Chapter 9
Impact of Technological Innovations and Online Social Capital on Education

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ABSTRACT

The author of this chapter explored the social capital knowledge regarding education in the following four theoretical contexts presented by Mikiewicz, the tradition of James Coleman's social exchange theory, the tradition of Robert D. Putnam's theory of civil society, the tradition of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural structuralism, and the tradition of network theory. This chapter also presented the effective use of the research on social capital and the impact of technological innovations and online social capital on education. The author pooled literature from different parts of specializations, especially in education. It documented that co-creation and social learning are essential components of knowledge productivity; therefore, by working together and leveraging the power of social networks, individuals can achieve more than they ever could on their own, leading to profound improvements in organizational and societal outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

It is essential first to understand how social networks evolved. Before humans decided to form online social communities, social networking and relationship-building were part of the human experience. As various communities grew and technology was involved, the quality of those interpersonal relationships became increasingly essential and progressively complex. Technological innovations and online social capital are having a significant impact on teaching and learning at all levels. The roles of the learning environments are also critical in the successful implementation of educational programs. The learning environment is supportive and productive. It promotes independence, interdependence, and self-motivation;

students' needs, backgrounds, perspectives, and interests are reflected in this environment. With social capital, learning connects strongly with communities and practices beyond the classroom.

This chapter explores the social capital knowledge regarding education, especially the research on social capital and the impact of technological innovations and online social capital on education. The information gathered will benefit students and educators because by working together and leveraging the power of social networks, students and instructors can achieve more than they ever could on their own, leading to profound improvements in teaching and learning.

METHODOLOGY

I thoroughly examined previous research published mainly in peer-reviewed journals about social capital and education. The databases used were Education Source, ScienceDirect, SAGE Journals, Taylor & Francis Online, and ProQuest Central. Education Sources and research reports from Google Scholars retrieved the highest number of relevant articles, so I searched that database to gather perspectives across various disciplines. I complimented the search by using the Yahoo search engine to locate articles using the exact keywords I used in the databases. The keywords and phrases used in the search included information and communication technology, ICT, digital media, Technological innovations, Online Social capital, Education, Digital Tools, Educational Technology, and Social Networking. Only articles that followed rigorous measures for research quality were considered for this review.

Digital tools, educational technology, social networking, and other emerging technologies have transformed educational systems worldwide. Understanding the impact of technological innovations and online social capital on education is critical to academic development in the 21st century. Social networks have expanded with digital technology in many disciplines, especially education. Teaching and learning have been transformed with the birth of the Internet, digital communication platforms, and social media. This transformation has enabled teachers and students to achieve much in critical times. Teachers could teach well, and students could learn effectively. The students and teachers could design, share information, and interact through websites, blogs, webinars, podcasts, social media sites, and smartphones. Teachers, students, and parents have connected in ways never before imagined. Social capital has enabled such connections and has contributed enormously to supporting educational innovation. Social capital refers to the networks, relationships, and norms facilitating cooperation and trust among individuals and groups. It is an intangible asset derived from social relationships and networks. According to Blessinger, Sengupta, and Meri-Yilan (2023), individuals and groups, including higher education, form networks and establish personal and professional collaborative relationships. They seek to collaborate with others because they can achieve personal and group goals in ways not possible to achieve alone (Blessinger et al. 2023). According to Blessinger et al. (2023), the benefits of these social networks in higher education include, among other things, sharing intellectual resources, co-development of knowledge, and joint research. Therefore, teachers and students often form networks because it serves their interests, and when their interests align, the relationships benefit everyone.

Salimi, Heidari, Mehrvarz, and Safavi (2022) examined the hypothesis that online social capital can improve students' academic performance, as one of the leading educational goals, through the mediation of knowledge sharing in the online environment. Three hundred seventy-six graduate engineering students from five universities in Iran participated in their study. Salimi et al (2022) found that bridging online social capital positively and significantly affected the cognitive and social integrative benefits of online

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