analyzes, what is seen in today's Iranian society has been the increase in social capital among Iranian residents, especially in the face of serious crises and challenges.

What is happening in program management and policies related to various social, economic and political crises is the strong role of social capital and its cognitive components (trust) (2). High level of trust and enormous

social capital during the imposed war, the formation of bonding and bridging social capital during the post-war construction period, and high participation in natural disaster relief are examples. It is as if a different paradigm of social capital prevails in Iran.

In the current period when Iran is under severe economic sanctions, the issue that has played a role in the historical memory of the Iranian people, is the existence of public trust and social capital and other components to cope with the difficult livelihoods of the country and to come up with solutions to exit the situation.

Various studies have pointed to the relationship

between social capital and trust with increased resilience capacity, adaptation, and recovery. These changes can be a way to improve mental health at the community level (8).

Trust and social capital is something that has been the focus of policymakers and government officials in the historical context of our country and expressing and expanding its meaning is one of the duties of the country's health authorities.

As such, it can be hoped that this large amount of social capital, and its widespread expansion, can pave the way for many of the country's problems in various fields, especially economic problems.

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