Social Capital Culture in Educational Institutions: An Anthropological Study

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Two variables interact to form a theoretical and practical frame for this research, which consist of (social capital and educational desire). As they are important anthropological topics in the Arab environment in general, while in the Iraqi environment they are special, this research began exploring the connection between social capital and educational desire amongst secondary school students of Qadisiya district. The study demonstrates the role of family and school social capital regarding children’s aspiration for future education. A regression analysis is carried out to measure the impact of social capital on students’ educational aspiration on a sample of 4925 students from 56 schools. The results demonstrate a strong family social capital association with educational motivations. School social capital also alludes to the motivation for students’ educational attainment. Interestingly, family size has a significant role in the educational aspiration of secondary school students. Furthermore, teachers’ expectations of students education are found to be aligned. The study provides insights families and schools that may clarify the predictability of social capital in moulding the educational aspiration of young students.

Key words: Culture, Anthropology, Social Capital, Educational Institution.

Introduction

Social capital theory stands out as the most compelling and trendy topic amongst social science theories (Coleman, 1988). The ubiquity of social capital opens endeavours to emphasise the importance of social relations in political discussions which in turn explains the connection and framework of social concepts in real life (Saidvo, 2018). According to the theory of social capital, social relations are life resources and considered to be capital (Kang & Na, 2018). Therefore, many authors define them as future benefits, an idea originally proposed by Loury, (1977).
Social capital hypothesis clarifies the impact of social position and relations regarding the advancement of human capital (Prewitt et.al., 2014). Analysts connect social capital with educational performance (GPA at school levels, grade maintenance, drop-out rate, secondary school enrolment, graduation, span of studies and so on) Ferguson, (2006). Given that all types of capital are really assets that can be utilised to accomplish different objectives, social capital is a standout amongst the most essential qualities of the development and advancement of any society (Zhan & Lu, 2019). Currently, social capital has encountered a similar situation in Humanism and Political Theory. Social capital consists of the customary solidarity of the general public within which people dedicate themselves to pursue their own advantages in social activities. Likewise, the impact of changes in socio-social conditions on social capital contrasts with different social orders (Zhan et.al., 2019).

The hypothesis of social capital offers compelling clarification of the reason for why a few students are more successful in Education than others (Bourdieu, 1977). Social Capital recognises overwhelming social codes in the general public. This is a key determinant of educational achievement since it is misperceived by instructors as academic brilliancy. This is in light of the fact that children from affluent socio-economic status by and large have more social capital than those from low socio-economic foundations. They have a relative favourable position in the educational framework which encourages them to imitate their advantaged social position (Bourdieu, 1977, Bourdieu, 1984; DiMaggio, 1982; DiMaggio and Mohr, 1985; Dumais, 2002; Jæger, 2009; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990).

Prior research has focused on social capital to draw a comparison between urban and rural students (Coleman 1988; Kim and Schneider 2005; Israel et. al. 2001). Most research has focused on developed regions. Social capital is affected by socio-economic conditions. Hence, it is worth examining how it affects educational development and achievement in other parts of the world (Lyson, 2002). Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of social capital on the education of students in the context of the Al-Qadisiya district in Iraq. Its contribution is twofold, by estimating the effect of individual social capital on educational success and providing a special data set from developing country.

**Literature Review**

Anthropology is a logical investigation of individuals and a wide range of societies (Eriksen & Nielsen, 2013). The method for analysing the educational framework from the perspective of social and cultural aspects is known as educational anthropology (Ahn and Ostrom 2008). The amount of work guided by anthropologists to the investigation of formal educational development is moderately small, despite the fact that it has a long history. A substantial amount has been completed in settings in which outsider or national instructive methods of insight and frameworks have been connected to social aspects which don't share the logic or
have empathy or comprehension of the framework (Nicholson, 1968). Some of relevant the issues have been along the line social support and its impact on educational aspiration as it influences the capacity of youngsters to adapt to those issues which help him or her make his or her place in society. Social capital is a part of social structures; hence, individuals don't have social capital in this adaptation. Social capital is only created through investment in existing social structures that help the requirements of a predominant gathering. As such, it is established in co-operation and participation with additional familial structures (Astone et. al.,1999). The concept of social capital in culture originates from a combination of extensive hypothetical directions from the fields of Humanism, Economics and Education. At the point when social orders are analysed in a sociological sense, we can see that the dimension of social capital of social orders is emphatically and fundamentally identified with the dimension of advancement of social orders. Social capital is viewed as a general public in which higher social orders are more secure, cleaner, more advantageous and refined, while social orders with lower social capital dimensions have backwards qualities. We can see that social orders with low social capital have steady political, ethnic, religious and partisan clashes and that these rare assets are squandered.

The underlying hypothetical development of the concept of social capital provides advantages to people from their social ties, a concept introduced by Bourdieu, (1986) and later explained by Coleman, (1988). Their clarification of social capital structure for social accomplishment is fairly extraordinary. For example, Bourdieu sees social capital as an arrangement of social multiplication, in contrast Coleman views it as positive social control that can accomplish the potential for better life outcomes. As per Coleman's perspective on social capital, who is an authority on political studies, speculative improvement of social capital is added(Antoci et.al., 2005). Moreover, in the United States most observational work on social capital depends on Coleman's unique work (1988).

Social capital comprises of relationships between relatives, particularly amongst guardians and youngsters. Social associations inside families are the product of family structure and characteristics. They consist of overall structure and specific characteristics such as family size, parental interest and discussion about educational goals and issues and parental instinct for education for their children (Kc et.al., 2018). These proportions of family social capital anticipate children’s school performance. Youngsters from two-parent small families and children whose mother had higher instructive desires, were fundamentally more averse to dropping out (Israel et.al., 2001). Various subsequent examinations have demonstrated that family social capital is an important tool which leads to better educational desires and scholastic accomplishment (McNeal 1999; Kim and Schneider 2005; Crosnoe 2004).

Furthermore, the most important family characteristics that shape family social capital are the presence of guardians (one or two) and family size (Delic et.al., 2017). These qualities of
family social capital incorporate one or two guardians and a number of siblings. In light of these facts, a child may have available chances, frequency and duration of parent-child interaction to develop associations.

Drawing attention to parallels between home and school, a few specialists have expanded on the idea of social capital to school context. Birendra, (2018) examined the significance of guardian association with schools which encourage results in education. Furthermore, non-public schools, educators, school conditions and parental inclusions in school activities are proportionate to school social capital (Crosnoe 2004; Parcel and Dufur 2009). Hence, a critical constructive outcome of parental inclusion at school and school conditions regarding Mathematical achievements have been investigated.

Methodology

The present study is part of a more extensive examination to look at school achievement and post-secondary goals in secondary schools in Qadisiya, Iraq. The unique examining outline was tailored to secondary schools in the Qadisiya district. A total of 56 schools were randomly selected for this study. The percentage of rural schools was 60.70% while urban schools consisted of 39.30%. Data was collected form 4925 students from 56 schools. Furthermore, 365 teachers were included from selected schools to record their responses on students.

Measurement Scale

The proportion of educational desires depended on the following: “What is your most desired goal in education attainment?” Respondents were asked to record their responses on a seven (7) point scale
Where: 1 = up to Secondary school  
2 = High school  
3 = Junior college, or Vocational college  
4 = Four year Bachelor’s degree  
5 = Master’s degree  
6 = Above  
7 = Don't have any idea

This research treated educational desires as a continuous variable and responses were converted into years of education. For instance, if a student’s educational desire was a Master’s degree, hence 5=18. Furthermore, students whose answer was 8=don’t have any idea were excluded from the sample. The scale was made using the guideline of Roscigno and Crowley (2001) and Roscigno et.al. (2006).
Family social capital was measured by family characteristics and size. Family characteristics are defined as one family or two parent family. Family size is understood as the number of sibling respondents in a family. The following indicators were measured for assessing the components of family social capital:

- Parental desires for the child to visit school
- How to pay for school
- Parents’ profession and work

Parental desires for children to attend school was measured on a seven-point Likert scale. Scopes of reactions ranged from 1 not mattering to 6 extremely frustrated. These unique reactions were incorporated as a ceaseless variable which show a more prominent degree of guardian anticipation that the child should attend school. The discussion on how to pay the fee measured parents on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4 (1 = never, 2 = more than once, 3 = three to multiple times, 4 = multiple times) with respect to how frequently the understudy chatted with guardians about paying for school during the previous year. The measurement of dialogue with guardians about work and future goals was based on a similar four-point Likert scale regarding how regularly the understudy communicated with parents about career and work.

In addition, school social capital was also measured. To measure school social capital we included school size and lunch provided by the school without cost. Similarly, we measured parental participation in school activities and the level of involvement with schools. Both indicators were measured on a 3-point scale where 1 corresponded to never, 2 to fairly and 3 very much. Responses were measured on the basis of school administration responses. Furthermore, teacher expectations concerning the educational attainment of each student under study were recorded on a 6-point Likert scale corresponds to student responses on educational attainment.

Results and Discussion

In this study we applied regression analysis to answer the understudy question. Educational attainment was regressed against social capital. Two models were constructed to measure the role of social capital on educational goals. Model 1 explained the impact of family social capital while model 2 recorded the impact of school social capital over educational goals. Hence, the overall objective is to measure the role of school and family social capital to establish student’s educational aspiration.

To understand the impact of social capital on student education the OLS regression model has been applied. In model 1, family social capital variables were regressed against education
ambition, while in model 2 school social capital was regressed against educational ambition of secondary school students. The econometric equations used to run the said model are given below:

\[
Edu = \alpha + \beta_1 P + \beta_2 S + \beta_3 D + \beta_4 F + \beta_5 W + \epsilon \\
Edu = \alpha + \beta_1 P + \beta_2 S + \beta_3 D + \beta_4 F + \beta_5 W + L + Sz + T + PP + \epsilon
\]

Equation-1

Equation-2

Where: “P” represents family characteristics, “S” represents number of siblings, “D” is parental desire for education attainment, “F” refers to fee and “W” is discussion on career with parents. “\(\epsilon\)” is a random error term, “L” represents free lunch, “T” represents teachers’ expectations about students’ educational aspiration and finally “PP” is parents’ participation in school activities.

The results showed that family characteristics have a significant impact on the education ambition of children. Students who have two parent families are expected to be associated with the ambition of higher educational attainment. However, our results have insignificant result for this variable. The reason for this insignificance is due to the very low ratio of one parent families. This may be due to contrasting social and religious landscape of Iraq which is different from Western World where one parent family ratio is very high. Furthermore, we also recorded a significant impact of the number of siblings on educational aspiration. This may be due to lack of fund and the non-supportive behaviour of government. Additionally, parental desire has been found to be significantly associated with educational desire. This may be due to the transfer of motivation from parents. Furthermore, discussion about fee and future career is also significantly related to educational desires. Frequent discussion on school fee with parents shows the weak financial position of families to bear education expenses. Hence, this factor leads to distancing students from higher educational aspiration. Further career discussion with parents motivates students to focus on earning better scores.

Model 2 explains the association between school social capital and students’ educational aspiration. It found that the gap between students getting free lunch from school and those who do not had insignificant correlation with educational desires. However, school size matters regarding desire for educational attainment. It is noted that students from large schools are significantly motivated to attain higher education level (Corbett 2007). In line of these results, teacher’s expectation regarding students have influence over students’ desire for educational attainment. Similarly, the association and participation of parents in school activities was found to be significantly associated with students’ educational aspiration. Furthermore, we include all variables of family social capital in model 2. The results of family social capital remained the same as in model 1.
Conclusion

This study was conducted with the aim of investigating the role of social capital in education desires. The results revealed a significant role of social capital on student desire for higher level of education. School and family social capital built up students’ desire for educational aspiration. Moreover, it is noted that teachers’ expectations are significant for student educational desire. Family size matters regarding aspiration for educational attainment. This indicates that lower income level and the burden of educational expenses on parents lower student motivation to attain higher levels of education (Sun, 1999). Therefore, family support is an important element for educational aspiration.

The study found a significant role of school environment on student motivation for educational attainment. Students from large schools are more focused on attaining higher educational levels while those from small and community schools are less so. In conclusion, this study contains different results from earlier studies such as the insignificant role of one parent and two parent families. In addition, family size plays a significant role which was reported to be inconclusive in earlier studies. Furthermore, the study revealed that the socio-economic characteristics of a country or specific region shape social capital. As a result, the context of Qadisiya district may not be generalised.
REFERENCES


