

## Social and Economic Factors Affecting Socialization of Children (A Case Study of District 4, Ahvaz)

<sup>1</sup>Bahram Nikbakhsh and <sup>2</sup>Mehran Hafezi

<sup>1</sup>Faculty Member of Payam Noor University, Khuzestan, Iran.

<sup>2</sup>Faculty Member of Islamic Azad University, Masjed Soleiman, Iran.

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the most significant socio-economic factors affecting socialization of the children in the family in a survey method. Population in this research consists of residents of municipal district 4 in Ahvaz. A sample of 338 people were selected by questionnaire and analyzed by SPSS software. This research was comprised of 4 hypotheses. According to the statistical hypothesis tests, there was a significant relationship between religious commitment and socialization of children in the family and an insignificant relationship between parents' education and socialization of children in the family. There was also a significant relationship between family income and socialization of children, and finally there was not any relationship between parents' occupation and socialization of children. The results of the study showed that social factors such as the mass media, especially television, peers and friends, education, family and strengthening of religious beliefs play an important role in the socialization of children.

*Keywords:* Socialization, strengthening of religious beliefs, socio-economic factors.

### INTRODUCTION

To be a perfect person and acquire the necessary skills for effective and active participation in social life, a human infant needs to learn all available patterns norms, namely values, skills, beliefs and patterns of thought and action that are necessary for social life. To remain sustainable, every society is required to transfer these patterns from old generation to the new generation; otherwise sooner or later it will be doomed to failure and deterioration. Family, school, peers, and the mass media are the factors which play an important role in achieving this goal. Although families do their utmost to directly or indirectly help children in the process of socialization and their conformity with values and social behaviors, at the same time along with efforts to transfer knowledge and technical and vocational skills, schools take children and young students into their system as raw materials and after a series of interactions with the transmission of values, norms and social attitudes to students gives them out as cooked products [10].

However, it should be noted that if the method used in schools is not compatible with family upbringing, children are likely to behave differently and even in contrast to what they have been trained in school as soon as they leave the school. If the existing contradictions between these two generation training centers are not resolved in a thoughtful

manner, and if their targets remain inconsistent with each other, the life of the younger generation will be wasted and they are likely to bear malice against community.

Cyril Burt, one of leading researchers in psychology states that human personality is influenced by two main factors:

1. Inheritance factor
2. Environmental factor

Meanwhile, he believes that environmental factor is mainly responsible for training and consists of the following two sections:

a) Internal factors: These factors are originated in the family, and are as follows:

1- Household economic status-High or low family size, perfection or deficiency of comfort and the quality of feeding the family members are the factors that indicate the family's financial situation.

2- Good family relationships, especially with the key members can lead to the academic, occupational and emotional progress in children. On the contrary, an inappropriate family relationship can lead to family break up, frustration and deviation of the family members. Warm and intimate relationship between parents brings comfort and peace of mind for children; on the contrary, a cold and unfriendly relationship can cause them anxiety and stress.

b) External environmental factors include: Friends, schools, entertainment places and work places [6].

### *Problem Statement:*

Socio-economic factors are as components of a whole. If we recognize society as a whole, therefore, these two factors can be considered as components of the society. Human is the center of these social factors. In other words, human is the most important social factor which plays an important role in leading and commanding these factors just like brain which is one of the most important organs in the body and gives orders to all members of the body. Socio-economic factors have always been and still are able to change and transform. With the exception that in the past, social and economic factors had a simple structure but now they are far too complicated. Human being has always been influenced and complied with socio-economic factors out of habit and has transferred the habit from generation to generation. So that the habits born of their parents and ancestors fantasies are worshipped as a goddess temple or Holy Spirit, and any disobedience is contrary to the divine command and do not deserve a punishment less the death.

On the one hand, socio-economic factors are used as playthings in the hands of puppeteers and fortunetellers to deceive people with their own game and lead them in their desired way. On the other hand, time socio-economic factors have always been able to solve many of the human problems by relying on the orders of God, religious leaders, philosophers and academic scientists [2].

Social factors along with human assistance have been always overcome the problems caused by natural disasters. When humans lived a primitive life they were not able to defeat natural disasters such as flood, hurricane, earthquake and other natural factors. By becoming socialized they learned to build dams and strong buildings in order to overcome the flood, hurricane and earthquake, and to double their victory with the help of other social and economic factors. Each of these factors has somehow an impact on society but when they form a networking relationship they can significantly affect the society. All tools and facilities are available for humans to achieve the highest social goals. If human beings as the most important factor influencing community make any attempt to achieve the highest goals of the society, it can be said that social and economic factors have been significantly effective. Socio-economic factors of any kind are effective in the socialization of children. Teaching methods, the content of educational books and school discipline play an important role in the socialization of children. Elementary and middle schools try to socialize the stages of childhood and adolescence, and at the high school stage, attempts are made to socialize the youth, who are expected to have a higher accountability [3].

Economic factors have long since influenced children's socialization. So that in ancient times, fathers used to take their sons with them to market

place for exchanging their goods and harvests in return for other products in order to teach them trading methods. In the midst of trading, children learned social skills, became familiar with other people and their ideas. Economic crossroad, a place where many people came from across the country or the world to exchange their products with those of the others was a suitable environment to exchange ideas with others. In this way they were being acquainted with people from other communities having different socio-economic cultures and beliefs. Craftsmen children were taught craft works by their fathers to not only assist them in their work but also continue the career of their ancestors. Because, this craft could provide social relationships with other children and as well as other crafts, and help them to become socialized [11].

### *Theoretical Framework:*

#### *Factors Affecting Socialization of Children:*

##### *1. The Role of the Family in Identity Formation:*

Family is the foundation of social life and the first training center for children. Family institution is the first and the most important social environment. Children from birth are brought up in the family; and then, alongside making relationship with other social institutions they continue their relations with their family. Although family today is less effective due to the displacement of the roles, it has never lost its impact on the children. In view of Anthony Giddens, socialization in today society occurs first in a small family background. Most British children spent the first years of their life within a family unit consisting of mother, father and perhaps one or two other children. On the contrary, aunts, uncles and grandchildren in many other cultures are often parts of a family unit, and are responsible for taking care of the younger children. According to Will Durant, family is the first social unity that children become interested in. Their moral development develops with their love and loyalty to the older members of the family to the extent that even their wide homeland seems narrow to their eyes. Family is a workplace, a worship center, the court justice, an education center for transcendental life; it is also a way of lifestyle. Family is having the understanding and cooperation of pure transcendental sweetness of life and the only law governing it, psychological and moral law, love and sacrifice. In view of Cohen, parents experience plays an important role in children's success. They are surprised to see that their experiences can be a barrier to their children's success. Teenage relationships with parents are effective in the formation of their identity [8].

##### *2. School Role in Identity formation:*

School is a social institution, and represents a culture in which school is a component. It conveys the worldview, manners and customs, skills and

certain knowledge to children. School is a micro-social system where children learn moral rules, social norms, attitudes and ways of communicating with others. Schools often provide a network of peers groups for children and adolescence. The existence of other children, teachers and curriculum planning underlie the influence of schools. Parsons defined the three main functions of schools as follows: The first function of a school is socialization of new generation with the dominant values in the society, particularly with the values outside of the family environment, and more specifically with the values in the world of work. School children are taught to internalize the values of universality, performance, features and emotional neutrality. Children are not much involved in these values within family environment. From this perspective, school is the main socialization environment for economic and intellectual motivations and typical values of industrial society. The second function of a school is education and preparation of human resources to imagine different kinds of industrial society. The third function of a school is the close relationship with scientific research in the higher education level. From this perspective, school is a place of creativity, innovation and change.

University is not only a transfer of knowledge from generation to generation, but a locus of knowledge production, review and reinterpretation of the existing knowledge.

What are the characteristics of socially mature students?

- 1- Have a high self-confidence.
- 2- Respect themselves and others.
- 3- Are responsible for their actions.
- 4- Participate in group activities.
- 5- Are not suffering from social anxiety disorder such as: Fear of being in a social situation and fear of public places [5].

### 3. Peers Group:

Peers are involved in the formation of personality, social behavior and each other's values in unique ways. Children interact with each other by emulating imitable actions, reinforcing or punishing certain responses and evaluating each other's activities or feedbacks. Friends can support children and make them feel secure. Friends are considered as trustworthy therapists and role models for children and evaluate their behaviors, since children's criteria are not the same as adults. Peers form teenagers' second world. The world of parents and peers: These two worlds can exist together while they have a small common part. Peers world subculture which is in many ways influenced by a larger culture in which children live has a history, collective organization and the means of transferring customs from generation to generation. Students learn important social skills from their peers which they could never learn from their parents. During adolescence, young

people keep away from family and give more importance to their friend groups. They are being influenced by their friends from different dimensions. Teenagers have more intimate relationship with their friends than their family members. They actually gain most of their sexual and non-sexual information from their friends. Teenagers select their friends from those who share similar interests, values, beliefs and attitudes; because they are more supportive and have similar behavior and leisure time entertainment, and they have the same attitude towards school and academic development [10].

### 4. The Mass Media:

The reason of why the mass media are considered to be important factors in socialization is that they help children learn the values and norms of the society. They present books, Television, movies, magazines and different patterns of role playing to individuals, so that they can emulate the behavioral patterns. More importantly, individuals learn different aspects of their culture through mass media; otherwise they could not have been achieved.

Experts say that the standard use of television among children and adolescence is one hour per day. However, parents nowadays worry about the excessive use of visual media by their children. Accordingly, television leaves more positive and negative effects on its viewers, especially children, than any other media. Although 7 days in a year has been assigned to children, with the hope that educational units, administrators and families may devote more time and attention to children, it seems not even in one week topics like children's right and enrichment of fundamental activities for children are to be considered properly. Let's not forget that children also have their share in society and family [3].

### 5. Religion:

Religion is a refuge and support that gives meaning and direction to our life. Religion is a belief system or the beliefs that determine our relationship with the world. By participation in the religious ceremonies, moral authority in the society is openly felt, and moral and social sentiments are strengthened and renewed as well. Therefore, religious ceremonies create and maintain social cohesion and solidarity. Religion as part of a culture is dealing with sacred symbols and their functions to incorporate humans' morals, that is, the tone, character and quality of life, moral and aesthetic style and mode of their lives with their worldview, the same image they are expecting from the facts about performance, and universal ideas about discipline [9]. Religiosity, being the same as believing in the centrality and omnipresence of God has always accompanied Iranian culture. It should be noted that, religion is defined as a complex set of revelation, doctrine, language, philosophy, mysticism, and

above all, ethics. In other words, religion is defined as patterns of thought, behavior and culture within the framework and based on the revelation in a world of eternal salvation and tranquility [1].

*The Importance and Necessity of research:*

Research is important since it helps to identify the effect of internal and external factors on children's not socializing and their isolation from society, and the factors that make children become anti-social, and finally, to delete these negative factors from the minds of children and establish a modern and correct process of socialization. The reason why research is so important is that, it is a key to solve the bottlenecks of social and economic factors in the process of socialization in children, can lead these factors and underlie their evolution, and restore hope in the socialization of children. The importance of research indicates that to reach a certain reality, there is no choice but to perform an investigation. In other words, there is only one way by which issues are clarified, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, and right and wrong are separated from each other, distinctions and truths are revealed; and that is research. Research is the root of understanding the effects of social and economic factors on socialization of children. Without research everything is baseless and unfounded, and has no legal force. Since in the world of acquisition and attainment changes in the manner of social stratification can influence job situation and social bases. In a powerful and constructive interaction environment, children better understand the customs, values and rules; and can well determine their favorable position in the future, using this systematic knowledge. From the perspective of the families, people and authorities, the necessity for normal socialization and personification is a matter that could be agreed.

*Research Background:*

The growing role and importance of education on the one hand, and the need for attention to social dimensions of education on the other hand, drew the attention of social science to this important social institution. According to Durkheim, social facts can influence individual behavior. To understand his definition of education, it is important to note that: Adults can influence the individuals who are not yet ready for social life through education. The purpose of education is to boost physical, mental, intellectual and certain moral states in children which are required by political community and the certain environment where children belong. Durkheim believed that the role of education is to fit children into the social system. In Durkheim's view, the function of education is to preserve social stability and socialize the individuals. He believed that education produces a human which is determined by society [1].

Family is the first social group an individual joins in. Family is the first agent of socialization in childhood. Family is where children learn language, values and moral rules, and social relationship with others. Family is a filter that offers children beliefs, values, and attitudes on social culture in a very specific and selective manner. Family is where individuals learn their first social roles. They learn what is expected of them and what kind of relationship they should have with others. Children recognize their self-image within the family social conditions. Children take with them a set of role behaviors and certain self-images which they have acquired within the family environment to school. Children's experience at school and join the peer groups may change their behaviors and self-images, or even strengthen them.

A peer groups is an important factor in socialization. Peer groups are group of friends of the same age. In some cultures, especially in traditional small communities, peer groups are recognized as age classes. Every generation has rights and responsibilities which are subject to change with the members getting older. (The age classes are usually limited to men). There are some special rites that specify person's transition from one age class to another. People within a certain age class, usually establish a lasting friendship with each other.

Mead and Piaget theories each rightly emphasize the importance of peer relationships. Piaget particularly emphasizes the fact that peer relationships are more democratic than parents-children relationships. The word peer means equal; and the friendship among young children has reasonably a tendency to seek equality. A strong child, or physically strong may try to dominate others. Nevertheless, since peers relationships are based on mutual consent, and not the inherent interdependence in the family, so there should be plenty of give and take in their relationships [5]. According to Piaget, due to their powers, parents are able to (to varying degrees) impose rules of behavior to their children. On the contrary, children in peer groups discover different interactions in which the rules of behavior can be tested and explored. Peer relationships often continue to remain important throughout their lives. Especially in areas where social mobility is limited, people may be most or all of their lives a member of an unofficial coterie, or may keep a group of friends. Even in areas with high social mobility, it is likely that peer relationships have beyond childhood and adolescence a significant impact on their lives. Informal groups of people who are of the same age, in the work place or in other areas, have usually an important role in shaping attitudes and behaviors of individuals.

In developed societies, the mass media play an important role in the process of socialization. People in these societies spend a lot of time reading books, newspapers and magazines, watching TV and

movies, and listening to radio. By instilling the feeling that what they transfer is the true reflection of the society, not only the mass media can reinforce social norms, they can also distort them. However, the mass media are not the only source to determine social norms for individuals. For example: The mass media have profoundly influenced the members of modern societies. In their investigation on the consequences of watching TV, socialists should be noted that most children from age three to age sixteen devote more time to watching TV than the time they spent in the classroom. Devoting such a great time to watching TV has caused it to have the most important role in the process of socialization.

#### Research Objectives & Methods:

One of the main objectives of this research is to identically and practically recount the impacts of socio-economic factors on socialization of children in the family, and that how jobs, education, family income and religious beliefs affect socialization.

This is a case study survey research which was conducted in District 4, Ahvaz. The results were obtained in the framework of structured questionnaires and analyzed through SPSS software.

#### Data Collection Method:

Due to the extent of population and the need for a proper generalizability, we used classification method proportional to population size. Since the samples should be extracted and questioned from 9 districts of Ahvaz, therefore, each district was specifically surveyed and as a result district 4 was selected for sampling.

#### Population and Statistical Sample:

Population in this research consisted of all parents residing in District 4 Ahvaz (with a population of over 20000 people) who had at least 2 children over 14 years. Samples were obtained based on the reliability and validity, and test divisibility as follows: District 9, Golestan, Shahrake Daneshgah, Farhang-shahr, Nehzat-abad, Pardis, Baharestan, Mojahed, Baghaie and Moienzadeh with a total population of 338 people were questioned. Baghaie and Golestan had the lowest and highest population, respectively.

#### Results and Research Inferential Statistics:

1- The relationship between commitment to religious beliefs and socialization of children.

**Table 1:** The relationship between commitment to religious beliefs and socialization of children.

Correlations				
			adherence to religious beliefs	socialization of children
Kendall's tau_b	adherence to religious beliefs	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.340**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	338	338
	socialization of children	Correlation Coefficient	.340**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	338	338

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Considering the sequential variables of this hypothesis, we used Toby Kendall Test to test this hypothesis. The significance level sig=0.000 was smaller than  $p=0.05$  (sig < 0.05). Therefore, the above hypothesis is confirmed. It could be said that the stronger the beliefs and spirituality of family

members are, the more the children become socialized. A socialization that due to trader's beliefs can be positive and consistent with the values and norms of the society.

2- The relationship between education and socialization of children

**Table 2:** The relationship between education and socialization of children.

Correlations				
			level of education	socialization of children
Spearman's rho	level of education	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.030
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.580
		N	338	338
	socialization of children	Correlation Coefficient	.030	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.580	.
		N	338	338

Considering the sequential and non-parametric variables of this hypothesis, we used Spearman correlation to test this hypothesis. The significance level sig=0.580 was greater than  $p=0.05$  (sig > 0.05). Therefore, the above hypothesis is rejected. The way children are socialized is not affected by promotion

of their social interactions in the community and the level of trader's education. According to above hypothesis, educated people have not necessarily a higher degree of sociability and vice versa.

3- The relationship between family income and children's sociability

**Table 3:** The relationship between family income and children's sociability.

Correlations				
			income	socialization of children
Spearman's rho	Income	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.049
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.0491
		N	338	338
	socialization of children	Correlation Coefficient	.049	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.369	.
		N	338	338

Considering the sequential and non-parametric variables of this hypothesis, we used Spearman correlation to test this hypothesis. The significance level  $\text{sig}=0.0491$  that is ( $\text{sig} < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the above hypothesis is rejected. The level of children's sociability and its severity and weaknesses is not affected by family income. The rich are not

necessarily more sociable and vice versa. This is a relative issue, and a function of a combination of factors. In this regard, family income is one of the most important factors.

4- The relationship between father's occupational status and socialization of children

**Table 4:** The relationship between father's occupational status and socialization of children.

Correlations				
			condition of job	socialization of children
Kendall's tau_b	condition of job	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.001
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.980
		N	338	338
	socialization of children	Correlation Coefficient	.001	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.980	.
		N	338	338

Considering the sequential and non-parametric variables of this hypothesis, we used Toby Kendall Test to test this hypothesis. The significance level  $\text{sig}=0.980$  that is ( $\text{sig} > 0.05$ ). Therefore, the above hypothesis is rejected. So, there is not a relationship between socialization of children and their fathers' occupation. In other words, fathers with high level occupations have not necessarily sociable children and vice versa. Duo to its non-parametric characteristic, this too is a multi-level and relative issue and a function of socio-economic factors.

#### Discussion and conclusion:

##### *Hypothesis 1: The relationship between Commitment to Religious Beliefs and Socialization of Children:*

The first hypothesis is about the relationship between commitment to religious beliefs and children's socialization in the family. The significance level of this hypothesis is  $\text{sig}=0.000$ .

The hypothesis show that the significance level is smaller than 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ), and it is confirmed. Therefore, there has been a high commitment to religious beliefs among people from ancient times, and has its roots in the intellectual foundation of the people in our society. Such beliefs have long been acknowledged and transferred from generation to generation, and like a chain have connected people over the years; so that they are not likely to cut the chain. They have a certain bias towards religion, and are even willing to sacrifice their lives for their beliefs.

They feel empty without these beliefs. They feel their lives are absurd. Their life and death is

dependent on their beliefs. In fact, religious beliefs are an inevitable part of their lives and many people think positively towards religion. Therefore, children who live in these families will undoubtedly be affected by their family beliefs. They and their families will testify for their beliefs with their lives. Religious beliefs help children to learn socialization and be sociable. In fact, socialization of people has been one of the main objectives of religious beliefs, that is, understanding their fellowman, feel pity towards each other, and even sacrifice their lives for their fellowman. According to what mentioned above, socialization of children will undoubtedly be increased by strengthening their religious beliefs. The commitment to religious beliefs has led children to social homogeneity, which has a great impact on reinforcement of human and social capital in the society.

##### *Hypothesis 2: The Relationship between Parents' Education and Socialization of Children in the Family:*

The significance level obtained from this hypothesis 0.580 is higher than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ), therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. Parents' financial problems and their lower level of education are the important factors that can affect socialization of children in two ways. Parents' education at different levels and depending on other circumstances can affect the process of children's socialization. Many of the parents have lower educational levels which can facilitate or limitate the process of socialization. Since children of these

parents belong to a new generation, they need to be involved in the modern society. Therefore, having parents with lower education, and the gap from the past will not help children in the process of socialization. Lack of adequate funding makes it difficult for parents to be educated, and children not to be able to learn from their parents. The lower the education of parents is, the less likely they can affect the socialization and interaction of their children.

*Hypothesis 3: The Relationship between Family Income and Socialization of Children in the Family:*

Given that the significant level 0.0491 is higher than  $p < 0.05$  and ( $p < \text{sig} = 0.00$ ), therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. With a low family income, most of the material and immaterial needs of the family cannot be provided. In fact, in addition to providing material and immaterial needs, family income can help children in socialization. When family income is at a level that fails to meet the needs of children, they will hardly find any opportunity for socialization and being in the society. For example, Computer is a physical device which connects us to the community; and children that their parents are not able to buy one because of their low income cannot use social information which is somehow needed for socialization. Anyway, the income of many families is so low and limited that they can barely satisfy their basic needs and obtain a mouthful of bread for their children. They spend all their time and energy to earn a living. Therefore, low income of the family plays an important role in social exclusion of children and limitation of their legitimate opportunities. However, according to the rejection of the hypothesis, the amount of acquisition of children's social interactions and development of their social world cannot be the outcome of the parents' income.

*Hypothesis 4: The Relationship between Fathers' Occupational Status and Socialization of Children in the Family:*

Given that the significance level  $\text{sig} = 0.980$  is higher than  $p = 0.05$  that is ( $p < \text{sig}$ ), therefore, this hypothesis is rejected. Since there are different occupations in the society, each job has its particular position. Unfortunately, in many occupations, parents spend more time working on their profession and so they are not able to take positive steps in socialization of their children. Whereas, many jobs give priority just to meet the material needs of the community, therefore, other priorities such as children's position in society and their influence are being ignored. Some of the occupations with a lower or higher level of social status have little impact on socialization of children or don't have any role in children's socialization. Many occupations represent the income and educational status of the individuals; therefore, people with lower level jobs who have undoubtedly lower education and income will not be

able to have an impact in the socialization of their children. Some businesses like shop keeping and building contractor have a good income and social status. But, the owners of these jobs are not necessarily well educated, and this low level of education can play an important role in their entering into social world or their social acceptability.

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