

# Education as Powerful Social Capital

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**Abstract**—Indonesia is currently experiencing considerable problems in terms of availability of social capital to build a prosperous society. Our social capital has collapsed along with the rule of the New Order, and getting crushed in the period thereafter. Solidarity and trust between members and community groups dwindling. Even within the community groups, they had already decreased dramatically. Through this study, the authors use the method of literature study to find solutions and strategic moves to low social capital at this time. Results of the study showed that education as a force means that education is one of the very strong human power and potential to fight all the forces of human nature hampers. One step educational strategy that must be taken is how to cultivate and simultaneously strengthen the social capital of the nation by building mutual trust, conduct reciprocal relations such as mutual respect, sharing, cultivate positive emotions for the continuity of social transformation better, and has wide network. The implication of this study is education as a force provides an opportunity for us, teachers, students, and parents can revitalize the education through social capital formation strategies in academic and non academic programs.

**Keywords**—education as power, social capital

## I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, Indonesia is experiencing various multidimensional crises due to the growing social changes. Social characters that emanate from Indonesian society are strongly degrading and leading to destructive actions. Destructive acts that are ingrained in the Indonesian nation will have an effect on social capital that we have had. Social capital, which includes social norms, should be maintained and preserved continually in order not to be marred by uncivilized human activities.

Indonesia is currently experiencing considerable problems in terms of availability of social capital to build a prosperous society. Our social capital has collapsed along with the rule of the New Order, and getting crushed in the period thereafter. Solidarity and trust between members and community groups are dwindling. Even within the community groups, they had already decreased dramatically.

A society group that has an advanced social capital can resolve the complexity of social welfare problems more easily. The ease will be found mainly in a society that is used to living with a sense of belonging and trust, united in an intensive social relationship (social networking) and supported by the spirit of giving for mutual benefits.

Mutual trust, reciprocity with mutual respect, mutual sharing, the growth of positive emotions, and maintenance of a positive network for a better social transformation are the basic values which become the spirit of social capital. On the other hand, an element of social capital that plays an important role is the willingness of the Indonesian people in maintaining social values, building networks, and producing creative ideas.

One of the methods to form social capital is through educational institutions. Social capital is a fundamental basis for the improvement of an organization, so that it becomes more advanced and optimal in performing its activities. An advanced and qualified educational institution cannot be separated from the role of its social capital. The maximum utilization of social capital within an organization can be a driving force to advance education in Indonesia.

The challenge of education in general is how to build trust and create social networks amongst schools, parents, and students in order to create a strong synergy with one another. Most people assume that the school has a full role in educating their students, whereas in truth the contribution of parents and society is necessary for the development of knowledge and skills possessed by students. The series of synergy among schools, parents, and students should not be interrupted for the reason that any development of social capital acquired by students has to be known by the parents and the school.

Referring to some of the research regarding that connection between teaching practices and social capital. The finding that schools, and not just families, can produce social capital, is consistent with the case for progressive education. This hopeful conclusion suggests the possibility of altering social capital in the community through teaching practices [1]. Progressive education idea's that how students are taught shapes their beliefs is not new. Teaching ethics and civics are established goals of school systems in many countries, which also animate the progressive education movement [2].

The aim of this study was to describing of how the form of the revitalizing education for strengthening social capital of the nation Indonesia. The concept of progressive education and typical Indonesian's education developed by Ki Hajar Dewantara become reference material authors to study the problems of social capital. Social capital is believed to be a very significant collective power if used to resolve any issues, such as development strategy, in an educational institution. Therefore, an outline of the scope of this study includes a review of revitalizing for strengthening social capital and how to building education network for the strengthening the social capital.

## II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

### A. Definition of Social Capital

Social capital can be defined as, "an instantiated informal norm that promotes co-operation between individuals. In the economic sphere it reduces transaction costs and in the political sphere, it promotes the kind of associational life which is necessary for the success of limited government and modern democracy" [3]. The definition illustrates that social capital serves as reinforcement of the norm in many aspects of life to realize the success of good governance.

This is supported by the opinion [4] that social capital is a part of a social organization, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions. Social capital, if needed, will provide supports in the forms of: esteem and honor that are often required if people want to attract clients into positions that are socially important, and a medium of exchange; for example, in the political career [5].

Based on its function, social capital is defined as follow: "It is not a single entity, but the variety of different entities that have a common characteristic: they all consist of some aspects of social structures, and facilitates actions of individuals who are within the structure" [6]. Then, there is a shift in the meaning that social capital is the actual or potential resources at play in the "field of the social," i.e., in the sphere of "mutual acquaintance and recognition" [7].

Putnam uses the concept of social capital to further explain the differences in people's involvements. He defines this term after presenting a detailed discussion on the evidence of institutional performance and levels of citizen involvement. Putnam's definition of social capital changed a little over the 1990s. In 1996, he stated that: "by 'social capital' I mean features of social life-networks, norms and trust-that enables participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives" [8].

Social capital is a capability that arises from the prevalence of trust in society or in certain parts of it [9]. Woolcock makes a useful distinction among:

- a. Bonding social capital, which is based on a common identity, such as a close family, close friends and neighborhood;
- b. Bridging social capital, which is a weaker bond of people, such as distant friends and co-workers; and
- c. Linking social capital, which is reaching out to people who are in different situations, as they are entirely outside the community, thus encouraging members to take advantage of the many resources available in the community [10].

Putnam distinguishes two basic types of social capital that arises from the network, namely: the bonding and bridging. Bonding social capital consists of a number of sources that are accessed through a reciprocal relationship in the network. Meanwhile, bridging social capital is a resource that is accessed through a network of social relationships outside the society [11].

One of the key indicators of social capital is "it encourages individuals to extend their networks with confidence and provides an incentive to individuals to participate, since they will expect that this will bring benefits. Participation in turn fosters a sense of trust which builds an authentic community of citizens; one in which social, economic and political life is not based on remote or merely commercial transactions. Participation is seen as meaningful. Such communities are more likely to be safe, well-governed and maintained, affluent and generally successful." [12] Through a vast network, social communication among members of the community in their social life can be magnified.

## B. Education as the Greatest Strength

The English term of 'education' is a noun derived from the Latin verb "educare". Etymologically, the word education comes from two different verbs, i.e., "educare" and "educere". The word "educare" in Latin has connotations 'to train or tame' (as in the human context to train wild animals become increasingly tame so it can be domesticated), 'to nourish' (to make the land produce more fruits because the soil was tilled and cultivated). So, education is a process that helps to grow, develop, mature, making the disorganized or wild become increasingly organized, like the process of creating a culture and system of regularity in themselves and in others [13].

Basically, education is one of the efforts to improve the quality of available human resources. It is supported by national education goals that are conscious and deliberate efforts to create learning atmosphere and process so that students actively develop the potential to have the spiritual power of religion, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character and skills needed by them, society, nation, and the state [14].

The division of education according to Richey [15] is as follow: "The term 'Education' refers to the broad function of preserving and improving the life of the group through bringing new members into its shared concern. Education is thus a far broader process than that which occurs in schools. It is an essential social activity by which communities continue to exist." In communities, this function is specialized and institutionalized in formal education, but there is always education outside the school with which the formal process is related. In this regard, education is divided into three scopes, namely formal education, informal education, and non-formal education which overall has a social activity in the community as part of social life.

## III. DISCUSSION

### A. Revitalizing Education for Strengthening Social Capital

The globalization that pervades human life multidimensionally represents the current situation of Indonesia with its growing individualism, decreasing communal rights, and weakening bonds that allow social capital to be eroded. Rapid changes sweeping society life have forced us to prepare ourselves with social capital in order to survive in a competitive global life. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare an adaptive strategy to restore the social capital of Indonesia, so that the nation can stand parallel to other nations in the world.

Social capital is a capability that arises from the common belief in a society or certain parts of the community. Social capital can be institutionalized in the form of the most minor or most fundamental social and community groups as well as the biggest country (nation). Moreover, social capital is believed to be something that refers to the institutional dimension, created relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of social relationships in the community. Social capital is not just the row number of the institution or group that underpin social life, but it has a broader spectrum,

namely as a social glue which maintains the unity of the group members [16].

Strategic effort that should be made is how to develop and reinforce the social capital of the nation because social realities indicate that social capital always grows and develops with the growth of the community. Through social capital, emerge mutual trust, reciprocity, and good establishment of networks. These three elements of social capital are in tandem and cannot be separated because all three have the most important role.

One element of social capital is to build trust between individuals and members of social institutions. Eventually, all of the elements are set into core values, virtues, and expectation in society as a whole. Without this interaction, trust decays, at a certain point the decay will start to manifest itself in serious social problems. The concept of social capital argues that building or rebuilding community and trust requires a face-to-face meeting [17].

One area that is expected to contribute to the strengthening of social capital is education. Education does not only include formal or school education, but also broadly includes both informal and non-formal education. In addition to socializing agents such as family education and mass media, the school is one of the agents of socialization of the development of social capital. Full and comprehensive support of all the agents will provide a wider impact for the strengthening the social capital of the nation.

On the other hand, Brameld argues that "education as power means competent and strong enough to enable us, the majority of people, to decide what kind of a world" [18]. Education as power is interpreted to be under the power or even as a generator and the leader of power. Only the power of education that is capable of directing the other forces that have been acquired by humans and used for the purpose of destruction or to change themselves.

The current paradigm should be able to change the way of thinking of the Indonesian nation to social capital; for example; First, to consider how educational settings can be managed properly within the scope of the family, educators, and managers of the mass media; Second, to think about how to change patterns of mental attitude of students in generating social capital; and Third, to think about how to change the values, habits, and beliefs of students in building self-confidence. The willingness to change themselves individually must be accompanied by reconstructing the education system to make it more conducive, as well as incorporating the understanding and application of the concept of social capital into the school and college curriculum.

Of course, the strengthening of social capital through education is done through three components: social networks, social norms, and sanctions. In social networking, students are given strengthened access to information and programs. In social norms, rules that apply are strengthened in order to generate a positive mutual relationship, the emergence of expectation for cooperation, confidence and positive behavior. This is similar to sanctions that are made as the penalties for violating the rules and to rewards for compliance.

The argument is also supported by the thinking of Ki Hadjar Dewantara in the Seven Educational Principles that are very appropriate for the Indonesian education to implement the concept of education as developed by the Taman Siswa School for the advancement of education in Indonesia in the future [19]. The seven principles include:

1. The purpose of education is as high as orderly peaceful life of unity in general. There is no order, if it does not lean on peace. Otherwise, there would be no people to live in peace, if they are hindered in any condition of life. Therefore, education that requires coercion and punishment is considered a rape of a child's spirit.
2. In the education system, teaching means educating the children who will be independent in heart, mind, and power. Teachers do not solely give knowledge, but also educate students to seek their own knowledge and practice it.
3. In the coming times, our people will live in confusion. Often deceived by the circumstances, we consider something necessary and harmony to our lives, but in truth it is the need of a foreign nation, which is hard to be earned by our own means of livelihood. Thus, we often ruin the peace of our lives. We are often too concerned with the teaching that only aims for the release of the mind (intellectualism), whereas that kind of teaching makes us dependent and separates people who are educated from those who are not.
4. If the teaching obtained by a minority of people is not beneficial to the nation, then it must be the largest class of people who should be taught sufficiently. The strength of the nation and the country depends on the strength of its people. Therefore, it is better to promote the teaching for the people in general rather than elevating the teaching.
5. Based on the independence principle, we should work under our own power. Although we do not refuse help from others, if it would reduce our independence, then it is to be rejected. That is the way of people who do not want to be tied or pressured in power, because they are self-willed to build their own power.
6. Leaning on our own strength, we must expend revenues so that all our efforts are to bear their own income. This is what we call "zelfbedruipings systeem" or tools of all businesses that want to thrive on their own.
7. With no burden, as well as pure heart, we intend to be closer to the Son. We do not ask any rights, but surrender to the Son. (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, Azas Tamansiswa in the Tamansiswa Charter).

The seven principles has been reinforcement the view of the author that education is a major component in terms of social life. Effect of Dewey has provided a reference to the practice of schooling, from formal and teaching full command style, toward a more humane concept of learning. Based on humanistic teaching, the strength born out of its own power will generate the ever-fading social capital. Hard work and holding fast unto self-ability would be the main capitals in revitalizing education to build the social capital of the nation.

The author believes: First, there is no doubt that some theories suggest that education is a force against other forces in addition to the economic, political, and defensive powers because education is a central value of development. Secondly, it is agreed that education acts not just as a support for other forces in society, but also as an overseer of those forces so that human life and values lead to the welfare of society. Third, the purpose of education is as a strategic capital to shape human behavior and performance in basic educational human activities so that education will be the central value of overall development.

### *B. Building Education Network for Strengthening the Social Capital*

Developing awareness of social capital in the family, school, and society is largely determined by the rate of public confidence in the community itself and leaders in the community, and then extends to the socio-political processes that are designed and developed together. This is based on the belief that high capital will encourage social action (social action) to tackle the various problems of the nation. Education in this case can encourage the creation of trust with social action in its teaching.

One of the efforts to strengthen social capital among the scholars is by building a network of education along with efforts to restore the enlightenment and empowerment of social capital through learning in the school system. The author considers that social capital in the learning approach emphasizes the importance of several elements: 1) a partnership in designing teaching programs and curriculum; 2) policies that support the existence of the partnership; 3) development of innovative science pedagogy used by teachers, and 4) establishment of a partnership between schools, parents, students, and surrounding communities. Partnership is established by enforcing the existing partnerships and creating new partnerships. For example, collaboration is the best way to realize a partnership.

Partnerships may occur at the macro, mezzo and micro levels of social life. A teacher or lecturer should know how far the partnership has been maintained by a particular group of students, both formally and non-formally. Then, s/he should build a new partnership with regard to the lessons to be delivered by forming a class into a new partnership with one common goal.

Teaching with the social capital approach will place the students as members of networks, namely class member networking, networks that they already have, and potential new networks to be established. The choice of teaching strategies will be influenced by two things related to learning conditions and the idea of networking. First, it will be influenced by a set of resources owned by students in their existing network. Thus, a teacher must have the ability to: 1) identify the capital—one brought in by individuals into groups; 2) encourage students to use the resources in accordance with the learning, and 3) manage the resources that are irrelevant to learning.

Second influence is the output of social capital that will be obtained students after experiencing the learning process, which will strengthen the way they interact with their old networks or enable them to access new useful networks. Teacher's goal here is to create conditions that maximize opportunities to build social capital for the students. Effective teaching strategies in building social capital output, among other things, are:

- Creating a new class as a networking group of students. The new group has the general purpose of learning as a learning community—a community that provides a safe and comfortable environment for its members and one that is not afraid to make mistakes in learning, developing a new identity, and practicing new skills.
- Teachers assist students in changing the perception of oneself and others, as well as expanding their networks with new networks. To strengthen the relations between the new groups, the teacher can adopt the means to build relationships in the group by:
  - 1) Reducing the social distance between teachers and students, including by sharing material relevant to students;
  - 2) Minimizing the science of teaching (pedagogy) possessed by teachers and optimizing the input of students;
  - 3) Being part of a small discussion group is better than just being a superintendent or supervisor;
  - 4) Using humor to appreciate the backgrounds and life experiences possessed by students;
  - 5) Opening opportunities to encourage interaction among students, including sharing experiences, group work, mentoring, or discussions with peers.

In the end, the output of social capital will be achieved by students if there are changes in:

- a. The nature of the individual, including the level of trust; beliefs regarding the ability of oneself, and understanding of others who are different from themselves.
- b. Network structure, including the number of old and new networks; dealing in networking; and the nature of relationships in their different networks.
- c. Transactions that occur within the network of students, including support sought, received, or given by others in their networks and how they negotiate and share information and skills.
- d. Types of networks, including activities that occur in the main group, in which students interact with different groups and connections that they have with other agencies.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Social capital is a capability that arises from the common belief in a society or certain parts of the community. Social capital can be institutionalized in the form of the most minor

or most fundamental social and community groups as well as the biggest country (nation) (Fukuyama, 1995). The challenge of education in general is how to build trust and create social networks amongst schools, parents, and students in order to create a strong synergy with one another. Most people assume that the school has a full role in educating their students, whereas in truth the contribution of parents and society is necessary to discover the development of knowledge and skills possessed by students. The series of synergy between schools, parents, and students should not be interrupted for the reason that any development of social capital possessed by students has to be known by the parents and the school.

The strategic effort that should be made is how to develop and reinforce the social capital of the nation because social realities indicate that social capital always grows and develops along with the growth of the community. Through social capital, emerge mutual trust, reciprocity, and good establishment of networks. These three elements of social capital are in tandem and cannot be separated because they have their respective role.

The formation of social capital that is directed at educational institutions is the right thing to cultivate a social character that is good for the individual. Based on humanistic teaching, the strength born out of its own power will generate the ever-fading social capital. Hard work and holding fast unto self-ability would be the main capital in revitalizing education to build social capital of the nation. Thus, first, there is no doubt that some theories suggest that education is a force against other forces in addition to the economic, political, and defensive powers because education is a central value of development. Secondly, it is agreed that education acts not just as a support for other forces in society, but also as an overseer of those forces so that human life and values will lead to the welfare of society. Third, the purpose of education is to be a strategic capital to shape human behavior and performance in basic educational human activities, so that education will be the central value of the overall development.

One of the efforts to strengthen social capital among the scholars is by building a network of education along with efforts to restore the enlightenment and empowerment of social capital through learning in the school system. Social capital in the learning approach emphasizes the importance of several elements: 1) a partnership in designing teaching programs and curriculum; 2) policies that support the existence of the partnership; 3) development of innovative science pedagogy used by teachers, and 4) establishment of partnerships among schools, parents, students, and the surrounding communities. Partnership is established by

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