

## **A Study on Changing Process of the 3rd Generation Beliefs about Political Efficacy in Iran (2001-2011)**

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**Abstract:** The political efficacy is considered as one of the factors in the utilization of political participatory process in human societies. The evaluation of the political efficacy has been a matter of importance for politician scholars. To reduce the damages caused by the lack of effectiveness, the evaluation of the political efficacy in a society can help the policy-makers decide a more precise program, therefore; an increase in political participation of the citizens can be resulted. In this study, I have tried to specify the 3rd. generation's beliefs of the Islamic Revolution during the decade leading to 2000s; using the national investigations done in the decade mentioned, research analysis in the amount of political effectiveness and finally by leveling the questionnaires. To deal the matter-using the investigation done and dividing the effectiveness into two categories namely internal and external efficacy; the sketches which demonstrated each of the above factors were extracted-the process of the changes in beliefs regarding the efficacy were drawn. In this study, I benefited from the secondary data analysis obtained from national questionnaire evaluation. The results of the study show that the changes in trust towards the political system during the decade of 2000 has a decreasing process. The findings show that the most important signs which had the most effectiveness in this decreasing process of political trust are: Inattentiveness of the authorities in submitting the affaires to the youth in doing the governmental affairs, Considering people cooperation in social activities as something unimportant, Having no relation with the people after the authorities had been elected, Misunderstanding of the youth from politics because of its complexity, Inefficient ability for political cooperation and Inability to maintain or change the political affairs.

**Key words:** Political efficacy, external efficacy, internal efficacy, the youth, inability

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The sense of political efficacy is one of the important concepts in political contribution (participation). The more competence citizens of a society feel they have in efficacy on political processes and the more accountable managers and authorities are for the needs and wants of citizens, the more optimum efficacy level the society obtains. That is why one of the concerns of political thinkers in democratic systems in recent decades has been to assess as well as to promote and improve the political efficacy of citizens by different methods. Reviewing and assessing the components of political efficacy; some of thinkers have found that education, political and social backgrounds, income level, ethnic and racial considerations have had considerable effect on the sense of efficacy of citizens. Thus, they are trying to increase the political efficacy level by teaching political sociability, improving life level and social status and contribution of ethnic, racial and gender minorities in political processes. However, some other thinkers believe that political

efficacy is considerably related to political trust; therefore increasing political trust can help improve political efficacy level.

Anyway, increasing the political efficacy level will cause people to support the political system and will bring about political stability. Therefore, trying to find the new ways of assessing this variant can help politicians carefully arrange to increase political efficacy level.

**Theoretical definition:** Political efficacy is the beliefs on which citizens think they can affect a political system. With high sense of efficacy, people believe that through their individual and collective endeavors, they can affect a political system in such a way that it is consistently accountable to the people. This concept is essentially a cognitive one including a set of beliefs concerning the citizenship role of a person related to governmental institutions revealing the efficacy of objective assessment about the political system. Campbell *et al.* (1954) have defined the political efficacy in their book "The Voter Decides" as:

Political efficacy is the feeling based on which people know that creating political and social changes are possible and the citizens consider themselves, one by one, capable of contributing in creating these changes. According to them, political efficacy has essentially a direct effect on political contribution

Niemi has divided the sense of efficacy into two categories of internal efficacy and external efficacy. Internal efficacy is the individual beliefs of people in the field of the competence to comprehend and proactive contribution in politics while external efficacy is defined as beliefs related to the accountability of authorities and governmental institutions against citizen's wants. Palizban (1970) defines political efficacy feeling as:

The sense of efficacy is defined as how people feel that their activities affect the political current of the processes and through their reactions they can be effective in governing the society

Sullivan and Riedel define this concept as: Political efficacy points to the citizens' beliefs to the fact that they can affect the political system. The concept is basically related to a series of beliefs concerning the citizen's role associated with governmental institutions and is more of a Sullivan and Riedel define:

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According to them, political efficacy can be affected by education, economic, social backgrounds, gender and ethnic position. By reviewing the constructional background of political efficacy, researchers found out that educating citizens in non-political environments would increase the internal efficacy. Political contribution affect external efficacy directly. Sullivan and Riedel argue that the decrease in external efficacy is associated with political trust and voter's contribution. As voter's trust in parties decrease, few people may take part in political arena. Scholars are rendering activities to indicate the relationship between the sense of political efficacy and political trust. In "The civic culture: political attitudes and democracy in five countries", Almond and Verba consider political efficacy as a subjective assessment of political system. In fact the sense of efficacy is related to motivation for contribution in politics. More extensively,

political efficacy can be subjectively described as not only the disposition to render a political behavior, but also the potentiality of a tremendous treasure to support the political system. In 1954, Campbell and his colleagues announced that the political efficacy can be used as the predisposition of voters. Later on, extending the studies related to political efficacy was proposed as an index and indicator for democratic systems so that Sullivan and Riedel recognize political efficacy as the barometer of the political system (Williams, 2004).

David Easton is one of the first individuals who could find a relationship between public dissatisfaction and political efficacy and trust. He declares that public dissatisfaction can cause lack of support from the political system.

In "political life: Why people Get Involved in Politics", Lane could differentiate between internal and external efficacy. He argues that internal efficacy is the effect of one person on the political process and external efficacy is the effect of a person beliefs and behavior on external processes. It is interwoven with accountability. He proposes that efficacy has a close relationship with the accountability of political system and when someone feels that the political system is accountable to people, they have a higher sense of efficacy.

In his study the concept sense of political efficacy, Balch believes that internal efficacy has a significant positive correlation with political interests, political knowledge and political activity and external efficacy has a positive correlation with political trust.

Investigating the relationship between the internal and external efficacy and other political variants, Balch explored that these two are correlated with variants of contribution in different ways. Balch argues that in order to test internal efficacy we have to test it with multiple external efficacy indicators. In this respect he tested four desired indicators with indicators such as inclination to express protest and political trust. The findings revealed that indicators which are reminded as internal efficacy by many researchers are correlated in different ways.

Prewitt's assessment of political efficacy concept in 1998 concentrates on people's experiences. To him, education, social and economic status and the position of racial minorities have a direct relationship with political efficacy and political efficacy has a direct relationship with citizen's support for democratic system.

Later on, in 2004, the study conducted by Michael *et al.* (2004) and his colleagues revealed that political efficacy has a direct relationship with contribution in democratic life. He and his colleagues tried to differentiate between desired and actual efficacy. They realized that the sense of political efficacy is directly

related to public policy and contribution in democratic life. In their research, they concluded when actual efficacy of citizens facing expectations, is unsuccessful, they inclined to individual ways of contribution more than the collective endeavors.

To them, internal efficacy is related to the person's belief concerning personal qualification to understand and contribute effectively in politics but external efficacy is related to the governmental authorities and public accountability of institutions to the citizen's wants. Wolfram schulz defines political efficacy as the feeling that political and social changes are possible and citizens can play a role in these changes (Schulz, 2005).

In modern democratic societies, citizens feel that they have the power to have an effect on their government's behavior. At the end of the twentieth century, studies led toward one of the concepts of self-efficacy which was proposed by Bandura as social cognitive theory.

According to Porteny external efficacy has a direct relationship with voting, campaigns, the political system's sense of accountability, political trust and political support. Reviewing the studies of political efficacy in psychological realm indicates that political efficacy is a view by which the person feels he affects the political processes through his political contribution-he controls and monitors the processes, thereby he can satisfy his needs.

Robert Doll believes that when people imagine what they do does not have a considerable effect on political consequences, they engage less in political affairs, in such a way that it can be said the less the person's political efficacy is, the less his political contribution will be. He names this feeling as political self-confidence.

**Concept definition:** According to many scholars the sense of political efficacy is the introduction and starter of citizens' contribution in political and social arenas. On the other hand the sense can be considered as the important result of political contribution of people. In other words the sense of political efficacy and political contribution has a mutual effect on each other.

Some scholars believe that sense of political efficacy includes two dimensions: the personal sense of political efficacy which is called internal efficacy. The sense of political efficacy recognized as external efficacy. Niemi has explained in his notes that internal efficacy is related to the individual beliefs in abilities in the political understanding and political contributions while external efficacy is related to accountability of authorities and public institutions before the citizen's wants. Internal efficacy is recognized as the efficacy of input or the personal ability of people and external efficacy is also

recognized as the efficacy of output or the accountability of system. Based on Mccluskey his colleagues, Niemi and social research center; the conceptual model is depicted as the following:

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to assess political efficacy in 2000s, the present surveys conducted in the form of national or regional research were thoroughly studied. Then a list including the proposal, the year of conduct, research realm, author and dealt topics was prepared. After that, with respect to the fact that our purpose was to review the third generation in the whole country; things like regional and local surveys published in the form of proposals and books were put aside. However, in this stage, it was tried to review the literature, sampling method and ways to determine the reliability and validity of these studies. At the end, after the necessary reviews, the following surveys which had the most conceptual relation to the concept of efficacy were selected (Table 1).

With respect to the fact that few questionnaires were used for the assessment of political efficacy, hence it was decided that the surveys of 2001-2004 were considered as the first half of 2000s and the surveys 2005-2007 as the middle of 2000s and the survey of 2010 as the end of the decade.

In order to assimilate the data in first stage with respect to the present definitions related to political trust, it was tried to select the questionnaires which were possible to have the most conceptual relation to this concept. The questionnaires then were given to 4 experts including the supervisor, the counselor and one of the other professors who had activities in the conduction of the researches. This was done to determine the validity; each of the questionnaires-in respect to the political confidence-were given the scores from 1-100. In the next stage, the questionnaires whose average given by the professors were higher than 60 were chosen.

**Assimilating the indicators:** In the next step in order to assimilate indicators and make them comparable, the criterion used for questionnaires was assimilated. i.e. through determining weighted (In statistics, the weighted mean is a kind of oriented central tendency and equals the arithmetic mean of an unequal sum of data. For each of the factors, weight is measured by specific value. Then the sum of these obtained digits is divided by the sum of weight (Wikipedia: <http://fa.wikipedia.org/wiki/>). In order to obtain mean of the weight, there are generally a 5 choices of Linker Ranges. For example, we consider the digital weight values of 1-5 for each of the question items like I accept, I don't accept, I have no ideas, I disagree and I totally disagree. Then, we multiply

Table 1: Surveys of conceptual relation to the concept of efficacy

The conducting organization	The number of questions	Sample population	Kind of survey	Year	Calendar
Ministry of culture and Islamic Guidance (ministry of culture and Islamic Guidance: 2002)	3	16824	Survey of Iranian's values and views	2001	The first half of 2000s
National organization of Youngsters (National Organization of Youngsters : 2001)	4	34521	Survey of position and views of Iranian youngsters (the final report of findings f national counseling plan of youngster)		
National organization of Youngsters (National Organization of Youngsters: 2003)	1	75301	Survey of the position and views of youngsters aged 14-29 throughout Iran	2002	
Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, winter 2003	2	5000	The values and views of Iranians (the second wave)	2003	
National Organization of Youngsters, studies and planning, 2005	4	15650	National survey of values and views of youngsters	2004	
The Center of Public Opinion Assessment of Youngsters (Ipa, 2006)	3	4879	National survey of political culture of Iranian people, the first wave	2005	The middle of 2000s
National Organization of Youngsters, studies and planning	8	4500	Survey of values and views and political behavior of youngsters	2006	
National survey of values and views of the youngsters (2006)	3	6017	National survey of values and views of youngsters		
National Organization of Youngsters (2007), National survey of values and views of the youngsters, studies and researches	6	6358	National Survey of values and views of youngsters	2007	
National Survey of Values and Views of Youngsters, the fourth book (media and citizenship rights), Tehran: The green book	9	6400		2010	The end of 2000s

the number of responders of the question items by each of the weight and then we divide the result by the total number of the responders. For example if the total number of responders in a survey is 6500, the mean weight can be calculated as:

$$X=(x1*5)+(x2*4)+(x3*3)+(x4*2)+(x5*1)/$$

mean which is usually used in Likert range .The score of each questionnaire was determined. In this stage with respect to the fact that the majority of questions had included 5 range of Likert scale the questions which had 4, 6 and 3 ranges were converted to 5 Likert ranges through the formula of IBM (To change the scales of Linker into each other, first we should find the most and the least of (maximum and minimum) the Linker ranges. For example if we want to change the scales of 1-5 into 1-7, we should change the primary scales from 0 to 1 according to the following formula, knowing that a = 1, b = 5 and a stands for the least (minimum) and b stands for the most (maximum):  $X = x - a / b - a$ , namely  $a/b - a$ , i.e., the digit in primary scale equals the digit in 0-1 scale. In the second step, we change the scale of 0-1 into the secondary scale. To do this we need to know the minimum and maximum of the new scale which are 1-7, namely we have A = 1 and B = 7, hence we can use the new equation as follows:

$$Y=[X \times (B-A)]+A$$

Namely  $(B-A)+A =$  the digit in second scale (0-1)) Company to complete the assimilation of questions.

**Statistical analysis:** Data analysis was done at both levels. In the first level analysis, it was tried to obtain the weighted average (which is generally used in Likert range) of each question. In the second level analysis it was tried to consider score weight of professors in weight average by obtaining a new indicator. In this regard, we multiplied the obtained mean by the average score of four professors and divided it by 100. The formula of this indicator is:

$$X1-X \times y/100$$

Where:

X = The weighted mean of questionnaire

S = In Likert range

Y = The mean score of professors

In the analysis of second level with respect to the fact that the minimum mean of the professors is considered as 60 so in the above formula, the base line is 1.80 (The base line is the line by which we do the measurement. In the sea, to specify the water way boarder line of the states, we use base line. In topography, it is used as a line between two points above the ground level and also for the direction and distance between the two points. The more we take aloof from the line zero above the baseline, the more positive effect on the parameter is

shown while the more we take aloof from the line zero below the baseline, the more negative effect is depicted). After depicting the line in both levels, we have an analysis under each table including the questionnaires which their weight mean is under the base line. It has been brought as the questionnaires which have the

most effect on the decrease of political trust. The comparative analysis with and without coefficient of the professor's scores exerting on the questionnaires related to the internal and external efficacy in the first half of 2000s (the surveys of the year 2001-2004) Fig. 1-2 and Table 2-3.

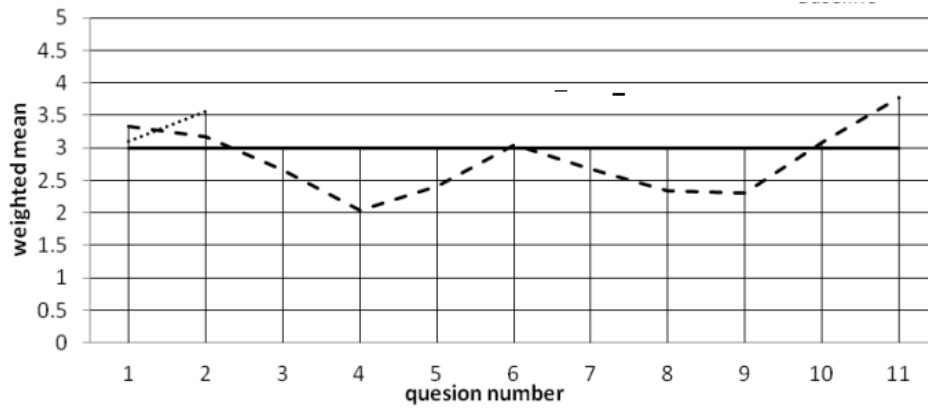


Fig. 1: Comparative line graph of internal and external efficacy in the first half of 2000s (without exerting the coefficients of professor's score) (From 2001-2004)

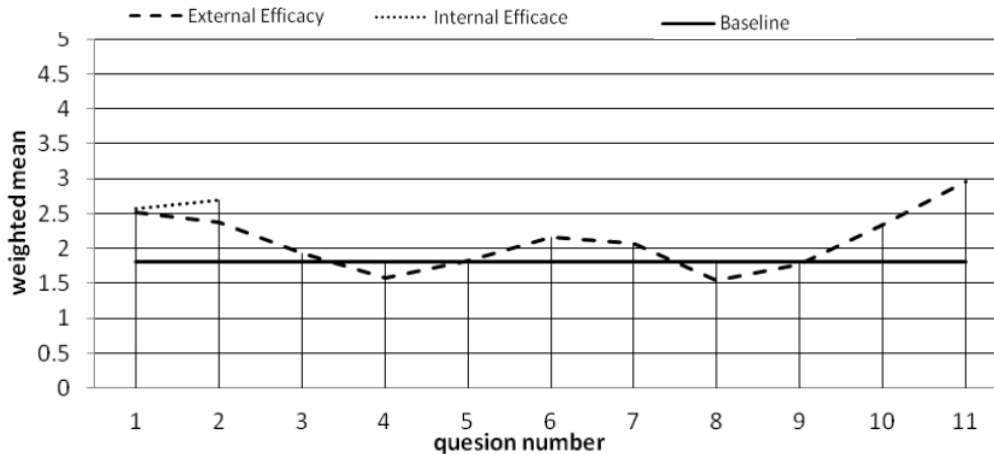


Fig. 2: Comparative line graph of internal and external efficacy in the first half of 2000s (without exerting the coefficients of professor's score)

Table 2: The indicators which have negative effect on political efficacy in the first half of 2000s (without exerting coefficients of professors' scores or the first level analysis)

Weight mean	External efficacy
2.043	In our society youngsters are not trusted to be assign responsibility (2002)
2.298	In our society youngsters are not trusted to be assign responsibility (2004)
2.346	To what extent do you think that authorities pay attention to people's wants in doing 4 the public affairs?
2.413	In our society, contribution in social practices is considered unimportant
2.676	Some people believe that the government considers the people's Votes and opinion important. What's your opinion? In your opinion, In current conditions, to what extent can people criticize the government without fear?

Table 3: The indicators which have negative effect on political efficacy in the first of 2000s (by exerting coefficients professor's score or second level analysis)

Weight mean	External efficacy
1.548	To what extent do you think that the authorities pay attention to people's wants in doing the public affairs?
1.573	In our society youngsters are not trusted in to be assigned responsibility (2002)
1.769	In our society youngsters are not trusted to be assigned responsibility (2004)
1.819	In our society, contribution in social practices is considered unimportant

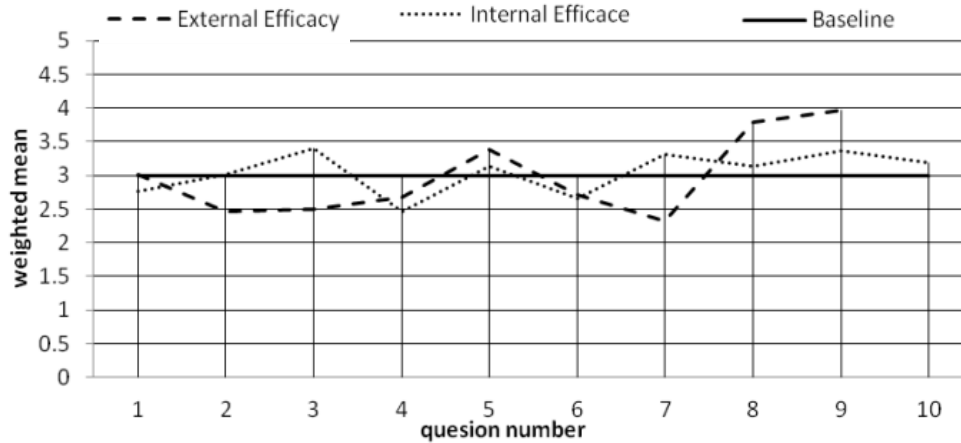


Fig. 3: Comparative line graph of internal and external efficacy in the middle 2000's (without exerting the coefficients of professors' scores) (Contribution in social activities)

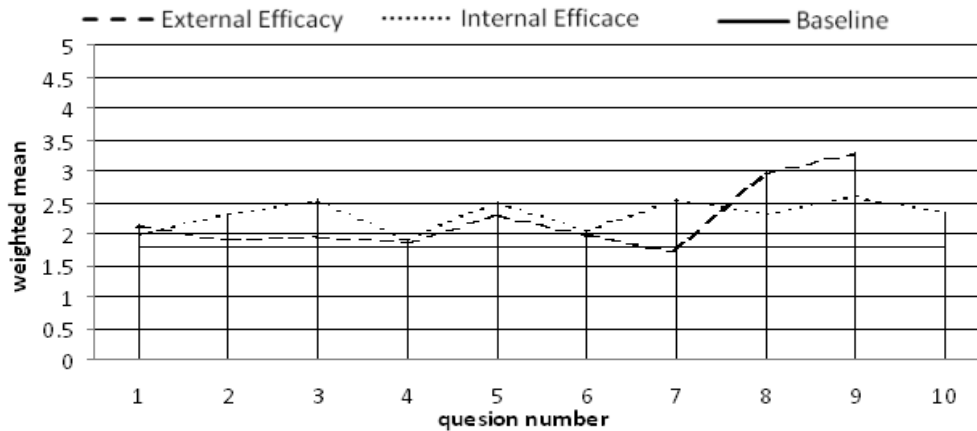


Fig. 4: Comparative line graph of internal and external efficacy in the middle 2000's (without exerting the coefficients of professor's scores) (Surveys of 2005-2007).

Data analysis of comparative position of internal and external efficacy indicators in the first half of 2000s. Reviewing the graphs and tables in the first half of 2000s, we can conclude that external efficacy has had the most effect in decreasing political efficacy in comparison to internal efficacy. And internal efficacy is on optimum level in this time range. In external efficacy, the factors which have the most negative effect on political efficacy are: lack of trust of authorities in delivering the responsibility to youngsters, lack of attention to the people's wants in

rendering the public affairs by authorities and emphasizing the contribution in social activities in society (Fig. 3-6 and Table 4-7). Comparative analysis with and without exerting coefficients of the professor's scores on internal and external efficacy in the middle of 2000s (surveys of 2005- 2007).

Data analysis and comparative position of indicators of internal and external efficacy in the middle of 2000s. Reviewing the graphs and tables in the middle of 2000s (2005-2007) shows that in external efficacy, the most

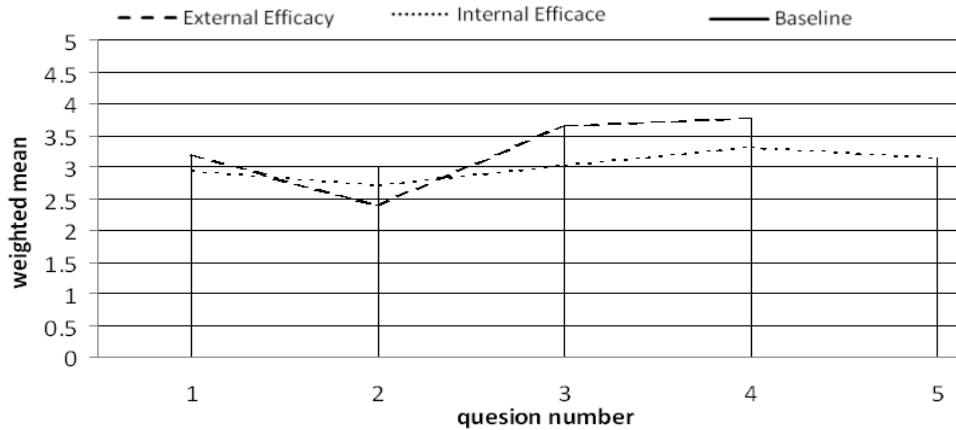


Fig. 5: Comparative line graph of internal and external efficacy in middle of 2000s (by exerting the coefficients of professor’s scores) (Lack of authorities trust)

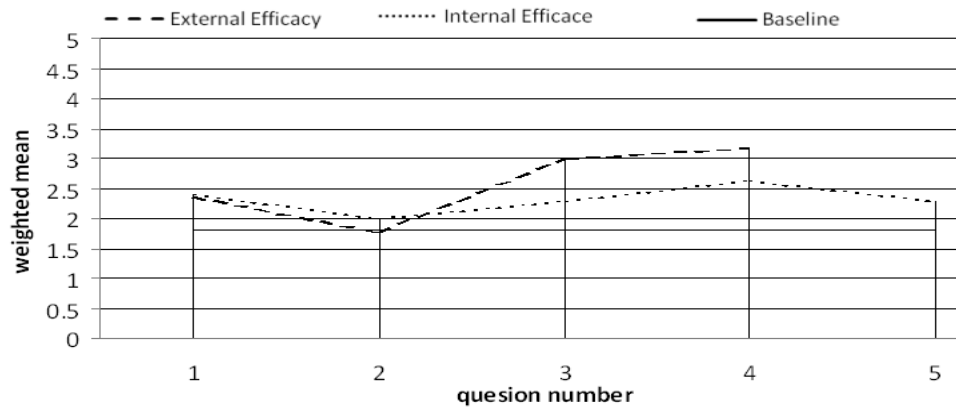


Fig. 6: Comparative line graph of internal and external efficacy in the late 2000 (without exerting the coefficients of professors’ scores) (Frustrated on politics)

Table 4: The indicators which have negative effect on the political efficacy in the middle of 2000s (without exerting coefficients of professor’s scores, or second level analysis)

Internal efficacy	Weight mean	External efficacy	Weight mean
Politics is so complicated that people like me are not able to make it out (2007)	2.459	In our society youngsters are not trusted in to be assigned responsibility	2.329
I prefer not to interfere in political affairs in order not to be in trouble	2.656	Authorities do not pay attention to individuals opinions and interests, those of like me.	2.467
Politics is so complicated that people like us cannot make it out (2006)	2.757	In our society youngsters are not trusted to be assigned responsibility to them (2004)	2.496
For the people of our country, there are other ways except taking votes to effect on the policies of the state 8	3.008	After being elected, authorities break with people and forget them	2.68
		In our society youngsters are not trusted in to be assigned responsibility	2.713

Table 5: Indicators which have a negative effect on political efficacy in the middle of 2000s (by exerting the coefficient of professor’s scores or analysis of second level)

Weight mean	Internal efficacy	Weight mean	External efficacy
1.918	Politics is so complicated that people like me are not able to make it out (2007)	1.723	In our society youngsters are not trusted to assign responsibility to them
		1.864	After being elected, authorities break with people and forget them
		1.914	Authorities do not pay attention to individual’s opinions and interests like me

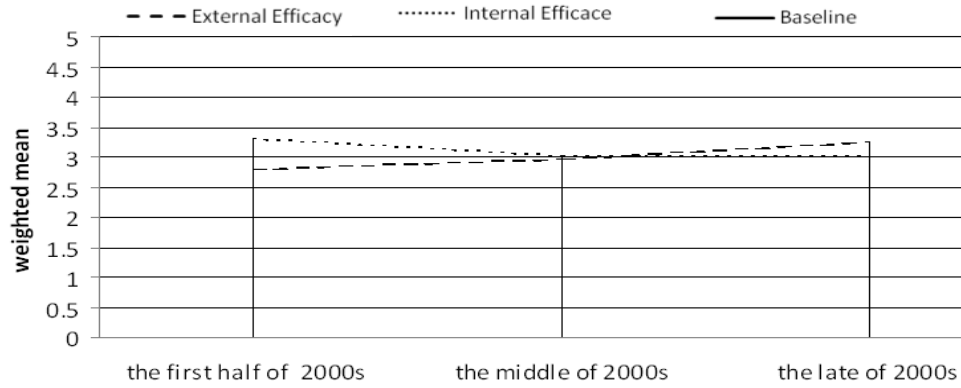


Fig. 7: Comparative line graph of internal and external efficacy in the late 2000s (by exerting the coefficients of professor's scores) (effect of year late 2002)

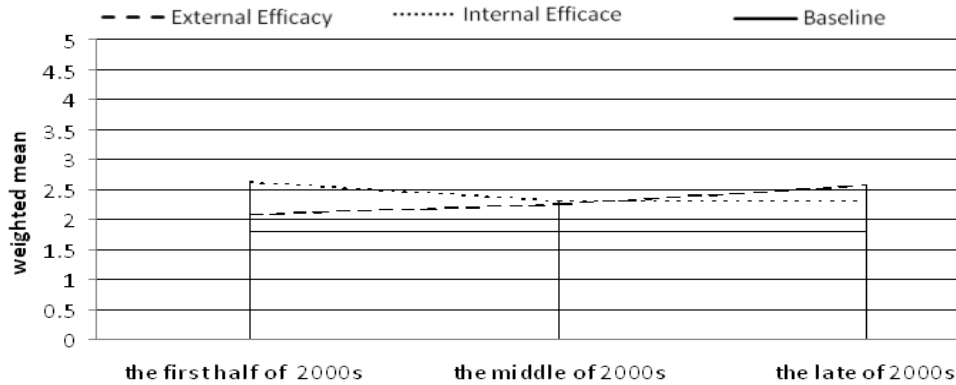


Fig. 8: Comparative line graph of internal and external efficacy in 2000s (without exerting the coefficients of professor's scores (Effect of Lack of authorities from year 2010)

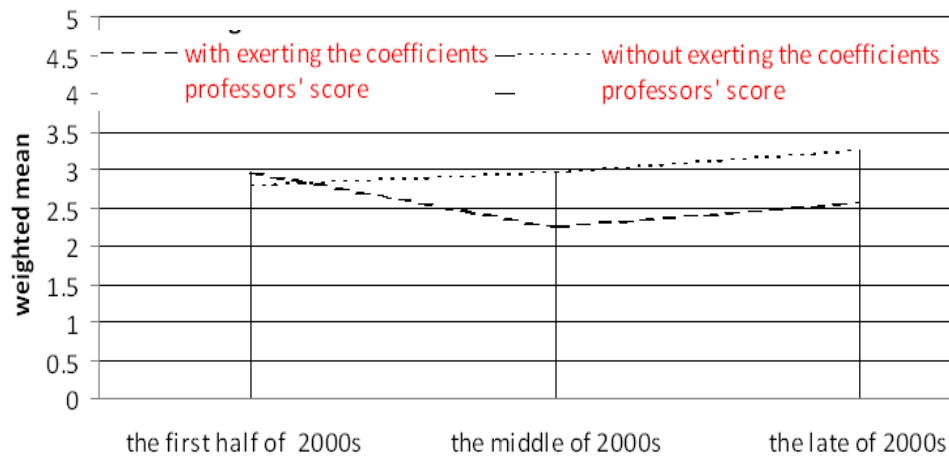


Fig. 9: Comparative line graph of internal and external efficacy in 2000s (by exerting the coefficients of professor's scores (Effect on polities from year 2010)



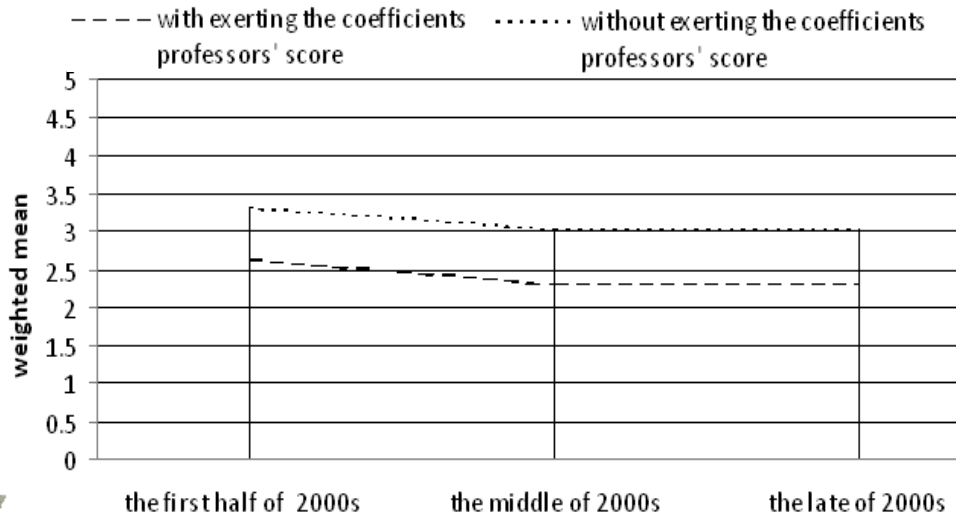


Fig. 10: The comparative graph of external efficacy with and without exerting the coefficients of professor's scores in 2000 ) (From year 2010)

Table 6: The table of indicators which have a negative effect on political efficacy in the late of 2000s (without exerting coefficients)

Weight mean	Internal efficacy	Weight mean	External efficacy
2.701	Politics is so complicated that people like me are not not trusted to be assigned responsibility able to make it out (2007)	2.411	In our society youngsters are
2.930	I think I have enough competence to contribute in the social affairs of my country		
3.037	I cannot have any role in determining or changing the political affairs		

Table 7: The table of indicators which have a negative effect on political efficacy in the late 2000s (by exerting coefficients of professor's scores)

Weight mean	Internal efficacy	Weight mean	External efficacy
	Politics is so complicated that people like me are not not trusted in to be assigned able to make it out (2007)	1.784	In our society youngsters are 1.998 responsibility

important indicators which have the most effect in decreasing efficacy is: the lack of authorities trust in assigning responsibility to youngsters, the authorities disregard for youngsters' opinions and interests and authorities break with people after being elected and the most important indicators in internal efficacy which have the most effect on decreasing efficacy are: Politics is so complicated that people like me are not able to make it out. Comparative analysis with and without exerting the coefficients of professor's scores on the questionnaires of internal and external efficacy in the in the late 2002s (without exerting the coefficients of professors).

Reviewing the graphs and tables in the late 2000s (2010) reveals that the most important indicators in external efficacy which have the most effect in decreasing efficacy are: lack of authorities' trust in youngsters for assigning responsibilities to them. In the field of internal efficacy, the most important factors which have the most effect in decreasing political trust are: politics is so

complicated that people like me cannot make it out. The lack of sufficient competence to determine or change the political affairs (Fig. 7-10).

**Analysis of present data in 2002s**

**Data analysis:** Reviewing two line graphs above shows that since the early decade to its end, the process of view changes in youngsters has been growing in the field of external efficacy; conversely, from the beginning of 2000s to its end the internal efficacy has been decreasing.

In the above table, comparison between external efficacy (with and without exerting the coefficients) in 2000s indicates that reviewing with exerting the professors coefficients, the process has been decreasing from the beginning to the middle of the decade, but it has increased from the middle to the late decade. In internal efficacy, without exerting coefficients, a growing process with a gentle slope from the beginning to the end of the

decade is seen. The general trend of external efficacy in 2000s indicates the growing trend. The analysis of the above table of internal efficacy (with or without exerting coefficients) reveals that the trend of internal efficacy had been declining from the beginning to the end of 2000s.

### CONCLUSION

Political efficacy is considered as one of the important and essential variants in political contribution. Assessing the amount of political efficacy in a country can determine the amount of political contribution.

According to the theories of political thinkers and based on the presented concept model in this section, political efficacy is divided into two parts of internal and external. It seems that internal efficacy is more related to the sense of power and its capacity in contribution in politics and external efficacy is more related to how authorities act in the political contribution of society. With reviewing the questionnaires related to political efficacy in 2000s, it seems that the most important options which have the most effect on decreasing the level of political efficacy are: the lack of authorities' attention to the assigning responsibilities to youngsters, ignoring people and youngsters wants in rendering governmental affairs by authorities, devaluing the contribution in social activities in society, having no relation with the people after the authorities had been elected, misunderstanding of the youngsters from politics due to its complexities, lack of sufficient competence for political contribution and lack of competence in determining and changing political affairs.

According to the above, it seems that in order to increase the sense of efficacy in youngsters, the transfer of authority to youngsters and the third generation should be gradually improved. This questionnaire is the only common questionnaire in the all reviewed levels in 2000s which is one of the most important youngster's

concerns. The sense of insist of government against surrendering power to the youngsters, will, in the long run, cause political indifferences and as a result of which decrease the political trust. On the other hand it seems providing the conditions for political contribution of youngsters through establishing political parties independent from the government and subsequently establishing the media especially private televisions, in order to reflect the youngsters 'and people's opinions about authorities and also reflect the opinions and views of experts about the society's authorities and the constant relationship of the elected with people; can improve a part of this decrease in efficacy. Also, the political system can teach the ways and procedures of contribution in political arena by instructing political sociability.

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