RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PERSONAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL TEHRAN, IRAN

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By

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June 2012

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The study was designed to determine the relationship between personal, environmental and organizational factors and citizen participation in neighborhood councils in Tehran, Iran. Citizen participation plays a relevant role in many community settings, but the major puzzle was the lack of resident participation which threatened potential success of efforts at the local level. A conceptual model was developed to identify relationships between personal, environmental and organizational factors that contribute to citizen participation. Each of the factors included several variables.

In order to achieve the goals of study, a cross-sectional survey design was applied and the data were gathered through personal interviews using a set of questionnaires. The data were collected from 250 respondents which were randomly selected from five neighborhood councils in Iran. Descriptive analysis,
Pearson product moment correlation and structural equation modeling (SEM) were employed for analyzing the data.

The findings of descriptive study showed that the majority of the respondents were female (57.2%) and single (60.8%). Mean of the respondent’s age was 36 years and the average total monthly income was 3.5 million Rials per month. The study showed that 43.6% of respondents had completed or obtained a bachelor’s degree. More than three quarter (64%) of respondents had a job, while 35.2% of respondents were unemployed. The average duration of participation in neighborhood councils was two years and four months. Only 41.6% of respondents stated their position as active participants in neighborhood councils. The most important residents’ sources of knowledge on neighborhood council activities were through their friends/neighbors (48.8%). The study also showed that the level of citizen participation in neighborhood councils was moderate; however, citizens preferred greater involvement in social and environmental rather than economical activities.

Pearson’s correlation analysis showed that there was a high positive correlation between perceived knowledge, organizing skills and sense of community with citizen participation; while there was a medium positive correlation between self-efficacy, perceived trust, organizational factors and norms for activism with citizen participation; and finally there was a small and positive correlation between neighborhood problems and citizen participation.
The results of hypotheses testing with the structural model showed strong relationships between perceived knowledge, organizing skill, perceived trust, and sense of community and citizen participation. The results of the overall model showed that there were no significant relationship between self efficacy, perceived neighborhood problems and organizational factors. The result also showed that norms for activism cannot mediate between sense of community and citizen participation.

Based on the structural equation model the between individual factors, perceived knowledge and between environmental factors sense of community had the most significant contribution in predicting citizen participation.

The results of this study also provided some theoretical and practical implications on citizen participation in neighborhood councils. The study recommends social cognitive theory is appropriate to explain factors influencing citizen participation. Several recommendations for improvement with respect to policy and practices of neighborhood council to increase citizen participation are suggested.
Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

HUBUNGAN ANTARA FAKTOR INDIVIDU, PERSEKITARAN DAN ORGANISASI DAN PENGLIBATAN PENDUDUK DALAM MAJLIS KEJIRANAN DI TEHRAN, IRAN

Oleh

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Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan hubungan antara faktor individu, persekitaran dan organisasi dan penyertaan penduduk dalam majlis kejiranan di Tehran, Iran. Penyertaan penduduk memainkan peranan yang penting dalam kebanyakan persekitaran komuniti, namun persoalan utama adalah berkaitan kurangnya penyertaan penduduk yang boleh menjejaskan potensi usaha dalam mencapai kejayaan di peringkat kejiranan. Model konsepsual telah dibangunkan untuk mengenal pasti hubungan antara faktor individu, persekitaran dan organisasi yang menyumbang kepada penyertaan penduduk. Setiap faktor dikaitkan dengan beberapa pembolehubah.
Bagi mencapai matlamat kajian, reka bentuk kajian berasaskan keratan rentas (cross-sectional) telah digunakan dan data dikumpulkan melalui temubual peribadi dengan menggunakan satu set soal selidik. Data yang dikumpulkan daripada 250 responden yang telah dipilih secara rawak daripada lima majlis kejiranan di Iran. Analisis deskriptif, korelasi Pearson dan permodelan persamaan struktur (SEM) telah digunakan untuk menganalisis data.

Hasil analisis deskriptif menunjukkan bahawa majoriti responden adalah perempuan (57.2%) dan bujang (60.8%). Min umur responden adalah 36 tahun dan purata pendapatan bulanan adalah 3.5 juta Rials sebulan. Kajian menunjukkan bahawa 43.6% daripada responden mempunyai ijazah Sarjana Muda. Lebih daripada tiga perempat (64%) responden mempunyai pekerjaan, manakala 35.4% daripada responden tidak bekerja. Purata jangkamasa penglibatan dalam majlis kejiranan ialah dua tahun empat bulan. Hanya 41.6% daripada responden menyatakan kedudukan mereka sebagai peserta aktif dalam majlis kejiranan. Sumber pengetahuan penduduk yang paling penting mengenai aktiviti-aktiviti kejiranan majlis adalah melalui rakan / jiran mereka (48.8%). Kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa tahap penyertaan penduduk di majlis kejiranan adalah sederhana, namun, penduduk lebih suka penglibatan yang lebih besar dalam aktiviti sosial dan persekitaran berbanding aktiviti ekonomi.

Analisis korelasi Pearson menunjukkan bahawa terdapat korelasi positif yang tinggi antara persepsi pengetahuan, kemahiran organisasi dengan penglibatan
penduduk; manakala korelasi positif yang sederhana antara kecekapan diri, melihat kepercayaan, faktor organisasi dan norma-norma untuk aktivisme dalam penglibatan warganegara; dan akhirnya terdapat korelasi positif yang kecil antara masalah kejiranan dan penglibatan penduduk.

Keputusan ujian hipotesis dengan model struktur menunjukkan hubungan yang kuat antara persepsi pengetahuan, sikap masyarakat dan penglibatan penduduk. Hasil daripada keseluruhan model menunjukkan tiada hubungan yang ketara antara kecekapan diri, masalah yang dihadapi kawasan kejiranan, serta faktor-faktor organisasi. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa norma untuk aktivisme tidak bertindak sebagai pengantara antara sikap masyarakat dan penglibatan penduduk.

Berdasarkan kepada model persamaan struktur antara faktor individu, persepsi pengetahuan dan sikap masyarakat dalam faktor persekitaran merupakan sumbangan yang penting dalam meramalkan penglibatan penduduk.

Dapatkan daripada kajian ini juga menyediakan beberapa implikasi praktikal dan teoretikal oleh penyertaan rakyat dalam majlis-majlis kawasan kejiranan. Kajian mencadangkan teori kognitif sosial adalah sesuai untuk menjelaskan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi penglibatan penduduk. Beberapa cadangan untuk penambahbaikan terhadap dasar dan amalan-amalan majlis kawasan kejiranan bagi meningkatkan penglibatan penduduk adalah disarankan.
DEDICATION

Especially for My beloved father, my kind mother, my loving husband, my sons Sadra & Sane and my daughter Leiley for their continuous support, patience and encouragement.
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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 1 June 2012 to conduct the final examination of Zeinab Barati on her thesis entitled "Relationships between Personal, Environmental, Organisational Factors, and Citizen Participation in Neighborhood Council Tehran, Iran" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any institutions.

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Date: 1 June 2012
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