

Social Capital Weaknesses among Employees

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the research was to identify the weak point of social capital. This is a descriptive-correlative research and due to its objectives can be practical. The statistical society included 420 employees of Kermanshah Department of Prisons among whom the researchers selected 210 persons using Morgan table and randomly. In order to collect the data needed, the researchers used, in addition to library researches, a questionnaire which was dedicated to evaluate social capital weaknesses. The validity was tested and evaluated by scholars and experts and then it was confirmed. The alpha coefficient for test reliability was between 0.854 which was reported by 20 employees after filling it. Moreover, the researchers used alpha coefficient and Spearman test, KMO, and SPSS software to analyse the data. Finally, the result showed that there was a significant relationship between employees' indifference, failures of groups and working committees, controlling agents, lack of competitive behaviour in organization, employees' distaste toward learning, knowledge sharing, and information, gossiping, administrative infraction, instructions, and circulars related to organizations and social capital; however there is no relationship between personality destruction and social capital.

KEYWORDS: Social Capital, Employees, Indifference, Controlling Agents, Competitive Behaviour, Knowledge Sharing, Gossiping, Administrative Infraction, Personality Destruction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social capital is one of the newest concepts which is, nowadays, common in all economical and social studies. "The existence of such a concept in most of economic, social, and cultural studies shows the important influence of structures and social relationships on social, economic, and cultural variables and factors" (Alvani 2002, pp. 34-35).

The view of social capital is supposed to have first appeared in Lyda Judson Hanifan's debates of rural school community centers. He used the phrase to label "those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people" (1916, p. 130). Hanifan was mainly dealing with the spreading of good will, companionship, empathy and social communication among social parts.

There are several definitions for social capital that each is related to a field of study. Beside the definition above, there is another useful one especially in this paper. Putnam puts the emphasis on social capital in a way that;

Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called "civic virtue." The difference is that "social capital" calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a sense network of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital (Putnam 2000, p. 19).

Later on, Jane Jacob in her splendid work, "Life and Death in American Metropolitan Cities", explained that packed social networks in suburbs are some sorts of social capital. They take more responsibility comparing other security organizations such as police security guard and so on. Social capital is not a very long-life issue. Its usage became popular since 1990s in academic majors such as sociology, economics, and politics. Moreover, using "social capital" according to "globalization and the weaknesses of governments", became a "practical attitude toward society" itself (Warner 1999, p. 126). Social capital simply can be defined as an obvious and clear collection of informal standards or values that are shared between group's members who have cooperation with each other. "Cooperation by itself, does not leads to social capital; this is because of the reason that there should be some factors such as honesty, and mutual commitment" (Rahman Pour 2003, p. 19).

1.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Capital: According to Coleman, “Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure” (Coleman 1990, p. 302).

Today, beside human, economical, and other kinds of capital, we have social capital which is taken from sociology and has a very close relationship with human capital as the most important resource of each organization. “Social capital can provide a very suitable framework for human resource improvement and efficiency. On the other hand, using other kinds of capitals in organizations is in the shadow of social capital and this increases its importance” (Alvani 2004, pp. 23).

In *The Forms of Capital*, Pierre Bourdieu distinguishes between three forms of capital: economic capital, cultural capital and social capital. He explains 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 and recognition”. His treatment of the concept is instrumental, focusing on the advantages to possessors of social capital and the “deliberate construction of sociability for the purpose of creating this resource” (1983, pp. 183–98).

On the other hand, trust can be considered as of the components of social capital. As it is stated:

The appearance of the modern social capital conceptualization is a new way to look at this debate, keeping together the importance of community to build generalized “trust” and the same time, the importance of individual free choice, in order to create a more cohesive society (Ferragina 2010, pp. 73-98). It is for this reason that social capital generated so much interest in the academic and political world (Rose 2000, pp. 1395-1411) (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2012).

When there is a powerful concept of social capital in organization, we can expect many benefits. According to Cohen and Prusak, more particularly, the benefits claimed include:

1. Better knowledge sharing, due to established trust relationships, common frames of reference, and shared goals.
2. Lower transaction costs, due to a high level of trust and a cooperative spirit (both within the organization and between the organization and its customers and partners).
3. Low turnover rates, reducing severance costs and hiring and training expenses, avoiding discontinuities associated with frequent personnel changes, and maintaining valuable organizational knowledge.
4. Greater coherence of action due to organizational stability and shared understanding. (Cohen and Prusak 2001, p. 10)

From the issues discussed, social capital, there might be a kind of relationship (to be discussed) between employees’ indifference, failures of groups and working committees, controlling agents, lack of competitive behaviour in organization, employees’ distaste toward learning, knowledge sharing, and information, gossiping, administrative infraction, instructions, and circulars related to organizations and social capital. Moreover, to find out more information about such a discussion, it is tried to study the relationship between personality destruction and social capital.

Coleman in a study in 1988 titled “Social Capital” found out that social capital is a social-structural resource which can be considered as individuals’ investments and assets. These investments and assets are not tangible objects but they are characteristics existing in social structures and facilitate better individuals’ interactions. This kind of capital provides the ways and alternatives to reach special and related goals. In another research, Akbar Hassan Pour (2007) studied social capital and the gender at work and concluded that the concept of social capital had a deep relationship with working environment and was more important than human capital.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive-correlative research and due to its objectives, it can be considered as a practical one. In order to collect the data needed, the researchers use, in addition to library researches, a questionnaire which is considered to evaluate social capital weaknesses. The questionnaire asks about the most important issues of social capital in a subjective manner. The validity is tested and evaluated by scholars and experts and then it is confirmed

form the view of both form and content. The alpha coefficient for test reliability is between 0.854 which is reported by 20 employees after filling it.

The statistical society include 420 employees of Kermanshah Department of Prisons among whom the researchers select 210 persons using Morgan table and randomly. Moreover, the researchers use alpha coefficient and Spearman test, KMO, and SPSS software to analyse the data.

3. FINDINGS

In this research we used 6 hypotheses as the followings and analysed them by means of SPSS software:

The First Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between employees' indifference and social capital weakness.

The null hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between employees' indifference and social capital weakness.

The Alternative hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between employees' indifference and social capital weakness.

Table 1 (employees' indifference and social capital weakness)

Spearman	N	Significancy
-0.209	201	0.003

According to the significancy (table 1), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Consequently, there is a significant relationship between employees' indifference and social capital weakness.

The Second Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between personality destruction and social capital weakness.

The null hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between personality destruction and social capital weakness.

The Alternative hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between personality destruction and social capital weakness.

Table 2 (personality destruction and social capital weakness)

Spearman	N	Significancy
0.104	201	0.108

According to the significancy (table 2), the null hypothesis accepted rejected and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. Consequently, there is no significant relationship between personality destruction and social capital weakness.

The Third Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between gossiping and social capital weakness.

The null hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between gossiping and social capital weakness.

The Alternative hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between gossiping and social capital weakness.

Table 3 (gossiping and social capital weakness)

Spearman	N	Significancy
0.709	201	0.000

According to the significancy (table 3), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Consequently, there is a significant relationship between gossiping and social capital weakness.

The Fourth Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between administrative infractions (deviation) and social capital weakness.

The null hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between administrative infractions (deviation) and social capital weakness.

The Alternative hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between administrative infractions (deviation) and social capital weakness.

Table 4 (administrative infractions (deviation) and social capital weakness)

Spearman	N	Significancy
0.631	201	0.000

According to the significancy (table 4), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Consequently, there is a significant relationship between administrative infractions (deviation) and social capital weakness.

The Fifth Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between competitive behavior and social capital weakness.

The null hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between competitive behavior and social capital weakness.

The Alternative hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between competitive behavior and social capital weakness.

Table 5 (competitive behavior and social capital weakness)

Spearman	N	Significancy
0.716	201	0.000

According to the significancy (table 5), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Consequently, there is a significant relationship between competitive behavior and social capital weakness.

The Sixth Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between employees' distaste toward new knowledge, sharing knowledge and social capital weakness.

The null hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between employees' distaste toward new knowledge, sharing knowledge and social capital weakness.

The Alternative hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between employees' distaste toward new knowledge, sharing knowledge and social capital weakness.

Table 6 (employees' distaste toward new knowledge, sharing knowledge and social capital weakness)

Spearman	N	Significancy
0.783	201	0.000

According to the significancy (table 6), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Consequently, there is a significant relationship between employees' distaste toward new knowledge, sharing knowledge and social capital weakness.

4. CONCLUSION

In this research, it was tried to identify the weak point of social capital among the employees of Kermanshah Department of Prisons. This is a descriptive-correlative research and due to its objectives can be practical. The statistical society included 420 employees of Kermanshah Department of Prisons among whom the researchers selected 210 persons using Morgan table and randomly. In order to collect the data needed, the researchers used, in addition to library researches, a questionnaire which was dedicated to evaluate social capital weaknesses.

According to the results obtained through SPSS software and also other parts of the article, we had 6 hypotheses among which 5 were accepted and 1 was rejected. Among accepted hypotheses 4 had a direct relationship and 1 had a diverse relationship. Among all variables, the employees' indifference had the lowest influence and employees' distaste had the most important influence on social capital weakness.

On the whole, it can be deduced that social capital in each group or organization is the sign of members' trust to each other. In the time of crisis, social capital could be a very effective and good way. Therefore, identifying the factors influencing on strengthening or weakening social capital is very important.

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