

## The Relationship between Educational Achievement and Communication Dimension of Social Capital

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**Abstract:** The aim of this research was to understand the relationship between educational achievement and social capital (communication dimension of social capital) from the viewpoint of teachers of Iran, Shiraz. Two standard questionnaires for educational achievement and social capital were used. The validity of the instruments was confirmed by researcher made questionnaire which was designed based on Likert measurement system. The reliability of the questionnaires was calculated by Cronbach's Alpha, which were both at significant level. The results from educational achievement and social capital show that Cronbach's Alpha of educational achievement and social capital was 0.79 and 0.85 respectively. Research participants were selected by random sampling. By using Pearson's correlation method results show that the communication dimensions of social capital are: confidence, group norm, commitment & expectations, identity. There is a significant relationship between confidence, group norm, commitment & expectations, identity with the educational achievement.

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**Key Words:** Educational Achievement, Social Capital, Communication Dimension of Social Capital

### 1-Introduction:

Education is defined as an investment made by a generation for the coming generations, and education system has faced some important problems during the recent years, among others, increase and diversity in demand for education, increase in costs, difficulty in providing the costs, and lessening in the educational achievement.

Today, success in an educational system depends upon its educational achievement, and the promotion of achievement and compliance with the scientific and value standards is deemed as the best solution for raising the level of the educational achievement in a society (Irannezhad, 2003).

What is certain is that the achievement is not to refer only to the production of a physical product, but it also used for rendering and supply of any services on education, administration, facilities and recreation... etc. However, measurement of achievement for a physical product is conducted easily. Generally, the concept of educational achievement is shown in figure 1 (Soltani, 2004).

Social capital refers to a set of features and concepts of a social organization such as confidence, norms and networks that facilitate cooperation of the members to reach the common interests (Ghoshal, 1998).

Social capital is attributed to the sources which are available in the occupational networks, and it will be accessed through them. Such sources include data,

concepts, counsels, business chances, financial capital, power and authority, emotional support, and even honesty, confidence and cooperation (Ghoshal, 1998).

### Dimensions of Social Capital

According to Nahapiet & Ghoshal (1998), the social capital has three dimensions, i.e. recognition, structural, and communicative.

#### Structural Dimension

a) Available links in the network: It includes extension and intensity of the communications available in the network;

b) Shape and combination of the network: It includes the sequence of the network, degree of communicability and network congestion;

c) Organizational Fitness: To what extent the network created for a certain purpose might be used for the other purposes.

#### Recognition Dimension

a) Language and common symbols

b) Common observations

#### Communicative Dimension

a) Confidence

b) Norms

c) Bilateral commitments and relationships

d) Define common identity

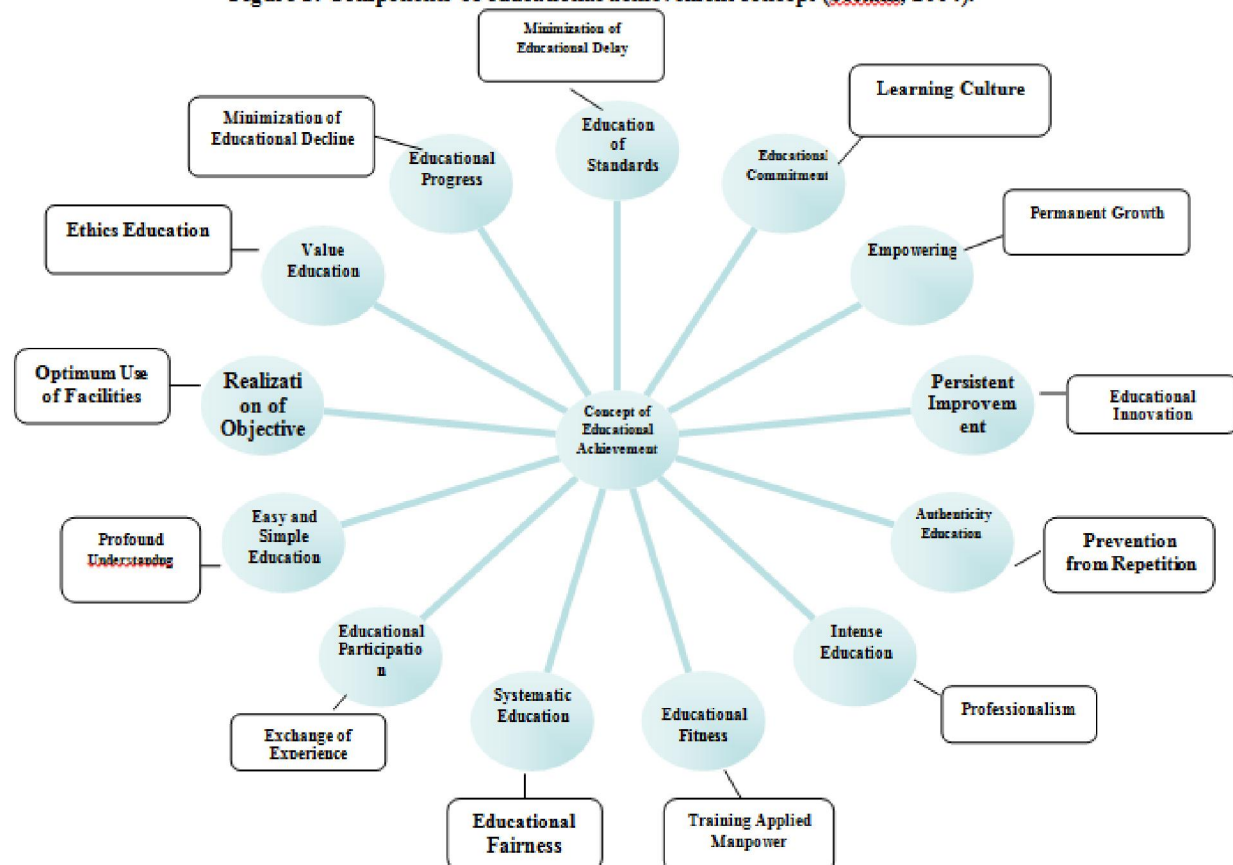
Education experts are generally of the opinion that the education achievement is the most important factor of the adequacy and efficacy of the educational programs. Meanwhile, attention to social capital as a sort of social investment in the educational and social

development will play an important role in the improvement of the educational achievement. As such, given the necessity that such issue has been addressed to by the scientific literature of the education, substantial research has been made on this ground.

1. In an article titled “Education, Social Integrity and Social Capital”, dealing with the studies made on many of the countries (in the Organization for

Economic Cooperation and Development), it was demonstrated that the social capital is an important element in the educational performance. The question is how the social capital affects the educational outputs (efficiencies)? how the social capital and social integrity affect education? and more important, how education affects the social capital?

**Figure 1: Components of educational achievement concept (Soltani, 2004).**



The relationship between the human capital and social capital is very close. For instance, the individuals and communities of a high level social capital (education) are recognized by their high level social capitals. In other words, the social capital will contribute to feeding the human capital, and the education will contribute to mass feeding of the social capital.

Nevertheless, how the social capital may contribute to strengthening the education process, and afterwards how education may be in connection with the social capital? The considerable studies made, show that the social capital is deemed as an important datum in the process of education. In better words, we may have two distinguished issues, namely, social capital or the “inner walls”, which are the social

networks which connect the schools to the outside community.

Another aspect of the “inner walls” of the social capital that affects education is the degree of confidence and the relationship between the teachers and the managers. A distinctive feature of the schools with a high performance is the collaborating atmosphere in the schools. Outside the schools walls, the social communications between the families and the communities is also a very important source of education. The findings demonstrate that the participation of the parents in the schools education, will effectively contribute to the success of the students. When the parents take part in the activities of schools, their children will progress more, this in turn will be the cause of schools progress. There is no

doubt that the details of the fact as to when and how the social capital affect the educational outputs (efficiencies), is something which differs from one country to the other, and the activities which are effective in a country would be different from another country. However, the records indicate that the policy makers, who are willing to promote the educational standards, have to take care of the social capitals (both within and outside the schools walls).

The main result which is obtained is that the education affects the social capital and vice versa. Secondly, the policy makers of all the countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development shall learn from one another that which action, at which time and which place may create a necessary communication between the education and the social capital (Putnam, 2004).

2. In a research launched by Israel & others (2001) titled "Effect of family and social capital on the education achievement", the effect of the social capital on the progress of the education was examined wherein three factors were used: score gained from a combined exam of math and reading, G.P.A of a year, and the rate of the student to continue remaining at the school. The findings demonstrated that the social role of the parents has considerable effect on the education process of their children. The children living in the well-off houses, and/or those who have educated parents, will make more progress during the university courses. In such families, there is an atmosphere wherein the educational progress is striking.

When the youth grow up in a proper environment, and they are benefitted from a moral counselor who trains them what is good and what is bad, this can strongly and positively be effective on their educational progress. The obtained results also revealed that the combination of the social capital and the details of the geographical structure affect the scores obtained from the combinational exam and university scores.

Children who benefit from special social activities, i.e. those who attend social gatherings and urged on group activities, do better at school. This finding suggests that children's access to the adults who are outside the family environment, is as useful as leading a steady life within a certain geographical place for a long term, without any physical displacement to another school or community.

To increase families' ability to make progress in the education achievement of the students deems imperative, which include planning and preparing programs that contribute to increase in parents' competency. Such programs may include the measures which serve necessary for the following:

1. To make Progress in communicative achievement between the parents and the students;

2. To establish self-confidence in the students;

3. To increase education on control of behaviors that hinders educational progress.

The aim is that the home environment is so prepared that the relationship between the parents and the children to be robust therein, and the parents play an important role in the education process.

Although the social capital does not play the main role in the success of the students in the educational process and achievement, yet it affects indirectly through programs, organizations, and activities which are customary at different places. In other words, John Gardener (1991) says that:

The child acquires the good and bad values from the playground, media, street... etc. This is the community and the culture that categorize an individual under a pattern of the values. These are values that are never stated directly, and they are not conveyed to the youth sufficiently (Israel, Beaulieu, Hartless, 2001).

3. Findings of the research on "Role of the Family Social Capital in Children's Primary Education" made by Komba (2007), reveal that the families are benefitted from diverse social capitals (financial, human, and cultural capitals). Such sources have positive and negative effects on the children's education. The results exposed that the foregoing sources were relatively used, such that they had no effect on the children's education, and/or if they had any, there had been no regular study, i.e. the children attended the school in a very poor condition, and their educational state declined and/or they quitted the school. Such situation prevented the children from access to the achieved education, and as such, it restricted the efforts made by the authorities to eliminate the educational poverty. Based on such findings, it was concluded that the responsibility to ensure whether or not the children had access to education, rested with the parents, community members, and the schools. Schools shall serve a common stand between the families and the teachers. As such, a stable stand is required to be established for the home and school, so that the role of each one is clearly defined (Komba, 2007).

4. For an article titled "Families, Social Capital, and Continuity of Education", the data gained by 4 international researches on education was used. Results evidence that the families which are more wealthy, they expend their wealth on their children's social capital. Such issue affects this fact that the wealth of the families intensities their permanent inhabitation, and the attention and eagerness of their children to schools (Coleman, 1997). Meanwhile, the results showed that the parents whose children lived the entire course of high school education in a fixed location, their children's enthusiasm for schools would

grow, and also the parents would become familiar with the families of their Children's friends.

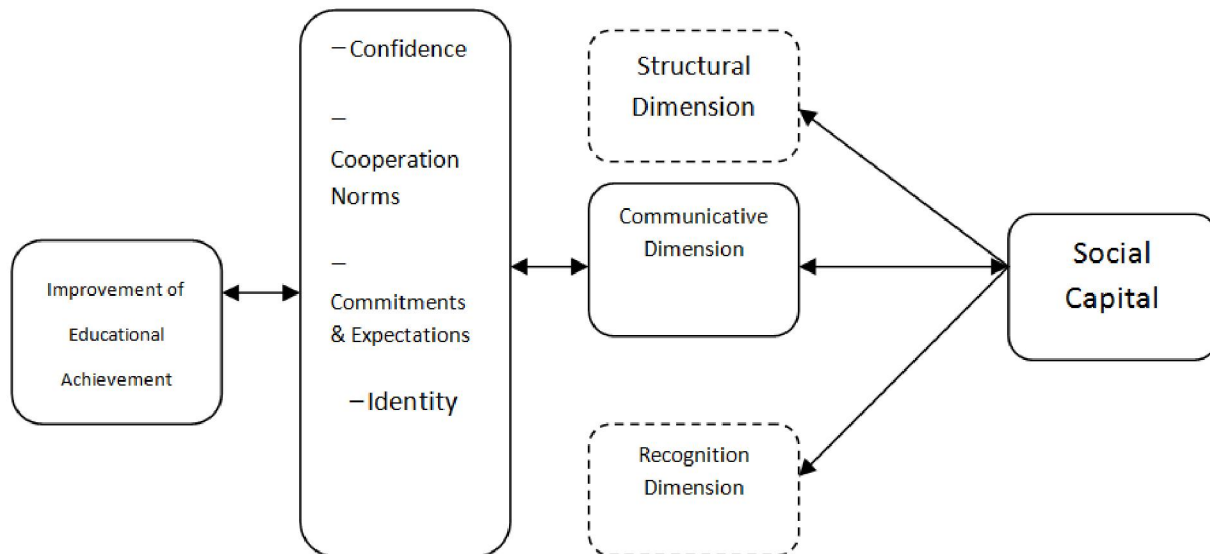
The juvenile who live in the healthy and free of problem families, can realize their teachers' feelings better than the juvenile of other families. The juvenile of the healthy families, discuss about their school with their families more than the other juvenile (Coleman, 1997).

Results also demonstrate that the features, qualities, and cooperation that constitute the social

capital, will affect the graduation from the high school and university. A part of the families' effect on the educational success is due to their relationship, a relationship of which the juvenile is a part of it and it helps their improvement. (Sandefur, Meier, Hernandez, 1999).

## 2- Material and Methods

### 2-1- Research Conceptual Model



## 2-2- Research Hypotheses

### 2-2-1- Main Hypothesis

The teachers in the public middle schools of Shiraz city are of the opinion that there is a relationship between the educational achievement and the communicative dimension of social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal Model).

### 2-2-2- Minor Hypotheses

1. The teachers in the public middle schools of Shiraz city are of the opinion that there is a relationship between the educational achievement and the confidence from the communicative dimensional of social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal Model).

2. The teachers in the public middle schools of Shiraz city are of the opinion that there is a relationship between the educational achievement and the cooperation norms from the communicative dimension of social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal Model).

3. The teachers in the public middle schools of Shiraz city are of the opinion that there is a relationship between the educational achievement and the commitments and expectations from the communicative dimension of social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal Model).

4. The teachers in the public middle schools of Shiraz city are of the opinion that there is a relationship between the educational achievement and formation of identity from the communicative dimension of social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal Model).

### 2-3-Methodology

This research is defined as a descriptive research which was conducted by the survey method.

### 2-4- Testable Items

Research Statistic Society was formed by all the teachers of the public middle schools in Shiraz amounting to 1200 teachers during the academic year 2008-09. According to Morgan Table, the specimen quantity was estimated at 310 persons, and they were selected by random-category sampling method.

### 2-5- Research Means

#### 1. Educational Achievement Questionnaire

For this questionnaire, and after selection of 15 factors from among the major factors of the educational achievement, the university professors and experts were asked to prioritize 15 factors. The highest priority was given score 5, and the other priorities were respectively given the descending scores down to the lowest priority which was given score 1. After

taking the average, and study of the obtained results, 6 factors or elements were selected as the criterion for the educational achievement in this research. Those factors are: Educational equipment and facilities, learning performance, new teaching methods, teacher's scientific factor, benefitting from educational technologies and software, and teacher's personal specifics, which are totally 25 items (World Bank Standards). The above items were classified in Likert's 5-option measurement system framework. The Cronbach's Alpha method of the credibility for the questionnaire was measured as 0.88, which is indicative of the high reliability of the questionnaire. In order to specify tolerance of the researching questionnaire, the views of the university professors and experts were benefitting from, and only minor modifications were applied.

#### 2. Social Capital Communicative Dimension Questionnaire

Given the social capital communicative dimension from the Nahapiet & Ghoshal Model (1998), four factors were considered in this questionnaire which includes: 1. Confidence, 2.

Cooperation and group norms, 3. Commitments and expectations, and 4. Identity. This questionnaire was prepared and classified by 24 items in the Likert's, 5-option measurement system framework. The Cronbach's Alpha method of the reliability for the questionnaire was calculated as 0.85, which is suggestive of the high credibility of the questionnaire. In order to identify the tolerance of the searching questionnaire, the opinions of the university professors and experts were used, and only minor modifications were made.

#### 2-6- Method of Data Analysis

In order to analyze data, the Pearson correlation method was used.

#### 3- Results

- The teachers in the public middle schools of Shiraz city during the academic year 2010-11 are of the opinion that there is a significant relationship between the educational achievement and the communicative dimensions of social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal Model).

Table (1) Relationship between the Educational Achievement and the Communicative Dimensions of the Social Capital

Communicative Dimensions of Social Capital	Significance Level	Correlation Coefficient
Confidence	0.000	0.672**
Coordination & Group Norms	0.000	0.431**
Commitments & Expectations	0.001	0.891**
Identity	0.000	0.532**

Based on the output of the Pearson's correlation method (as shown in the above table), there is a significant relationship between the educational achievement and the communicative dimensions of the capital.

#### 4- Discussions

Results of the research reveal that there is a significant relationship between the communicative dimensions of the social capital and the educational achievement. Such results correspond to the findings of Coleman, Sandefur, Putnam, and Israel. This suggests that an organization which has a high social capital among its personnel, can by its effect in the exchange of data and transfer of implicit and explicit technology, and the cooperation and mutual confidence, elicit flourishing of the new ideas among the personnel and the participatory activities to meet the targets of the organization, and ultimately improve the educational achievement.

Meanwhile, the existence of mutual confidence between the principal and the teachers, the colleagues, and accordingly the clients, will benefit the educational system from a number of advantages.

Hence, it is concluded that if confidence grows in the schools, the educational achievement will be also improved and boosted.

Should cooperation norms exist between the principals and the teachers of schools, the attitudes will be conveyed and the people's knowledge will be shared, which will improve the educational achievement. Eventually, if the grounds are provided for acquiring identity in the individuals within the schools during the service, and the individuals' expectations in the schools are taken into account, they will improve the learning performance by optimum use of the educational equipment and facilities, and this means the improvement of the educational achievement.

#### Recommendations

In this section, based on the findings of the research, the following are recommended:

1. Given the significant relationship between the confidence (from the communicative dimension of the social capital) and the educational achievement, it is recommended that an atmosphere of confidence is established between the education officials, between



the principals of the schools and the teachers, and among the teachers themselves.

2. In view of the significant relationship between the group norms (from the communicative dimension of social capital) and the educational achievement, it is advised that in the schools and even in the education system, the group norms are identified, defined and explained, and by general agreement, is made into a policy.

3. Given the significant relationship between the commitments and expectations (from the communicative dimension of the social capital) and the educational achievement, it is recommended that, due to the difference in the teachers' expectations as to the degree of their responsibility and their individual and group requirements; and meanwhile they are entrusted with commitments which are affected by such expectations, the education authorities shall pay special attention to the point that the educational achievement of the schools would be improved if only the expectations of the teachers in the schools are identified and addressed to, and their commitments are in compliance with the stand, expectations, and the applicable laws based on the educational achievement.

4. In view of the significant relationship between the identity (from the communicative dimension of the social capital), and the educational achievement, it is advised that the identity of the teachers (that who are they, and where do they intend to reach) is considered (even at the beginning of their recruitment). No doubt, a teacher of an integrated (consistent) and flexible identity will be notably more successful in realizing the educational achievement than the one who is of a disintegrated (perplexed) identity.

As a result, in order to intensify the educational achievement, every principal and official shall grasp the importance of the social capital, and they shall be aware that education and the educational achievement will be well performed if only the personnel within the organization know each other and rely on one another's confidence. Such capital shall be addressed to extensively, because this capital nowadays plays a substantially more important role than the physical and human capitals within the organizations and communities, and the mass media networks synchronize the relationship between the people and the organizations, and between the organizations and organizations. In the absence of a social capital, the efficacy of the other capitals will fade away, and without a social capital, traversing on the route of

growth and evolution will become rather too hard and rough.

Given the substantial diminishing of the social capital, and its great importance for the individual and community, it is imperative to make new investments to contribute funding the social capital within the organizations for the coming generation.

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