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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL CAPITALS AND TEAM WORK AMONG TEHRAN'S TEACHERS (SOCIOLOGY OF TEACHERS)

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ABSTRACT

The studies so far have been on the sociology of institution of education and its functions. However, there has been little attention to the teachers; in other words, the sociology of education has been approved, not the sociology of teachers. Now, is it possible to see the teachers as social capital and evaluate this large social group from this perspective? The most important purpose of the present study is to investigate different dimensions of teachers as social capital, namely cognitive, structural, and relational dimensions and their effects on team activities of teachers. The main hypothesis of the research is: "There is a relationship between social capital of teachers and their team activities. The statistical society of the study included teachers of the city of Tehran as well as citizens of Tehran that 420 people were selected from each group by the stratified random method. The instrument for data collection was an author-made questionnaire using key indices, the validity of which had been confirmed by experts and the reliability of which had been confirmed to be 0.78. Following the data collection, the hypothesis of the study was confirmed. The cognitive dimension of teachers had the greatest and the structural dimension had the lowest impact on the social capital of teachers and their participation in team activities. Also, willingness to take part in teamwork was proved to be higher in teachers in primary schools than the teachers in secondary schools. Also, with respect to the job status, among 40 jobs, teachers got the score of 68/33 out of 100. The most important suggestion of the author in the first step is to improve the view of teachers, managers, and assistants towards group and team teaching in schools (Lesson Study) and a serious decision should be made by executives to heighten the social status of teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Infection Social relationships can be considered as one of the most important components of social capital or the most important source of social capital. By a more concise look, it can be said that this very important source is the essence of the relationships of people in social institutions and organizations including education institution. But the point is discovering and reinforcing these relationships.

In other words, this precious gem is hidden in the relationships among people and even some people are unaware of its existence and importance. But when the importance of these relationships in resolving or improving the main issues of any organization or institution becomes clear, people and organizations will find out its importance as well.

Trust among people is also another aspect of social capital. Without trust, people and institutions cannot improve their issues. In other words, trust-based relationships can make ground for creating a power to improve the external and internal issues of people and organizations.

By relationships among people we don't mean the superficial relationships, but we mean those relationships which lead to the synergy of personal powers as a collective power to improve the issues.

In order to better explain the problem and with respect to institution of education, we should ask a question: "Haven't been any relationships among teachers?"

The answer is: by relationships among teachers we don't mean ordinary relationships. They have always been there and are still there. But the ordinary relationships cannot resolve the problems of class, lessons and school and only those relationships can be considered as social capital that are along with trust and create a power to resolve or at least improve the problems of lessons, class, and school.

Since the author himself is a member of board in the University of Farhangian (teacher training) and is familiar with the methods of teacher training as well as collaboration among teachers in teaching and learning, by concise studies about social capital and education system, he has found three points in this regard: 1) so far the studies have been about the sociology of institution of education and its functions. But there has been little attention to the teachers and in other words, so far much attention has been toward the sociology of education rather than the sociology of teachers. Now, is it possible to consider teachers as social capital and evaluate this large group from this perspective? 2) Summing up all the studies regarding social capital, we can conclude that social capital is a latent potential created in the relationships among teachers which facilitates things and accelerates achieving to the goals. The question is: how much is this

KEY WORDS

social capital, cognitive dimension, structural dimension, relational dimension, team activities

Published: 15 October 2016

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capital among teachers and how it can help to improve the problems of education and assist teachers to resolve the problems of lessons?

One of the most recent teaching methods which has been considered by educational experts in the USA, Europe, Japan ... since the early 20th century and its effectiveness has been confirmed in various field studies, is Lesson-study (team and collaborative teaching). Team teaching is usually used to teach important complicated subjects; in this method two or more teachers are present in the class simultaneously and teach the subject collaboratively by observing each other. This method facilitates and accelerates the process of teaching-learning and leads to deepening of learning. But realizing this requires more and better relationships among the teachers. In the light of these team activities they can resolve problems which they couldn't solve lonely and this is what sociologists call social capital.

According to these three points, the first spark and starting point from which the author is going to express the issue has become clear.

Definitely the quantity and quality of the relationships among people in any institution and organization may affect efficiency and effectiveness of people as well as that organization or institution and is a main base for achieving individual and organizational success. It is one of the essential prerequisites for development and improvement in the society and is considered by researchers and experts as social capital.

The importance of training human resources as the most important factor affecting economic development is clear to everyone. The question is who trains these people. The answer is, the future makers of the society are now being trained and educated by teachers; in other words, teachers make the future of the society and they can be called architectures of the society.

The importance of the present study lies in the question that how much we know the architectures of our society.

How much do the sociologists who claim they know the society well, actually know the architectures (teachers) of their society? Have they written to or taken a step toward knowing the teachers of the country more deeply and correctly?

The group of teachers is one of the largest and most effective groups in the society. The number of the members of this group is considerable compared to other social roles (more than one million teachers), and they are notable in sociology studies due to their influence on the families.

Since teachers are considered as the most important social capital, cultural executives and planners of education should know this large organized power in the first place and use it to improve cultural and educational issues.

The author believes that one of the major reasons of failure of cultural and educational institutions in achieving their goals is that they don't know the teachers of their society and are unaware of their latent precious potentials.

Therefore, the sociology of teachers and knowing this social group more concisely to apply this potential in order to improve sociocultural issues seems to be a necessity. In the present study, the relationship between different aspects of social capital and team activities of teachers is investigated.

Fukuyama believes that education is an area in which governments use their most abilities to create social capital, since educational institutions not only transfer human capital, but also transfer social capital in the form of social rules and norms (Fukuyama, Cited by Nasiri, 2008: 120).

In the thought and opinion of many experts, the cognitive dimension of social capital is seen as one of the most effective dimensions in forming social capital. Some of the main components of this aspect include values, attitudes, and norms and the schools are known as the most effective institutions in these components.

Billante and Sanders (2002) who consider personal respect as the background for emergence and durability of social capital point out that since education plays an important role in socialization of any generation, schools have a basic part in any policy making aiming at reinforcing respect (Billante and Sanders, 2002: 30).

Putnam believes that social capital forms the development of children effectively. Trust, networks, and norms of cooperation among families, schools, peer groups, and the larger community in which children are living have considerable effects on them achieving their opportunities and choices and hence influence their behavior and progress (Putnam, cited by Azizi and Ghayumi, 2015: 59 and Rabiei, 2004, 64).

The present study aims at investigating cognitive, structural, and relational aspects of social capital and the effect of social capital on team activities of teachers.

In other words, this study is going to answer the following questions: Is it possible to measure and evaluate cognitive, structural, and relational dimensions of teachers? Is there any relationship between social capital and team activities of teachers?

The purpose of the study

The overall purpose of the present study is to identify cognitive, structural, and relational dimensions of teachers as one of the most important aspects of social capital (and recognizing the components of each of these dimensions) and to investigate the relationship among different aspects of it and the relational conditions and teamwork of teachers, aiming at knowing teachers as one of the largest social groups (the sociology of teachers).

Theoretical foundations

Hanifan (1916) was the president of the schools of Virginia, USA at that time. He refers to the notion of social capital in describing the importance of collaboration in increasing the efficiency of schools: something tangible having the greatest impact on the life of people, like good will, friendship, sympathy, and social communication among people and families making the social unity... if the one communicates with their neighbors and the neighbors communicate with other neighbors, a social density will be created which may immediately fulfill the needs of society and has probably the potential to be adequate to improve life conditions fundamentally (Mousavi and Alipour, 2012: 13).

The article by L. G. Hanifan in 1916 about the local support for rural schools was one of the first times of using the phrase social capital (Hanifan, 1916: 130). Coleman (1988) attracted the attentions toward the importance of social capital by his studies about cooperation at school. He points out: social capital is defined through its function and has two common features: it has aspects of a social structure and facilitates particular action by the people inside the structure (Coleman, 1994: 302).

Coleman considers the social capital as the perfect example of a public good which is created by a group of people not only for those whose efforts to create it have been effective, but also for all people in that structure (Coleman, 1988: 116).

James Coleman, the leading American sociologist having a great impact on the studies about education, has had a greater effect on the notion of social capital than Bourdieu. Through studies about educational success in minority areas, he showed that social capital is not merely limited to the powerful, but may be useful for the poor and marginal communities as well. In Coleman's eyes social capital indicates a source. (John Field, 2007: 38).

Consequently, Coleman performs a series of experimental studies about learning in private schools compared to public ones and reports that the students of Catholic schools as well as schools with other religious affiliations have better performance, even taking account of other factors such as social class and ethnicity; he concludes that communities are main resources of social capital. (ibid: 42)

Bourdieu says, "social capital is the collection of physical and spiritual resources allowing an individual or a group to have a sustainable network of more or less institutionalized relationships for mutual familiarity and cognition" (Bourdieu, 1992: 119).

Putnam defines social capital by three components: a) networks: like other social capital theorists, Putnam introduces the social relationships between people and their interactions together as the most fundamental element of social capital. b) Social trust: it is another component of social capital. And c) cooperative norms: Putnam sees it as the criterion for social capital, like that colleagues switch their days off to each other. Putnam's focus is more on cognitive aspects of social capital (Putnam, 2000: 134).

The theoretical foundations in team activities of teachers (lesson study)

One of the studies performed about cooperative teaching by teachers was in the educational year 1995-96 in the country Japan entitled "The most effective plan to train teachers in schools of Japan professionally".

This is a case study investigating the process of cooperative research in mathematics class in the primary school of Komno in the city Nagoya and the effect of cooperative teaching on improvement of teaching-learning process, educational activities at the schools and enhancement of professional merits of teachers has been explored.

This study aimed at investigating cooperative teaching of teachers in class (lesson study) and its effect on improvement of learning and educating professional teachers. For data collection, the researcher has used observation and interview, reports, and documentations and observed and recorded every activity using audiovisual recorders to explain the process of cooperative teaching in a scientifically objective way (Sarkar Arani, 2010: 68).

Teachers obtain opportunities in the process of cooperative study to work together, have group evaluation of the educational behavior of each other, practice teamwork methods, exchange their opinions together, and learn from each other and study the educational problems of the school in a cooperative process. In this way teachers learn from each other and add to their professional abilities (Sarkar Arani, 2010: 68-80).

Cooperation is not only for students, and the teachers can benefit from cooperation with their counterparts as well. If possible, it is sometimes better to teach in groups. It means that two or more teachers teach in one class at the same time. It is not easy, but it is very great. These teachers observe the classes of each other and give feedback to each other. They can record the lesson audio-visually and then get the records heard by the group. Of course the observers should be trained to consider what aspects of the class while observing. Then, a meeting should be held so that the observers may compare their notes. It is good to include assistant teachers, volunteer parents, and others in cooperative group of teachers (Jacob, cited by Mortazavi and Vahdani, 2011: 213).

Cooperativity of the study in classes leads to balance of self-criticism in individual teachers, suggesting that improved education is a process of team act, not an individual scope of responsibility. This indicates that when Japanese teachers design a lesson cooperatively together, they consider the result as a joint product belonging to every member of the group. When a teacher teaches a lesson and others observe her, the possible problems are usually attributed to the lesson designed by the group, not the teacher who is performing it. So it is possible for teachers to criticize their colleague without offending her. Therefore, it will be possible to talk about the merits and defects of the class and the process of reviewing and improving it more deeply and concisely (ibid, p: 133).

What caused Japanese teachers to emphasize on performing and continuing lesson study, was that lesson study was based on collective wisdom which is certainly more advantageous than individual wisdom. They also learned each other's experiences as well as facilitating and deepening their students' learning. Another important point is that theories are usually studied and tested in laboratories and the best place to test the efficiency of educational theories is real lesson classes, as Japanese teachers implemented the theory of teaching based on collective wisdom practically in their classes and was able to overcome the problems of how to transfer knowledge, concepts, and skills to their students (which other teachers try to realize lonely) and prove efficiency of team teaching.

Following Japan, in countries like Germany, the US, China, Singapore, Australia, UK, and Malaysia lesson-study has been considered by education experts.

In Iran also it has been considered in recent years, and somehow actions have been done in order to make some teachers familiar with lesson study method, although the efforts have not been succeed in making the majority of teachers familiar with this lifesaving prescription to improve teaching-learning process, and it has yet a long way to achieve change in teachers' attitudes and implementing this method.

Teachers obtain opportunities in cooperative teaching process to work together, have team evaluations of the educational behavior of each other, practice teamwork, exchange their views, and learn from each other. In fact, cooperative research by teachers in class is the most effective study while practicing and has a great impact on improvement of education in schools and training professional teachers. Literature shows that one of the most important effective factors in teacher training is their study in the class and their relationship to the students (Yushimoto, cited by Sarkar Arani, 2010: 68).

This method helps teachers while obtaining professional merits, rebuild their thoughts and pay considerable attention to extension of relationships and interactions of students with them (ibid: 69).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology and type of the study

The present study is an applied research according to its purpose, and the methodology is descriptive-survey. Since in the present study the author is trying to describe and explore the cognitive, structural, and relational aspects of social capital of teachers and the degree of their willingness to do team and team activities (lesson study), as it is without any manipulation through a field survey. Yet, in explaining the theoretical framework of the study we used a documentary method.

Statistical society of the study

The statistical population of the study includes male and female teachers in the city Tehran. The total statistics of teachers of the city Tehran, separately for all areas, was taken from Deputy of research, planning and human resources of the city Tehran in educational year of 2015-2016 and the sample volume has been calculated accordingly.

Sample volume and sampling method

Sample volume was calculated using Cochran’s sample volume (Sadei, 2006: 71) and was considered as 384 people. For the sake of assurance, this number was increased to 420 people.

According to the extent of the city Tehran, the sample was first selected through cluster sampling from northern, southern, eastern, western, and central zones, namely the zones number 1, 16, 8, 9, and 11 of the city, and then the sample in every zone was selected through stratified random method according to the educational course and gender.

Data collection instruments

The main instruments for data collection are

1. Inventory of measuring dimensions (cognitive, structural, and relational) of social capital
2. Inventory of willingness of teachers to team activities (lesson study)
3. Inventory for measuring social position of teachers from the perspective of people

Findings

1. The social capital of teachers was measured through 60 items in three dimensions (cognitive, structural, and relational) and the following results were obtained:

Table 1: the results of social capital of teachers

Amount of Social capital	Frequency	Percentage
High	234	55.71%
Medium	123	29.28%
Low	63	15%
Total	420	100%

According to the obtained results, the amount of social capital was high in 55.71%, medium in 29.28%, and low in 15% of teachers. It means that in sum 85% of the teachers in Tehran have social capitals higher than the average amount.

2. To measure the cognitive dimension we used four components: a) religious and national values, b) attitudes toward teaching job, c) commitment and honesty in teaching job, and d) degree of teachers’ trust in the people around them; totally 18 items were used to measure this dimension and the following results were obtained:

Table 2: The results obtained from distribution of respondents according to the cognitive dimension of social capital

Cognitive dimension of social capital	Frequency	Percentage
High	284	67.61%
Medium	104	24.76%
Low	32	7.61%
Total	420	100%

According to the results, the amount of cognitive dimension of social capital is high in 67.61%, medium in 24.76%, and low in 7.61% of the teachers. It indicates that in sum, the cognitive dimension of social capital was higher than the average amount in 92.37% of the teachers in Tehran.

3. To measure the structural dimension of social capital we used three components in a total of 14 items: a) degree of accountability of the manager of schools, b) degree of clarity in decision-making, and c) degree of collaboration in the school. The following results were obtained:

Table 3: The results of distribution of respondents with regard to the structural dimension of social capital

Structural dimension of social capital	Frequency	Percentage
High	186	44.28%
Medium	136	32.38%

Low	98	23.33%
Total	420	100%

According to the above results, the structural dimension of social capital is high in 44.28%, medium in 32.38%, and low in 23.333% of the teachers, as they evaluated it. It indicates that generally the score of the structural dimension of social capital in schools is lower than that of other dimensions of social capital.

4. In order to measure the relational dimension of social capital we used 7 components consisting of 28 items: a) family relationships, b) kinships, c) relationships with friends, d) relationships with neighbors, e) relationships with councils, f) relationships with associations, and g) corporate relationships. The following results were obtained:

Table 4:

Relational dimension of social capital	Frequency	Percentage
High	232	55.23%
Medium	129	30.71%
Low	59	14.04%
Total	420	100%

According to the above results, relational dimension of social capital is high in 55.23%, medium in 30.71%, and low in 14.04% of the teachers in the city Tehran. It indicates that 85.94% of the teachers in this city are higher than average amount with regard to relational dimension of social capital.

5. To measure the amount of willingness of the teachers to take part in team and team activities (lesson study) we used 10 items and the following results were obtained:

Table 5: The results of distribution of respondents regarding the amount of team activities

Team activities (lesson study)	Frequency	Percentage
High	203	48.33%
Medium	146	34.76%
Low	71	16.90%
Total	420	100%

According to the above results, willingness to take part in team activities (lesson study) was high in 48.33%, medium in 34.76%, and low in 16.90%. It indicates that 73% of the teachers are willing to take part in team activities.

Testing hypotheses

Multivariate regression analysis

Researcher may create a linear relationship between independent variables and dependent variable through multivariate regression, and investigate the relationships between independent variables in this way. At this time we have used step by step multivariate analysis in order to investigate spontaneous effects of independent variables on the dependent variable.

Table 6: The results of multivariate step by step regression analysis

Predicting variables	R	R ² adj	β	T	Sig-T	F	Sig-F
Social capital	0.869	0.725	0.817	24.172	0.000	402.135	0.000
Social capital Cognitive dimension	0.936	0.738	.0131	11.277	0.000	659.49	0.000
Social capital Cognitive dimension Structural dimension	0.948	0.741	0.163	7.119	0.000	721.23	0.000
Social capital Cognitive dimension Structural dimension Relational dimension	0.925	0.765	0.109	4.203	0.000	892.56	0.000

First stage: At this stage the first predicting variable, willingness of teachers to take part in team activities (lesson study), i.e. social capital was placed into the regression equation. It means that this variable in itself explains 72% of the variance of team activities (lesson study) by teachers. While beta coefficient (0.817) shows that there is a direct relationship between these two variables.

Stage 2: In the second phase cognitive dimension was placed into the regression equation and the power of prediction was added by 1.3 following entering it. Meanwhile beta coefficient (0.131) shows that there is direct correlation between this variable and the dependent variable.

Stage 3: In the third phase structural dimension was included. By inclusion of this variable only about 0.3 was added to the power of prediction. And beta coefficient (0.163) indicates a direct correlation between this variable and the dependent variable.

Stage 4: In the fourth phase relational dimension was included in regression equation and added to the power of prediction by 2.4. Beta coefficient (0.109) shows a direct correlation between this variable and the dependent variable.

The results obtained from multivariate regression analysis indicate that the above four variables together explain 76.5% of the changes in the dependent variable and the rest should be sought in other factors (like economic and living conditions, educational and education assistance facilities ...), the investigation of which is recommended to other researchers.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

1. All the research hypotheses are confirmed following data collection. But cognitive dimension had the greatest and the structural dimension had the least impact on social capital of teachers and their participation in team activities which indicates that the teachers themselves have a good attitude toward team activities. But the structure and organization of the schools haven't been able to offer this opportunity to the teachers. The most important structural factor is the method of management in the school. In other words, rather than trying to improve the quality of education and optimize the teaching-learning process, managers try to resolve physical and constructional problems, a fact that may be clearly observed by analyzing the time spent by the managers during educational hours.

This result is consistent with the findings by Ahmadi (2013). In his study also the role of cognitive dimension was greater than the structural and relational dimension. This finding is also consistent with the finding by Afshar Kabiri (2003).

2. Social capital in female teachers is higher than male teachers. And the significance test confirms this result.

This finding is consistent with the results of the study by Radmehr (2007). In his study by contrast, the social capital was higher in male teachers. Of course it must be noted that Radmehr performed his study only in one zone (zone 11 in Tehran) on the teachers in secondary schools. While the statistical society of the present study included all the teachers in secondary and primary schools in the city Tehran.

3. Willingness of female teachers to take part in team activities is higher than male teachers and the significance test confirms it.

This finding is consistent with the findings by Radmehr (2007), in which social participation of female teachers was higher compared to male teachers.

4. There is no significant difference between social capital of teachers in different zones of the city Tehran. But willingness of the teachers in southern areas to take part in teamwork (lesson study) was higher than that of teachers in northern areas and the significance test confirmed this.

5. Social capital in primary school teachers is higher than that in secondary school teachers. Also willingness to take part in team activities is higher in the teachers in primary schools. The significance test confirmed this finding.

This finding was consistent with the results of the study by Rahimi Saghand (2011) in which social capital was higher in the teachers in lower courses.

6. There is no significant difference between education level and social capital. Also there is no significance difference between education level and participation in team activities.

This finding is consistent with the results of the study by Rahimi Saghand (2011). In his study the relationship between level of education and social capital of teachers has not been confirmed as well.

7. Social capital is higher in married teachers compared to the single ones. But with regard to willingness for team activities, there is no significance difference between married and single teachers.

This result is consistent with the findings by Rahimi Saghand (2011) in which social capital was shown to be higher in married teachers than the single ones.

8. The relationship between age and social capital is not significant statistically. However, social capital is shown to be of higher value in older teachers. But as they get older, their willingness to take part in team activities.

Part of this finding is different with the findings by Rahimi Saghand (2011). There was a relationship between age and social capital teachers in the study by Rahimi Saghand. His research also showed that as the teachers get older their job satisfaction reduces and this study shows that as the teachers get older, their willingness to take part in team activities reduces.

9. There is a significant relationship between experience and social capital, i.e. the more the years of experience, the higher the social capital. But there is no significant relationship between years of experience and willingness for team activities.

This is the same as the results found by Rahimi Saghandi (2011). He also found a positive significant relationship between years of experience and social capital.

The reason why social capital is focused more than other types of capital such as economic capital, physical capital ..., is that without social capital, it is not possible to use other kinds of capital efficiently and social capital increases the efficiency of other kinds of capital.

The quality of the relationships among people as social capital is much more important when the human resources of an institution (like institution of education) are training the human resource of other institutions in the society.

Hence, teachers as the core trainers of human resources should themselves have a high quality so that they can add to the quality and development of human resources of other social institutions. But one factor impacting quality and efficiency of teachers is relational conditions of teachers (their team activities).

Since teachers are one of the most important kinds of capital in developing societies, it must be noted that only motivated teachers can encourage their students to learn more and better and in this way add to the quality and efficiency of work force and smoothen the way to development. In contrast, teachers without motivation with poor relational conditions, decrease the rate of achieving development directly (by superficial teaching) or indirectly (by lacking happiness and exhilaration).

In sum, it should be said that in light of the relationships among people, there will be capital which may be used both for economic growth and development and improving educational issues.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

None

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

None

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