

Building Social Capital in Micro Environment: The Family, Attachment Theory and Socialization

Emine Ozmete

Department of Social Work, Ankara University Faculty of Health Sciences, Ankara, Turkey.

(Email: eoymete@yahoo.com)

ABSTRACT

Social capital is an instantiated informal norm that promotes cooperation between two or more individuals. The understanding of social capital can provide valuable insights into the social network and links that individuals and communities have, and importantly how these networks and links can be utilized to contribute to positive outcomes for the individual and the community life. In this way the explaining of social capital may enlarge our understanding of how individuals can work cooperatively to achieve shared goals and to deal with difficulties within environment productively. In this period, families as micro environment create norms and social ties for their members. Bowlby's "Attachment Theory" strongly suggests a positive domino effect of trusting relationships spreading out from the family and into wider circles of life. Individuals who see from their parents volunteering and supportive behaviors in childhood period, they are in more likely engage those behaviors for communities in adulthood-it has called as socialization of an individual. Also this socialization process contributes to wider social networks. The study is a literature review deeply. It aims to investigate about building social capital in family as micro environment and, effect of attachment styles and socialization process for members in family life on their social capital.

Keywords: *Social capital, Family, Attachment theory, Socialization.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Definition of the Concepts

At the beginning of this review of what conversations to be shown about the relations among social capital, attachment styles and socialization process in family environment. I shall start with definitions of each of the three concepts under review. And then will consider ways in which these may be linked.

Firstly, what is social capital? As the main concept of the review. The working definition of social capital that is emerging in an increasingly interdisciplinary literature refers to the networks, norms and understandings that facilitate cooperative activities within and among groups of individuals (Helliwell, 2001). The commonalities of most definitions of social capital are that they focus on social relations that have productive benefits. The variety of definitions identified in the literature stem from the highly context specific nature of social capital and the complexity of its conceptualization and operationalization (Claridge, 2011). This has been exacerbated by the different words used to refer to the term. These range from social energy, community spirit, social bonds, civic virtue, community networks, social ozone, extended friendships, community life, and social resources to informal and formal networks, good neighbourliness and social glue. Within these there are different conceptualisations depending on the theoretical background which contribute to conceptual confusion (Halpern, 2005).

The notion of social capital is said to have first appeared in Lyda Judson Hanifan's discussions of rural school community centres. He used the term to describe 'those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people' (Hanifan, 1916). Hanifan was particularly concerned with the cultivation of good will, fellowship, sympathy and social intercourse among those that 'make up a social unit' (Hanifan, 1916). Bourdieu (1983) contribution to social capital is related to social theory, and then Coleman (1994) in his discussions of the social context of education moved the idea into academic debates. However, it was the work of Putnam (1995) that launched social capital as a popular focus for research and policy discussion. 'Social capital' has also been picked up by the World Bank as a useful organizing idea. They argue that 'increasing evidence shows that social cohesion is critical for societies to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable' (The World Bank, 1999). According to these different approaches; definitions of the social capital are as following:

According to Bourdieu, Social Capital is the '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' (Bourdieu, 1983). In the view of 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 a social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure' (Coleman, 1994). Putnam stated 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" (Putnam., 2000). Also according to The World Bank 'social capital refers to the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions... Social capital is not just the sum of the institutions which underpin a society – it is the glue that holds them together' (The World Bank, 1999). Those definitions show that social capital is seen as a social asset by virtue of actors' connections and access to resources in the network or group of which they are members.

Woolcock (2001) suggests that the concept of social capital "...risks trying to explain too much with too little [and] is being adopted indiscriminately, adapted uncritically, and applied imprecisely..." For Field (2003) the central thesis of social capital theory is that 'relationships matter'. The central idea is that 'social networks are a valuable asset'. Interaction enables people to build communities, to commit themselves to each other, and to knit the social fabric. A sense of belonging and the concrete experience of social networks (and the relationships of trust and tolerance that can be involved) can, it is argued, bring great benefits to people. Lin (2001) has stated that social capital may be defined operationally as resources embedded in social networks and accessed and used by actors for actions. Thus, the concept has two important components: (1) it represents resources embedded in social relations rather than individuals, and (2) access and use of such resources reside with actors. Also Lin (Also Lin (2001)) argued that there are two types of resources an individual can gain access to and use: personal resources and social resources. Personal resources are resources possessed by an individual and may include ownership of material as well as symbolic goods (e.g., diplomas and degrees). Social resources are resources accessed through and individual's social connections. Depending on the extensity and diversity of their social connections, individuals have differential social resources.

For Flap (Flap, 1991) social capital also includes mobilized social resources. Flap specifies three elements of social capital:

The number of persons within one's social network who "are prepared or obliged to help you when called upon to do so,"

The strength of the relationship indicating readiness to help,

The resources of these persons.

From these definitions, three main underlying ideas can be distinguished:

- 1) Social capital generates positive externalities for members of a group;
- 2) These externalities are achieved through shared trust, norms, and values and their consequent effects on expectations and behaviours;
- 3) Shared trust, norms, and values arise from informal forms of organizations based on social networks and associations. The study of social capital is that of network-based processes that generates beneficial outcomes through norms and trust (Durlauf & Fatchamps, 2004).

The definitions show that social capital can be understood quite simply as networks of social relations characterised by norms of trust and reciprocity. The essence of social capital is quality social relations. It is the quality of relationships, understood through the use of the concept 'social capital', which affects the capacity of people to come together to collectively resolve problems they face in common. Defined in this way, it is clear that social capital can exist in family and community life, and is an important feature of both. It is well known that good quality family relationships are important to a whole range of outcomes for family members, including the development of children. What (James Coleman, 1994) aimed to demonstrate — one of the key social capital theorists — was that social capital within the family - norms of trust and reciprocity within the family — is essential for the transmission of parents' human capital to their children (Stone & Hughes, 2001).

Secondly, what about attachment theory? Attachment is an emotional bond to another person. Bowlby's attachment theory posits that meeting the physical and psychological needs of the child through the first two years of life provides the template for all future relationships through the development of a secure attachment. This attachment is characterized by parents who are able to meet the physical and psychological needs of the child resulting in the development of the child's capacity for empathy. If the child's needs are not met, the result is an insecure attachment and an inability to exhibit empathy linked to the capacity for later criminal behaviour, particularly violent behaviour (Katz, 2002).

Psychologist John Bowlby was the first attachment theorist, describing attachment as a "lasting psychological connectedness between human beings" (Bowlby, 1982). Bowlby believed that the earliest bonds formed by children with their caregivers have a tremendous impact that continues throughout life. According to Bowlby,

attachment also serves to keep the infant close to the mother, thus improving the child's chances of survival. The central theme of attachment theory is that mothers who are available and responsive to their infant's needs establish a sense of security. The infant knows that the caregiver is dependable, which creates a secure base for the child to then explore the world.

Children who are securely attached generally become visibly upset when their caregivers leave, and are happy when their parents return. When frightened, these children will seek comfort from the parent or caregiver. Contact initiated by a parent is readily accepted by securely attached children and they greet the return of a parent with positive behaviour. While these children can be comforted to some extent by other people in the absence of a parent or caregiver, they clearly prefer parents to strangers.

Parents of securely attached children tend to play more with their children. Additionally, these parents react more quickly to their children's needs and are generally more responsive to their children than the parents of insecurely attached children. Studies have shown that securely attached children are more empathetic during later stages of childhood. These children are also described as less disruptive, less aggressive, and more mature than children with ambivalent or avoidant attachment styles.

As adults, those who are securely attached tend to have trusting, long-term relationships. Other key characteristics of securely attached individuals include having high self-esteem, enjoying intimate relationships, seeking out social support, and an ability to share feelings with other people. For example a study show that women with a secure attachment style had more positive feelings about their adult romantic relationships than other women with insecure attachment styles (McCarthy, 1999).

In the past several years, interest in attachment theory has grown substantially. Not only has a large empirical base of knowledge on attachment been developed but researchers have also begun to examine its utility for conceptualizing various types of problematic relationship patterns. The attachment theory defined as a biologically based system of behaviour that exists between the attachment figure and the child to ensure the child's proximity to the attachment figure. Thus, the primary function of attachment behaviours is to protect the young and to maintain their survival.

If children develop secure and healthy attachments to their attachment figures, they develop expectations of the self and others as trustworthy and expect to have their needs met. In relationships that are not secure, however, children internalize the negative aspects of the relationships and develop congruent expectations (Bolen, 2000). In this point, it can be said that attachment styles in childhood effect on structure of social communication network and social capital in adulthood.

Thirdly, socialization as a concept of the review, it has defined the process by which people learn to adapt to norms, values, attitudes and, behaviours accepted and practiced by the ongoing system. The actors in the socialization process are (i) parents, (ii) formal education, (iii) religion, (iv) social networks, (v) media. Sociologists may distinguish six kinds of socialization: (i) primary socialization, (ii) secondary socialization, (iii) developmental socialization, (iv) anticipatory socialization, (v) re-socialization, (vi) reverse socialization. The amazing power of the family as an agent of socialization comes from a combination of two factors:

1. The family has almost exclusive control of the person during the first years of life and preeminent control during the childhood and adolescent years.
2. Parent-child emotional bond motivates the child to be socialized and the parents to do the difficult, messy job of socialization.

Socialization in family begins a process through which humans learn and develop to be the adult persons they become. The effects of family socialization are very evident and long lasting, especially about relationships with others and social relations. For some adults, their interactions with other individuals have continued in such a close relationship that they learned in their family life in childhood or youth period (Rusconi & Tummons, 1975).

Social Capital In Micro Environment: The Family, Attachment Theory And Socialization:

In the light of studies to be reviewed here, linkages between social capital and attachment styles and socialization process in family life as micro environment. The micro environment includes the surrounding elements of the living environment common to all family systems and family members as individual. The micro environment is made up of physical habitats, including homes and yards and social aspects relating to kin, friends, and neighbours in terms of social connections and social capital. While the physical residence and members of any one family are integral to their own system and with each other as socially (Deacon & Firebaugh, 1988). The family household, as a place in which social relations are characterised by trust and where reciprocity operates, has received relatively little attention in social capital research.

Those studies which do focus on social capital within a family household typically investigate the impact of social capital on a given family socialization outcome – often child development or wellbeing. Coleman's development of social capital indicators for children's educational attainment included personal, family and community

dimensions. Measures of personal and family resources include the following: socio-economic status, ethnicity, number of siblings, number of residential moves, whether or not mother worked before children started school, the mother's expectation of children's level of educational attainment, the level of communication between children and parents about personal matters, and whether or not both parents were present in household both in micro environment and in macro environment (Coleman, 1994). Families create norms and social ties. They are also the context within which the vast majority of people first learn to trust others. In review of socialization studies, it might be more plausible that primary socialization experiences, that is, those experiences in one's childhood and adolescence, are more formative. It is stressed that individual values (y) which can only be explained effectively by socialization processes within the family and in early adulthood experiences, play a more important role in creating social capital than does face-to-face interaction within organizations'. Also because of their social experiences adolescents in youth associations, peer groups and other social interactions, as well as their school experiences, might have more impact on their civic attitudes than experiences later on in their lives. This view suggests that core values of social capital, such as norms of reciprocity and generalized trust, can be considered as traits that are acquired early in life and that they remain rather stable throughout one's lifetime (Stolle & Hooghe, 2004).

How does attachment styles relate to social capital in adulthood? In the family, the young child becomes 'securely bonded' to the primary caregiver, and this bond becomes the secure emotional base from which the child can safely explore the world. Hence the young toddler holds onto the parent's coat-tails for comfort as he, or she, sits on the bench in the park. It is the existence of the strong, secure bond that eventually gives the child the confidence for the life-long period. There is now ample evidence that the character and strength of this early relationship have repercussions throughout later life. Though this is not deterministic, the securely bonded infant tends to grow into the secure and confident child and teenager. This in turn is predictive of the formation of stable and successful adult relationship, and of being a parent more likely to form a secure bond with their own children.

Table 1. Definitions of socialization kinds.

Kinds of Socialization	Definitions
Primary socialization	It occurs when a child learns the attitudes, values, and actions appropriate to individuals as members of a particular culture. For example if a child saw his/her mother expressing a discriminatory opinion about a minority group, then that child may think this behaviour is acceptable and could continue to have this opinion about minority groups
Secondary socialization	It refers to the process of learning. What is appropriate behaviour as a member of a smaller group within the larger society? It is usually associated with teenagers and adults, and involves smaller changes than those occurring in primary socialization
Developmental socialization	It is the process of learning behaviour in a social institution or developing your social skills
Anticipatory socialization	It refers to the processes of socialization in which a person "rehearses" for future positions, occupations, and social relationships
Re-socialization	It refers to the process of discarding former behaviour patterns and accepting new ones as part of a transition in one's life. This occurs throughout the human life cycle The family is the earliest and without question the most influential agent of socialization.
Reverse socialization	It refers to situations in which a younger person teaches an older person. Reverse socialization is deviation from the desired behaviours or enculturation, especially of the younger generation. It involves both adult and children.

Table 2. Characteristics of attachment styles.

Characteristics	As children:	As adults:
Secure attachment	Able to separate from parent Seek comfort from parents when frightened Return of parents is met with positive emotions	Have trusting, lasting relationships Tend to have good self-esteem Comfortable sharing feelings with friends and partners
Ambivalent attachment	Prefers parents to strangers May be wary of strangers Become greatly distressed when the parent leaves	Seek out social support Reluctant to become close to others Worry that their partner does not love them
Avoidant attachment	Do not appear to be comforted by the return of the parent May avoid parents Does not seek much comfort or contact from parents	Become very distraught when a relationship ends May have problems with intimacy Invest little emotion in social and romantic relationships
Disorganized attachment	Shows little or no preference between parent and stranger Show a mixture of avoidant and resistant behaviours May seem dazed, confused, or apprehensive	Unable or unwilling to hear thoughts and feelings with others May take on a parental role Some children act as a caregiver toward the parent

Source: Cherry (2009) Attachment styles.

Bowlby has argued that mother-child attachment has an evolutionary basis, encompassing a wide range of mother-child interaction behaviours that together demonstrate attachment. He believed that predisposition to become attached was inherited and necessary for survival. Also he believed that attachment between infant and adult was immediate, necessary and a key element of human behaviour. He further asserted that children's attachment relationships will to their parents in many ways predict the types of relationships they will enjoy throughout their entire life. Another important tenet of the Bowlby's theory is that physical disconnection from one's parents is directly related to delinquent or even criminal behaviour later in life (Sowers, Thyer, & Dulmus, 2008). Consideration of an individual's interrelationships with various dimensions of its environment involves an expanded view of systems in terms of social capital. According to attachment theory; there is a positive domino effect of trusting relationships spreading out from the family and into wider circles of life. In contrast, disrupted, abusive or absent early relations in life- from the family context to teenage peer groups through to adult isolation and deviancy. Children who see their parents volunteering, engaged in the community and so on are in turn more likely to engage in such behaviours themselves. Indeed, the influence and community engagement of parents appear to be one of the most robust routes through which social capital is formed or transmitted (Halpern, 2005). There is evidence that social capital tends to be lower for children in single-parent families. Single parents tend to have smaller social Networks, partly as a result of residential mobility and family break-down, and the child tends to have less exposure to adult attention. Much the same is true of teenage mothers, whose partners tend to be less reliable, less supportive and more abusive, and who tend to have smaller and more impoverished social Networks. Divorce also seems to be associated with lower levels of generalized trust, while the loss or withdrawal of one of the parents-typically the father-deprives the child of Access to that parent's social network as well as their emotional presence (Jonsson & Gähler, 1997). Family social capital affects the child both directly through the 'inheritance' of a smaller social network and indirectly through the individual psychological resources and traits that the child acquires, or does not acquire-feelings of security, the ability to trust, and the social skills to build relationships. Ironically, while people tend to think of the family as the prime source of bonding social capital (because it is the most powerful form of such affiliation), they neglect the fact that it is also likely to be important influence on bridging social capital. Feeling secure and confident in oneself is almost certainly a necessary prerequisite for interacting with others who seem different and unfamiliar. Children who see their parents and family interacting freely and respectfully with diverse other adults will tend to model their own behaviour on these interactions (Halpern, 2005).

2. CONCLUSION

This paper considered how attachment theory and socialization process relate to social capital? In the other

words how norms of trust and reciprocity within family life relate to norms of trust and reciprocity in other aspects of social life, including informal ties and generalised social capital. The paper explains that family life relates to norms within informal networks, which in turn are related to generalise social capital, which are related to trust in institutions in adulthood. It is the quality of informal relations with other family members, parents, friends in childhood and the like that may be one of the keys to quality community ties. Some studies show that good quality family relationships appear related to the levels of community participation among adult family members and the practices of family life do have a role to play in enhancing community life, as a conduit for community participation from one generation to the next. At the individual level, personality differences map onto variations in the propensity to engage in and stimulate social capital along a dimension labelled “agreeableness” vs. “antagonism”. The causes of these individual variations appear to lie in socialization and environmental factors rather than in our genes; hence they appear to mark rather than explain micro-variations social capital. Socialization experiences in the family appear to have a major impact, as does the individual’s social capital ‘inheritance’ from their parents and relatives. These early influences have domino effects through the child’s peer groups and later relationships. Educational attainment, itself partly determined by family and social class origins, has powerful additional effects. Going to university appears to have a particularly strong effect on boosting the scale and diversity of an individual’s social network and their propensity to trust others. Recognising that the dynamic between family socialization process, attachment theory and social capital may vary over time or circumstance is consistent with a life course approach to social capital as well as a resources approach — which focuses on the links between social, economic, human and environmental capitals. In addition to understanding how social capital varies over time and circumstance, it points to the further critical academic and policy issue to address which is whether and how social capital within community life may compensate for poor quality family relationships, and vice versa.

FUNDING

This study received no specific financial support.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 20 January 2011/ Revised: 25 August 2011/ Accepted: 27 September 2011/ Published: 30 December 2011

Copyright: © 2011 by the author. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

REFERENCES

- Bolen, R. M. (2000). Validity of attachment theory. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 1*(2), 128-153. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/152483800001002002>.
- Bourdieu, P. (1983). Forms of capital, (In J. C. Richards -Ed., *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*) (pp. 5-249). New York: Greenwood Press.
- Bowlby, J. (1982). Attachment and loss: Retrospect and prospect. *The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 52*(4), 664-678. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-0025.1982.tb01456.x>.
- Cherry, K. (2009). An overview on attachment theory. Retrieved from <http://www.about.com/psychology>. [Accessed 14.10.2009].
- Claridge, T. (2011). Social capital definition. Retrieved from <http://www.socialcapitalresearch.com>. [Accessed 5.10.2011].
- Coleman, J. (1994). *Foundations of social theory*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Deacon, R., & Firebaugh, F. (1988). *Family resource management: Principles and applications*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Durlauf, S., & Fatchamps, M. (2004). Social capital. NBER Working Paper Series No: 10485, Cambridge MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Field, J. (2003). *Social capital*. London: Routledge.
- Flap, H. (1991). Social capital in the reproduction of inequality, comparative sociology of family. *Health and Education, 20*, 6179-6202.
- Halpern, D. (2005). *Social capital*. Cambridge UK: Polity Press.
- Hanifan, L. J. (1916). The rural school community center. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 67*(1), 130-138.
- Helliwell, J. (2001). Social capital, the economy and well-being. *The Review of Economic Performance and Social Progress, 1*.
- Jonsson, J. O., & Gähler, M. (1997). Family dissolution, family reconstitution, and children’s educational careers: Recent evidence for Sweden. *Demography, 34*(2), 277-293. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2061705>.
- Katz, R. S. (2002). Re-examining the integrative social capital theory of crime. *Western Criminology Review, 4*(1), 30-54.
- Lin, N. (2001). *Social capital: A theory of social structure and action*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- McCarthy, G. (1999). Attachment style and adult love relationships and friendships: A study of a group of women at risk of experiencing relationship difficulties. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 72(3), 305-321. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1348/000711299160022>.
- Putnam, R. (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1), 65-78. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.1995.0002>.
- Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Rusconi, G. E., & Tummons, P. (1975). Introduction to "What is socialization?". *New German Critique*(6), 48-59.
- Sowers, K. M., Thyer, B. A., & Dulmus, C. N. (2008). *Comprehensive handbook of social work and social welfare: Human behaviour in the social environment*. USA: John Wiley and Sons.
- Stolle, D., & Hooghe, M. (2004). The roots of social capital: Attitudinal and network mechanisms in the relation between youth and adult indicators of social capital. *Acta Politica*, 39(4), 422-441. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ap.5500081>.
- Stone, W., & Hughes, J. (2001). *Social capital: Linking family and community?* Paper presented at the Family Strengths Everybody's Business Everybody's Gain, Family Strengths Conference, 2-5 December 2001, Newcastle.
- The World Bank. (1999). What is social capital? PovertyNet <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/scapital/whatsc.htm>. [Accessed 8.12.2007].
- Woolcock, M. (2001). The place of social capital in understanding social and economic outcomes. *Canadian Journal of Policy Research*, 2(1), 11-17.