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The Role of Social Capital in motivating University Students for the Future and Building their Self-esteem

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Contents

Abstract

This research aims to identify the role of social capital in motivating university students for the future and building their self-esteem. Previous studies suggest that social capital has a major influence on the academic and personal growth of university students. This research hypothesizes that university students with a higher level of social capital have higher level of self-esteem and future motivation. Purposive sampling techniques have been deployed for the accumulation of data of 152 students from FCCU; Forman Christian College. The results for this research confirm both of the hypothesis that higher levels of social capital indicate higher level of self-esteem and higher level of future motivation. The results of this paper are worthy of governmental attention as policymakers can draw significant and pragmatic policies and implications.

Introduction

The term 'social capital' is been studied in the fields of social sciences for a very long time, Bourdieu identified it as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu 1985, p. 248; 1980). The rough perspective of social capital proposed by Bourdieu, it becomes states that social capital brings with it 'resources' or in simple words benefits rooted in consistent involvement in a particular group or community. The concept of social capital is understood in two domains; first, the social relationships that allow people to acquire the resources and benefits or potential benefits provided by social capital, and second the amount and quality of those resources (Portes 1998). The outcomes of social capital are not only limited to financial benefits, but it is also highly linked to educational achievement, well-being, and social mobility.

This research looks into the role of social capital in building the self-esteem of university students while also exploring the dimensions in which social capital motivates the university students of Pakistan for their future. This study draws its theoretical perspective from sociology to provide a comprehensive and detailed understanding of social capital's role in student success. Previous research has highlighted the role of social capital to be critical in shaping the academic outcomes of students, especially for students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds (Coleman, 1988). Social capital can provide students with a vast source of information, resources, and social support that can enhance their academic and personal development (Portes, 1998). In addition to this, as illustrated by Sampson et al., social capital can promote positive attitudes toward education and academic achievement, leading to increased motivation and self-esteem among students

(1977).

       The study will utilize a quantitative approach, gathering and analyzing data using quantitative techniques. To gather quantitative data, a survey will be conducted on a sample of university students at Forman Christian College and University (FCCU). The hope for this research's results to be a contributing factor to the expanding bulk of literature on social capital and education and provide recommendations for policies and initiatives aimed at enhancing student achievement.

Conceptual definitions

Social Capital

For this study purpose, social capital is defined as; "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu 1985, p. 248; 1980)

Self-esteem:

Self-esteem can be defined as "the evaluative and affective dimension of the self-concept that reflects a person's overall subjective evaluation of his or her worth or value as a person" (Leary & Baumeister, 2000, p. 680). It encompasses an individual's beliefs about their abilities, appearance, and other personal characteristics.

Motivating university students:

(i) Hopes for the future:

Hopes for the future for this study refers to the expectations, goals, and ambitions that a student has for his/her future life and career.

(ii) Perceptions of job opportunities and advancement in the future:

Perception of job opportunities and advancement for this study refers to the perception of availability of jobs based on abilities, skills, education, and experience that a student has for future advancement and betterment

(iii) Current college attendance:

For this study, current college attendance refers to the daily attendance of university students.

(iv) Participation:

For this study purpose participation refers to the involvement of university students in curricular and co-curricular activities.

Significance of research

Examining research from around all over the globe including Pakistan, examines the impacts of social capital in motivating university students for the future while also looking at the potential or possible impacts that social capital could have in building self-esteem of the university students. Aiming to perceive social capital as a significant aspect of the accumulation of future career goals/job attainment, this study could provide a suggestive insight for the authorities to make amendments to support students from different socio-economic backgrounds who do not have the advantages of better social capital.

Theory

Bourdieu defines social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition"(Bourdieu, 1985, p. 248; 1980). According to Bourdieu's concept, social capital may be divided into two categories: both the amount and the quality of resources that an individual can access through their

connections' social relationships, and the social relationship itself (Portes, 1998). The sociometer theory demonstrates how individuals have an innate desire to be accepted by others and to belong (Leary and colleagues, 1995). This theory highlights the value possessed by social interaction in building self-esteem in an individual. Both of these theories stand relevant for this research purpose as these discuss the importance of social interactions in both building self-esteem which ultimately ameliorates the future motivation of university students.

Literature Review

A study suggests that policies designed to promote educational achievement should also keep an eye on the social backgrounds of the students and make suitable policies to ameliorate the social capital of students (Israel and colleagues, 2001). Israel and colleagues illustrate how community social capital alongside family social capital influences a student's educational achievement. This study supports my research by illustrating how the social backgrounds of the students influence student's educational achievement.

There are very less studies examining the relationship between academic success and social capital. The study by Jasperina Brouwer and colleagues (2016) examines this research gap by highlighting the influence of social capital on success in studies and whether the results differ from low-performing to high-achieving students (Brouwer and colleagues, 2016).To assess social capital, a questionnaire of 407 freshman-year university students was undertaken. Path analysis showed that faculty capital (mentor assistance) and peer capital (help-seeking, collaboration, and support from other students) positively influence academic success subsequently through close relationships or self-efficacy. (Brouwer and colleagues, 2016). Family capital did not have a significant impact on study success. Moreover, the study found that friendship affected study performance in a good manner, particularly for high achievers compared to low achievers. The findings suggest that small-group teaching, which aims to enhance students' social capital, is beneficial for study success among university students (Jasperina Brouwer et al., 2016).

Another study conducted by Sehee Han examines the relationship between different aspects of social capital and self-esteem while also looking for other potential

confounding factors at different levels (Han, S. 2015). Data was extracted from the Seoul Welfare Panel Study in 2009 and 2010, from 2738 households in 25 administrative areas, having a final sample of 5127 participants. Sehee Han found that the dominant attribute of self-esteem variance was household level (52.5%), with a very small proportion attributed to the area level (7.6%). Signals on people-to-people levels were found to have a positive association with self-esteem (Han, S. 2015). In contrast, only organizational participation at the household level showed a positive relationship with self-esteem, and no area-level social capital indicators were found to be associated with self-esteem (Han, S. 2015). The main finding of this study suggested that, depending on the dimensions and levels of social capital indicators, the association between self-esteem and social capital is varied. (Han, S. 2015). This research illustrates how different indicators of social capital are positively associated with self-esteem which supports my research topic signifying the relationship of social capital with self-esteem.

      In a related study, the establishment and maintenance of social capital were examined on Facebook, a well-known online social site. Regression analysis was done on a survey result of N=286 undergraduate students in 2007 by (Ellison and colleagues, 2007). According to Ellison et al.., Facebook use was also found to be associated with psychological well-being measures, suggesting that it might give higher advantages for consumers having low self-esteem and low life satisfaction (Ellison and colleagues, 2007). This study demonstrates how social media platforms like these aid in raising self-esteem, which is consistent with my work on the "Role of social capital in motivating university students for the future and building their self-esteem".

      In a research study the relationship between family and social capital and career

choice for the future (Ali and colleagues 2017). Participants were chosen from a large Pakistani institution with about 3,000 students for the study, which was carried out in 2015–2016 (Ali and colleagues, 2017). After looking at the views of 200 Pakistani university students, most of whom were majoring in business, to ascertain the elements thought to be crucial for growth in entrepreneurship, all the areas of social capital were found to be significant (Ali and colleagues, 2017). This study supports my research as it demonstrates the influence that social capital has on the future career goals of university students in Pakistan, while also looking at family capital.

In a related study, Greenbank (2009) investigated the challenges that working-class university learners face when deciding on a career due to a lack of social capital. According to in-depth interviews conducted with thirty final-year students from a variety of majors, working-class students may find it extremely difficult to make wise career decisions due to a lack of social capital, particularly if they do not take advantage of the university's career services (Greenbank and colleagues, 2009). Analyzing results from in-depth interviews of university students, this study provides a foundation for my research as it examines the role of social capital in the career decision behavior of students possessing a weak social capital and highlights how lack of social capital becomes a barrier to successful decision making for career choice.

In a study Trimble and Kmec (2011) while looking for the influence that social networks have in getting a job, reviews recent research on the effects of social networks on job acquirement and reach to the job-related information. While explaining how social capital matters for job attainment Trimble and Kmec (2011) found two mechanisms; 'Information provision' and 'Influence'. According to Trimble and Kmec, a job seeker's

chances of landing a job are increased when they have social network contacts that can help them learn about more and better jobs. (2011). This privilege of social networking is not always beneficial for all job seekers, as stated by Mouw in previous research; "Those already in privileged positions and those already connected with resourceful people benefit most from reliance on networks" (Mouw, 2003,2006). This study is relevant for backing my research as it concludes how reliance on social networks can be beneficial for job information which in turn increases the chances of successful job attainment (Trimble and Kmec, 2011).

In a similar study while examining the impacts that social capital has on getting a job Skillier interviewed 720 adults with full-time employment to discover the source for the information of their most recent job (Silliker, 1993). In the job search process, social connections were found to be one of the most useful resources, and in certain work settings, one's connections were used more frequently than in others (Silliker, 1993). With the frequent focus on social capital as a key aspect and one of the key resources for getting a job this study along with the previous review of similar research proves it self-valid for my research area as it highlights social capital as a useful resource which also varies depending on the quality and quantity of that resource.

While researching to determine whether social capital influences outcomes in the labor market, Mouw reevaluated the results regarding the function of social capital in the labor market using four distinct sets of data (Mouw and colleagues, 2003). By the claim that, under all other circumstances, employees with a high degree of social capital would be more likely to use contacts for finding employment, if social capital variables do have a causal effect on job outcomes, the casualty test was carried out (Mouw and colleagues,

2003). The findings point to the tendency for similar people to become friends as a major source of social capital effects in the literature, rather than a direct correlation between the traits of friends and labor market outcomes. This study is valid for my research purpose since it highlights the subject of the causal effect of social networks on the labor market, which links to my research to some extent.

Study Aims

This study aims to identify the relationship between variables social capital, self-esteem, and future motivation. The findings of this study can provide significant insight for the social policy-making authorities and educational policymakers.

Research Question

The question under the study is:

Study the role that social capital plays in motivating university students for the future and building their self-esteem.

Methodology

Ethics of research

This proposal was presented for approval to the Institutional Review Board and the Department of Sociology Ethics Committee at Forman Christian College University. The researcher adhered to all ethical standards, including participant confidentiality and anonymity. Every participant's data was safely stored by the researcher. None of the volunteers suffered any physical or psychological harm, and they were not forced to take part in the study. Before the study began, participants were asked to sign an informed consent form (Appendix A). Participants are told of the study's aims, objectives, and their part in them in the informed consent letter. The study's participants were free to exit at any time, and the researcher upheld their integrity and respect. Care has been taken to use an internationally standardized survey, which includes questions about social capital, but does not offend respondents or ask questions that are degrading, provoking, or intrusive.

Research Design

This study is quantitative and uses a survey-based methodology. Participants filled out questionnaires evaluating their social capital and self-esteem.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis for this study is:

H1. University students who have a high degree of social capital are more likely to have higher self-esteem.

H2. University students who have a high degree of social capital are more likely to have

higher levels of future motivation.

Instrument

A questionnaire was administered to measure the social capital and self-esteem of the sample. The following scales were taken into consideration to construct the questionnaire:

1. Rosenberg self-esteem scale (1995)

2. Development and Validation of a Social Capital Questionnaire for Adolescent Students (Pavia and colleagues 2014)

The questionnaire comprises four sections: Section one comprises questions about the respondent's demographic information. The section consists of a five-point Likert scale which ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree asking about the respondent's self-esteem levels. Section three focuses on the respondent's social capital in terms of social networks/cohesion/sense of belonging. Section four comprises six questions, developed by a supervisor, investigating about respondent's future motivation.

Sample

The sample for this study was collected from the FCCU student body. The sample consists of undergraduate students from different majors and semesters with an expected sample size of 200 students. Furthermore, the purposive sampling technique was used for the selection criterion of the sample.

Data collection

The collection of data was done by a self-administered questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale to measure social capital and self-esteem among university students. The distribution of the

survey was manifested electronically using a Google survey and a maximum of two weeks were given to the participants for filling out the survey between June and August 2023.

Data Analysis

The independent variable for this study is social capital and the dependent variables are future motivation and self-esteem. Both inferential and descriptive statistical techniques were used for the analysis of the collected data. Descriptive statistics; and frequencies were used for the summarization and presentation of data, while inferential statistics; and regression analysis were used for the testing of hypotheses. The entire analysis was conducted using SPSS.

Results

Sociodemographic results

Table 1 presents and summarizes the socio-demographic information of the participants. According to the result, the number of female respondents is 40.1% and male respondents are 59.9%, among all these respondents 48.7% belong to the age group 19-22, and 50.7% belong to the age group 23-26. 96.1% of the respondents reported being single while the remaining 3.9% are married. 16.4% of the respondents associated with a family size of 9-12 while only .7% belonged to a family size of 4-8. 19.1 percent of the respondents associate with the field of natural sciences, 49.3% from social sciences, 22.4% from humanities, and 8.6% from the fields of engineering. The majority of the respondent's parental education is reported higher with a percentage of 93.4%. 59.9% of the respondent's monthly family income is reported to be more than 100000pkr. 47.4% of the respondents reported having 1-2 close friends at the university. Most of the respondents have 2-4 close family friends.

Table:1
Sociodemographic results (N=152)

	F	%
Age		
19-22	74	48.7
23-26	77	50.7
Gender		
Male	91	59.9
Female	61	40.1
Marital status		
Single	146	96.1
Married	6	3.9
Family size		
4-8	1	.7
9-12	25	16.4
None	47	30.9
Major/Minor		

Natural sciences	29	19.1
Social sciences	75	49.3
Humanities	34	22.4
Engineering	13	8.6
Parental Educational level		
Primary	4	2.6
Secondary	6	3.9
Higher	142	93.4
Monthly family income		
20000-40000pkr	4	2.6
40000-60000pkr	9	5.9
60000-80000pkr	12	7.9
80000-100000pkr	36	23.7
Above	91	59.9
Number of close friends at university		
1-2	72	47.4
2-4	62	40.8
4-8	14	9.2
Above	4	2.6
Number of close family friends		
1-2	42	27.6
2-4	69	45.4
4-8	33	21.7
Above	8	5.3

Regression Results

Table 2 illustrates the simple linear regression results for the relationship of self-esteem and social capital. A significant regression equation was found, with a t value of 10.544 (p=.000). The results confirm that when social capital is high, self-esteem is also high.

Table 2

Regression table for the relationship between social capital and self-esteem

Coefficients							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Constant	27.915	2.647		10.544	.000	22.6	33.1
Social Capital	.067	.065	-.135	-1.667	.098	-.226	.019

Dependent Variable: FM. Comp

Table 3 shows the simple linear regression results for the relationship between social capital and future motivation. A significant regression equation was found, with a t value of 3.922 (p=.000). The results confirm that when social capital is high, future motivation is also high.

Table 3
Regression table for the relationship between social capital and future motivation

	Coefficients						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Constant	10.962	2.795		3.922	.000	5.440	16.484
Social Capital	.067	.065	.083	1.024	.307	-.062	.196

Dependent Variable: FM. Comp

Discussion

This study aims to analyze the role of social capital in motivating university students for the future and building their self-esteem. The first study hypothesis, that when social capital is high, self-esteem is also high, is proven correct by the findings of this study. Another research also confirms this (Han, S. 2015). The second hypothesis of this study is also proven correct, that when social capital is high, there is a higher level of future motivation. Other scholarships corroborate this study's findings (Koyanagi et al., 2021). In this way, this study illustrates the significance of social capital in the youth of Pakistan and has implications for improving the social capital of people, especially those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those belonging to disadvantaged communities.

Limitations

One of the study's drawbacks is the self-report nature of the data, which is more prone to answer biases. As the study will be limited to a specific region, it might not be representative of a larger population from other regions

Conclusion

Based on this study's findings it is recommended that Pakistani youth be supported in the development of social capital. Some interventions that can support this include (i) building trust and bonding with families, friends, and neighbors, through community programs; (ii) building healthy relationships with adults in the community through social workers and counseling; and (iii) increasing engagement in community service projects, such as greenery drives, charity programs, and recycling initiatives. The education sector, family sector, social media, social welfare officers, and other stakeholders can unite to deliver social capital-building interventions in Pakistan.

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Appendix A: IRB certificate

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INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
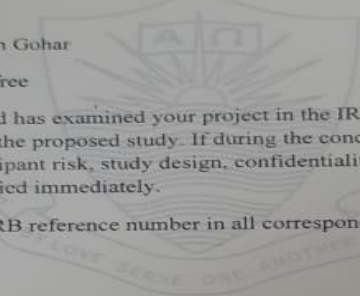**APPROVAL CERTIFICATE**

IRB Ref: IRB-458/6-2023

Date: 22-06-2023

Project Title: Role of Social Capital in motivating university students for the Future and building their Self-esteem

Principal Investigator: Shehram Gohar

Supervisor: Dr. Sara Rizvi Jafree

The Institutional Review Board has examined your project in the IRB meeting held on 22-06-2023 and has approved the proposed study. If during the conduct of your research, any changes occur related to participant risk, study design, confidentiality or consent, or any other change then IRB must be notified immediately.

Please be sure to include the IRB reference number in all correspondence.

Dr. Sharoon Hanook
Convener – IRB
Chairperson, Department of Statistics
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Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Date: _____ Dear Participants,

You are invited to participate in a study titled: "The Role of social capital in motivating university students for the Future and building self-esteem". The study aims to highlight the potential benefits of social capital in motivating university students for future career-building and also how a lack of social capital could cause serious self-esteem issues among university students. The questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes to answer. There is no compensation for responding nor is there any kind of known risk. Your names are not required for participation and none of your data will be disclosed or shared. The data will remain with the researcher and be analyzed without compromising confidentiality or anonymity.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from answering the survey at any point.

By signing this form, you are agreeing that you have read the above information and are indicating your consent to participate in this research study.

Thank you!

Researcher: Shehram Gohar.

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Signed consent of the participant: _____

Appendix C: Survey

Section A	
Socio-Demographic Question	**Response Categories**
1.Age	18-24, 25-35, None of the mentioned
2.Gender	Male, Female, Others
3.Marital Status	Single, Married, Divorced
4.Family Size	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or more
5.Major/Minor	Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Applied sciences
6.Family's Education Level	No formal education, Primary education, Secondary education, Higher secondary education, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Doctorate or higher
7.Monthly Family Income	Less than or 20,000-40,000 PKR, 40,000-60,000 PKR, 60,000-80,000 PKR, 80,000-100,000 PKR, More than 200,000 PKR
8.Number of Close Friends at the University	None, 1-2, 3-4, 5 or more
9.Number of close family friends	None, 1-2, 2-5, 5-10, or more

Section B ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE (Rosenberg, 1965)					
1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.At times I think I am no good at all.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.I feel that I have several good qualities.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4.I feel that I am able to do things as well as most other people.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5.I feel I do not have much to be proud of	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6.I certainly feel useless at times.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7.I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8.I wish I could have more respect for myself.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

9.All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10.I take a positive attitude toward myself.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Section C: Social network/cohesion/sense of belonging (Paiva et al., 2014)					
1.The students at my school stay together.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.I feel like I belong at this school, as if it were mine.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.I feel safe at this school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4.The students at my school have fun together.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5.When the students at my school are having fun, some are left out.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6.Bullying occurs at my school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7.The teachers at my university are sympathetic and give us support.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8.My parents get along with my teachers.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Trust					

9.I trust my neighbors.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10.I can count on my neighbors for help.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11.My neighbors would try to take advantage of me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12.My classmates would try to take advantage of me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13.I trust my friends at university.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14.I can ask my friends at university for help.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Autonomy and Control					
15.My mother controls everything I do.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16.My father controls everything I do.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Section D: Future Motivation					
1. I have positive feelings about my future	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2. I am looking forward to a successful future	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. I feel I will get good job offers	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4. I feel the jobs available to me will have opportunities for advancement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. I never miss university classes as it will mean missing out on networking and gaining opportunities for my growth	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. I actively participate in university societies and activities as it is helps me in networking and gaining opportunities for my growth	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree