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Appendix 1
Permission Letter



Department of Education [CASE & IASE]
Faculty of Education and Psychology
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara-390 002
Phone No: 0265 2795516
E-mail: head-edu@msubaroda.ac.in

Date:

To,
The Principal.

Subject: Permission to conduct a case study

Respected Sir/Madam,

I, Shourya Chaturvedi, am a Ph.D. student from the Department of Education, Faculty of Education and Psychology, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat. I am working under the guidance of Prof. S.C. Panigrahi on **“Social Capital in an Elementary School: A Case Study.”**

During this one-year study, I shall attend your school and interact with the administration, teachers, students, and parents to understand their interactions. I assure you that the names and data given by you and the members shall remain strictly confidential and shall be used only for research purposes.

Thanking You

Yours Sincerely,
Shourya Chaturvedi

Appendix 2

Interview Protocol

The interview protocol is the list of suggestive questions that were asked formally as part of interviews with students, teachers, and the principal during the fieldwork. Furthermore, there were items that were asked as an extension where the need for an elaboration was felt which have been written in Bold and parentheses. The language of these questions and the sequence of a few questions were changed to avoid repetition of answers.

Interview Protocol For Students

Name of the Student:
Class/ Sex:
Description of the setting in which the interview has been conducted:

Date:
Day:
Time:

1. How comfortable are you in talking to me about yourself?
2. Tell me about yourself: name, class, members of the family (**Is it a joint, nuclear, or single-parent family?**).
3. For how long are you studying in this school (**Can you tell me the class in which you joined this school?**)
4. Anyone else from your family has studied in SFS school?
5. Educational Qualification of Mother and Father
6. Occupation of Mother and Father
7. How do you reach school? (**Mode of transportation: Walking, School van, Bicycle, Dropped by parents**)
8. Can you share your experience about being associated with SFS school?
9. What do you like about SFS school?
10. What is it that you dislike about SFS school?
11. How comfortable do you feel while interacting with your classmates?
12. Do you trust your classmates?
13. What do you think is required for classmates to be trusted?
14. What is it that prompted you to differentiate between your classmates?

15. How do your friends support you in the classroom? In school?
16. Any behaviour of your classmates which bothers you?
17. How has the low classroom strength affected you? (**Personally, education-wise**)
18. Do you fight with your friend(s)?
19. How do you resolve it?
20. Do you think it is right to support your friend(s)? (**In case the answers point to behaviour such as cheating and others**)
21. How much are you comfortable in interactions with your teachers?
22. To what extent do you think that what is being taught in the school will help you in the future?
23. What is your favourite subject?
24. Who is your favourite teacher? (**Ask about each teacher**)
25. Why do you think you are fond of (**name of the teacher(s)**)?
26. Is there anything that you do not like about a teacher?
27. Has there been an incidence where the teacher
28. Do you think that coming to SFS schools has made a difference in you as a student?
29. What do you want to be when you grow up?
30. Why did you choose to be the name of the career(s)?
31. When the 21-day lockdown was announced, how did you feel?
32. Can you tell me about your routine during the lockdown?
33. How did the school manage to teach you during the lockdown?
34. Were you able to attend online classes regularly?
35. How did you feel about online classes?
36. Did you miss your friends during the lockdown? (**Were you connected through phone or any other platform? How different it was as compared to face-to-face?**)
37. Do you feel supported in school during the lockdown? (**In what ways?**)
38. How do you feel coming back to the school?
39. How different is online class as compared to offline class?
40. How much do you think the school has changed since you joined?
41. How does it feel sitting in a classroom where students from other classes are also sitting?
42. What do you miss about SFS school since the lockdown? (**Activity, classmates, teachers, building**)
43. Do you think the school building matters?
44. An important lesson that your teachers have taught you?

Interview Protocol For Teachers

**Name of the Teacher:
Description of the
setting in which the
interview has been
conducted:**

**Date:
Day:
Time:**

1. Please introduce yourself
2. Qualification
3. Teaching Experience
4. Working in SFS school since (**year/month**)
5. What subjects do you teach?
6. Can you share why you chose to work in SFS school?
7. In what way is SFS school different from your previous school?
8. What is it that you like in SFS school?
9. What do you dislike in SFS school?
10. How is the leadership of the school?
11. How comfortable are you in sharing thoughts and concerns with the principal?
12. To what extent does the principal accept constructive feedback?
13. What is your role and responsibility in school apart from teaching?
14. Do you think that the school compensates you sufficiently?
15. How do you describe your interactions with your colleagues?
16. Can you elaborate on the nature of relationships with your colleagues? (**Ask for each teacher**)
17. Are they open to your feedback?
18. How do your colleagues support you in your time of need?
19. Do you feel pigeonholed in the given role and responsibility? (**If yes, how do you express your disdain? What steps does the school administration take to support you?**)
20. What are your concerns about the school at the present time?
21. How will you describe your interaction with the students?
22. Do you involve students in your planning of lessons? (**How are they involved? To what extent are they involved/ How do you deal with their disinterest?**)
23. How much has the COVID-19 pandemic changed your working style in the school?

24. To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your teaching in the classroom?
(Online and offline)
25. What are your views about your online classes?
26. How did you teach students during the COVID-19 lockdown?
27. What were the challenges you faced from the students during the online classes?
28. How did the school support you during the COVID-19 pandemic?
29. What changes have you observed in students since the pandemic?
30. How does your presence change the school?
31. What are the instructional strategies you adopted before and after the lockdown?
32. To what extent do you trust your colleagues?
33. How will you define the parents associated with the SFS school?
34. Do you feel supported by the parents?
35. What are the major challenges that you now face from the parents?
36. How do you resolve issues **(with parents, teachers, and students)**?
37. What role does a school as an institution play in your life **(in a student's life)**?
38. In what way do you contribute towards the development of the school?
39. During the celebration of the festival, what responsibility is given to you?
40. What does it mean to be a teacher?
41. Describe your first few months when you joined SFS school.
42. How do you assess students during your classroom teaching? **(Both online and offline)**
43. How did you communicate with students during the lockdown?
44. Describe the concerns that you have pertaining to the students?
45. How likely it is that the school provides you with opportunities for your professional growth?
46. How likely is it that the parent will attend PTMs or any other form of activities as planned by the school?
47. How did you handle the transition when you joined this school?
48. Describe the ways in which you address and resolve disagreements or conflicts with your colleagues?
49. What steps do you take to ensure that a sense of collaboration is maintained with your colleagues? **(Ask the same question with a focus on the collaboration among students)**
50. What are the ways in which parents and local community is involved in the functioning of the school?

51. When you face professional issues, how likely is it that you will receive support from your colleague or administration?
52. How would you describe the leadership of the principal?

Interview Protocol For Principal

Name:

Date:

Description of the setting in which the interview has been conducted:

Day:

Time:

1. Please introduce yourself
2. Qualification
3. Teaching Experience
4. Administrative Experience
5. Tell me about your school. (**History, Vision, and Mission**)
6. Describe the social and economic background to which the school caters.
7. How do you describe the interaction with parents?
8. As the principal of the school what was your initial reaction to the 21 days lockdown announcement?
9. During the lockdown how did you support the teachers? (**How do teachers cope with the workload during this time?**)
10. How many students are attending your offline school?
11. Have any students left the school during covid lockdown?
12. What is your view on the online classes that have emerged as an alternative?
13. What are your expectations from the parents?
14. Describe your instructional strategies.
15. As a leader, what are your strengths?
16. As a principal, what are your weaknesses?
17. To what extent does the social, economic, and cultural background of parents affect the functioning of the school?
18. Have you felt that your efforts to make parents understand worked?
19. Describe the steps taken to ensure that fees are paid on time and the no-dues are being cleared.
20. How do you decide about something pertaining to the school? (This was at different times elaborated to **activities, workload**)
21. Describe the ways in which you provide opportunities for teachers and students to develop as leaders.

22. What is the school's major source of funding?
23. To what extent do you believe that most people within your school can be trusted or that you feel that you cannot be very careful in your dealings with the members of the school?
24. If you are faced with some personal issues, how likely is it that you will seek advice from a colleague?
25. When you face professional issues, how likely is it that you will receive support from your teachers, students, and parents?
26. How strong is your feeling of togetherness in the school?
27. How will you describe the school environment?
28. What are the ways in which parents and local community is involved in the functioning of the school?
29. What steps do you take to ensure that a sense of collaboration is maintained among your teachers?
30. Describe the ways in which you address and resolve disagreements or conflict within the school community?
31. How likely is it that the parent will attend PTMs or any other form of activities as planned by the school?

Appendix 3

Observational Indicators

The following indicators shall be looked at during the observations of the students, teachers, administration, and the parents.

- Relationships, Interactions and Leadership of students, teachers, administration with respect to student engagement.
- Motivation, aspirations, perception of students, teachers, and administration with respect to self and school.
- Incidences of conflicts and its resolution.
- Parent participation and involvement in school.
- Organization of activities.

Appendix 4

Photographs taken during the fieldwork in addition to the ones in the text.



School Office and Teachers engaged in their work



Students and Teacher in summer camp of SFS school



Sports Day-cum-Grandparents Day Celebration after the COVID-19 in November 2022.



Students and Teachers playing during the games period



Celebration of Christmas



Preparing for Assembly

SYNOPSIS

for the Ph.D. Thesis titled

Social Capital in an Elementary School: A Case Study

Researcher: Shourya Chaturvedi

Guide: Prof. S.C. Panigrahi



Department of Education

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Introduction

Education plays a vital role in translating a nation's vision into reality by nurturing well-rounded individuals who contribute to social, economic, spiritual, and psychological progress. It serves as a catalyst for human capital development, self-realization, and overall advancement.

Elkin and Handel (1972) emphasized that an individual's development encompasses various aspects shaped by socialization, which involves adhering to societal norms and functions. Schools play a crucial role in this process as they provide opportunities for children to interact with peers, fostering social support networks beyond their families. Utilizing school support, students can overcome social inequalities arising from family and community interactions, leading to greater integration into the community and broader prospects.

In Rajasthan, a state facing various challenges, such as poverty, gender inequality, and low literacy rates, the social fabric is complex, with diverse caste-based structures shaping the society. Understanding and addressing these elements require careful consideration.

The concept of Social Capital has become essential in educational practices. Introduced by Pierre Bourdieu (1986), Social Capital encompasses economic, cultural, and social elements, emphasizing the importance of relationships, resources, and readiness in social interactions and engagement. Coleman (1988; 1994) and Putnam (1993) further developed this concept, highlighting interpersonal relations as the foundation for generating Social Capital.

In summary, education and Social Capital play critical roles in shaping individuals and communities, fostering progress, and addressing social challenges.

Theorizing Social Capital

Social Capital is a dynamic concept, explored by scholars from different fields. Pioneers like Bourdieu, Coleman, and Putnam emphasized the role of social relationships, networks, and civic engagement in shaping society. Their theories have contributed to understanding the positive impact of Social Capital on social situations and community dynamics.

A. Bourdieu's Notion of Social Capital

Bourdieu (1987, 1988) presented a perspective of the social world as a collection of historical events rather than merely mechanical interactions between individuals. He

redefined capital as an accumulated endeavor, which, when possessed privately or exclusively by individuals or groups, empowers them with social energy in the form of material or living labor. Capital can take various forms and requires time and effort to accumulate, leading to different outcomes and distributions within a social structure, making it a scarce resource.

Bourdieu (1984, 1988) identified three forms of capital: economic, cultural, and social capital. Social Capital, according to Bourdieu (1986), refers to the resources linked to possessing a durable network of institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition. Woolcock (2001) emphasized the sociological foundations of Bourdieu's conception of social capital, highlighting that individuals' access to different resources, including education, is influenced by the networks and recognitions they develop as part of a group.

The volume of Social Capital a person possesses depends on the range of networks they can successfully form and the amount of capital (economic or cultural) that each connected individual possesses. Social Capital is not naturally acquired but socially given, as individuals come together, invest their time, energy, and resources through obligations and reciprocations to develop and acquire it.

Bourdieu (1988) noted that relationships do not develop in isolation; they involve various tangible and intangible "investment" strategies like respect, gifts, friendship, praise, etc. These lead to the development and transformation of relationships in different settings.

According to Bourdieu (1988), Social Capital can be created through economic and cultural capital and vice versa, akin to the Law of Conservation. For example, economic capital in the form of school fees allows access to education, leading to the development of skills (human capital) and the acquisition of values and cultural knowledge, transforming economic capital into cultural capital. Schools also foster socialization and friendships, converting economic capital to social capital.

In conclusion, Social Capital depends on the effort put into developing sociability and its constant affirmation within a group. Individuals work towards their goals while limiting access to Social Capital to non-members, ensuring its exclusivity within the group.

B. Coleman's Conception of Social Capital

James Coleman based his concept of Social Capital on the sociological theory of action and the theory of rational choice. These theories view individuals as purposeful, goal-oriented, and rational actors who are guided by interests and incentives in a social environment, resulting in social organization.

Coleman (1988) defined Social Capital by its "function," describing it as not a single entity but rather a collection of different entities. These entities share two common characteristics: they are aspects of social structure and facilitate actors in their actions. To qualify as capital, any aspect of a structure must add value for certain actors. Social Capital resides in the relationships between actors and is not solely individualistic or tied to mechanical forms of production but driven by purposive actors within a purposive organization.

Coleman (1988) provided examples like South Korean radical student study circles, trading practices of merchants, and a mother of six children to illustrate Social Capital's dimensions, such as reciprocation of obligations, maintaining family and outside relations, trustworthiness, and norms. Social Capital can manifest as economic and non-economic outcomes, including obligations, information channels, effective and prescriptive norms, and intergenerational closure. Intergenerational closure refers to the relationship between parents and children and relations outside the family, and it plays a crucial role in supporting effective norms and sanctioning desirable behaviors among children in the school setting.

Coleman (1990) emphasized that individuals exist in multiple social contexts with varying hierarchies, influencing their access to resources, including Social Capital. Parental Social Capital has a direct impact on a child's educational outcomes, as it can affect school shifting, friendships, and dropout rates. Higher Social Capital among parents in a school can lead to a decrease in dropouts, attributed to intergenerational closure among parents.

In conclusion, Social Capital is a public good existing in relationships within social structures and between actors. In an educational setting, it extends beyond participation in organizations like PTA and benefits stakeholders across all educational strata, clarifying group intentions and norms and empowering individuals to improve their quality of life.

C. Putnam's Insights on Social Capital

Putnam (1993) further developed Coleman's idea of Social Capital in his work "Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy." He emphasized the benefits of community networks for individuals, as they aim to generate relationships and networks that serve their own interests. Social contacts influence both the physical and human capital in terms of individual and group productivity, with Social Capital deeply embedded in relationships.

Putnam (1993) highlighted elements like trust, associations between civil societies, and norms, which instil conviction within a group and reduce transaction costs, facilitating cooperation. He identified reciprocity as a defining characteristic of norms, whether balanced (exchange of goods of equal value) or generalized (imbalanced exchange, where people help without expecting anything in return).

According to Putnam (1993), Social Capital is more of a public good than a privately owned good, leading to underinvestment in its production and maintenance. It is a byproduct of other activities individuals perform to achieve their objectives, and its investment is constrained by an individual's needs. Social Capital can be organized in formal or informal ways, such as school parent-teacher associations or meeting friends in public spaces, respectively. Relationships with family members can range from densely interwoven to thinly woven, influencing the level of Social Capital.

In 2001, Putnam and Goss introduced three forms of Social Capital: bonding, bridging, and linking. Bonding occurs within a network of people with similar backgrounds, bridging within a network of people with different backgrounds, and linking between individuals or groups and powerful institutions or others.

Thus, Social Capital can be referred to as the connections between and within social networks, significantly impacting the utilization of embedded resources in the system or group. The quality of social relationships is crucial, as it influences the capacity to solve common problems and achieve mutual goals. Social Capital can be seen as a resource for collective action, leading to various outcomes with different social degrees.

Social Capital in Elementary Education: A Panoramic View

The academic community, rooted in sociology and economics, is increasingly exploring Social Capital in the global context of education. Dewey (1900) is credited with introducing

the term 'social capital' to integrate psychological principles into education, while Tocqueville (1840) recognized its significance as an undercurrent in society and the risks associated with a lack of associational life. In 1916, Lyda Judson Hanifan studied social issues in rural school communities in the USA and defined Social Capital as goodwill, fellowship, sympathy, and social association among individuals and families, leading to cooperative benefits for the community.

Papapolyrodou (2011) researched the relationship between Social Capital and educational outcomes and concluded that it functions as both a generator and an outcome of education, echoing Dewey's perspective in "The School and Society. Mikiewicz (2021) dispelled incorrect notions about Social Capital by identifying two significant evaluation factors: individual characteristics of actors in education and structural factors in education.

Schools play a crucial role in social development and transformation, forming a structural site for the development of Social Capital in students. Students bring in social connections from various contexts, and schools provide avenues for competition and access to different forms of capital. Piaget's theory highlights the concrete operational mental processes of children during the elementary stage, leading to struggles in generalizing from one situation to another, which can impact behavior and social outcomes.

In summary, the concept of Social Capital is increasingly being explored in education globally, with its influence on educational outcomes and social behaviors coming into focus. Understanding Social Capital can help create better educational environments and support students in their social and cognitive development.

Policies Insights on Social Capital and Initiatives with a Special Focus on Elementary Education in Rajasthan

In the early days of India's constitution, there was a pressing recognition of the need for universal elementary education to uplift the nation and its people. Article 45 of the Constitution mandated free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of fourteen within ten years of its commencement. The vision behind this provision was to create an educated and skilled workforce that would contribute to the country's progress and development.

However, achieving this ambitious goal was challenging, and progress was slow. The education system was plagued by several issues, including a lack of infrastructure, limited

access to schools, and low enrolment rates, especially among girls. Additionally, there were disparities in education quality and accessibility between urban and rural areas, perpetuating social inequalities. To address these challenges and comprehensively reform the education system, the government established the Kothari Commission in 1964. Led by Dr. D. S. Kothari, the commission aimed to study and revamp the entire education system, with a specific focus on the needs of the masses. While the commission did not explicitly use the term "social capital," it emphasized the importance of community involvement and participation in education. The Kothari Commission stressed that education should not be viewed merely to acquire knowledge but as a powerful tool to foster social cohesion and national integration. It recognized that building an egalitarian society required a strong foundation of values and a high level of social cohesion. The commission emphasized the need for schools to recognize themselves as integral parts of the community and to be committed to the cause of nation-building over divisive loyalties.

Following the recommendations of the Kothari Commission, the government released the first National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1968. Although the policy did not explicitly use the term "social capital," it echoed the commission's emphasis on social cohesion and national integration through education. The National Policy on Education (1986) viewed elementary education as a powerful instrument to strengthen the agrarian foundations of the country. It aimed to provide equal educational opportunities to all and create a sense of common citizenship among the diverse population of India. The policy recognized the transformative power of education in promoting social cohesion and bridging societal divides.

Over the years, various initiatives were launched in Rajasthan to improve elementary education and promote social capital. The *Shiksha Karmi* project in 1987, for instance, encouraged community participation in providing education to children in remote and underserved areas. The project relied on the cooperation of local community members who were not government employees but were willing to serve their communities as teachers. The *Lok Jumbish Pariyojana*, initiated in 1988, was another important step towards educational transformation in Rajasthan. The project focused on enhancing the quality of learning, increasing community participation, and improving education management. It sought to engage public debates and household surveys to identify out-of-school children and the reasons for their absence.

In 1990, the Acharya Ramamurti Committee emphasized the need for education to be deeply rooted in its social context for effective social transformation. While not explicitly mentioning "social capital," the committee underscored the role of education in promoting social cohesion and national integration. The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), introduced in 1999, aimed to reduce drop-out rates and promote community empowerment in decision-making. The program was designed to decentralize planning activities and encourage community participation and ownership. It recognized the importance of involving local communities in shaping the education system.

In 2001, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched as a politically-willed effort to achieve universal elementary education. SSA aimed to provide free and compulsory education to all children aged six to fourteen years. It emphasized community participation, ownership, and monitoring of education programs to ensure their success.

The release of the National Education Policy (NEP) in 2020 marked another significant milestone in India's education landscape. While not explicitly mentioning "social capital," the NEP recognized the importance of a conducive and caring environment for learners. It emphasized the holistic development of individuals and society, including social, emotional, ethical, and spiritual aspects. The NEP emphasized the need for learners to engage productively in a pluralistic society, encouraging open communication and collaboration among parents, teachers, and other stakeholders. It also encouraged community participation and philanthropy in the education system to ensure the success of education-based interventions.

In conclusion, social capital has played a crucial role in shaping education policies and initiatives in Rajasthan and India as a whole. Policymakers have recognized the importance of community involvement, social cohesion, and national integration in education programs. Initiatives like the *Shiksha Karmi project*, *Lok Jumbish Pariyojana*, DPEP, and SSA have sought to engage local communities and promote social capital in the education system. The recent NEP also underscores the significance of creating a caring and conducive environment for learners and emphasizes the holistic development of individuals and society. As India continues to strive for inclusive and equitable education, the role of social capital in education policies remains crucial in building a strong foundation for the nation's future.

Elementary Education in Rajasthan

In the historical context, public education in Rajasthan before 1818 was provided through Hindu Pathshalas, Muslim Maktabas, and Jain Upasara in vernacular medium, varying between principalities, kings, and communities. English education was introduced later through missionary schools and government-funded institutions. Modern education in Rajasthan began to take shape in the mid-19th century, and efforts were made to provide free English education from 1842 to 1885.

Over time, various schools and institutions emerged, including those with a focus on girls' education. Despite challenges like patriarchal stereotypes, education became crucial in the struggle for Independence, with charitable trusts playing a role in opening private schools for rural children. After Independence, Rajasthan focused on elementary education, introducing several schemes and programs to improve quality and reach marginalized children. Decentralized management of schools through Panchayat Samitis was implemented before the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. However, issues like low enrolment and achievement scores persisted. To address these, innovative programs like LJP and SKP were developed. Despite efforts by the state and central governments, the overall literacy rate in Rajasthan lags the national average.

In conclusion, Rajasthan's education landscape has evolved over the years, with significant progress and challenges. Different castes, classes, and communities contribute to the state's diverse educational environment.

Dimensions of Social Capital

Based on the conceptualization of Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1990), and Putnam (1993) along with the literature review, seven dimensions that contribute to the building of Social Capital have been discussed in the subsequent sections.

A. Trust

According to Abegglen and Stalk (1985), trust is an expectation that arises within a community, based on shared norms, of regular, honest, and cooperative behaviour from its members. Coleman (1990) sees trust as both a personal attribute and an emergent property of a social system, and he considers it a crucial element of social capital. Putnam (1993) identifies two forms of trust: social trust, which individuals have in their immediate surroundings like family, friends, teachers, and neighbours, and general trust or altruism, where trust is placed in strangers or acquaintances. For example, a child might ask a friend

to submit a project on their behalf or trust new classmates to guide them on their first day at a new school.

B. Reciprocity

Reciprocity means behaviour that cannot be justified in terms of selfish and purely outcome-oriented choices. Granovetter (1985) pondered that people who are embedded in different social groups remain in few groups for almost their entire life. Reciprocity leads to solidarity (Shoji et al, 2014; Poltacan and Balci, 2019) and loyalty does not emerge in vacuum. It is supported by the obligation (Onyx and Bullen, 2000; Shoji et al, 2014) between different actors that help them sustain and satisfy their desires. Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993) see this as mutual obligation that is reinforced by associations through credit slips. For instance, if a child remains absent for some time in the school and expects his/her friend to update him/her about the developments in the classroom must practice honesty when his/her friend remains absent and expect the same from him/her.

C. Information Sharing

Fukuyama (1989) asserted that information is a source of power, and those with greater access to Social Capital can also access more information. However, Burt (1992) challenged this notion, stating that in dense networks where new members are not allowed, information can become repetitive and outdated among group members. Burt suggested that fresh information can be obtained through interactions with peripheral members who act as bridges between the information and other group members. The transmission of information between individuals, within and between groups, can significantly impact actions and outcomes. Information is scarce, and obtaining it demands considerable effort and attention.

D. Sense of Belongingness

Goodenow and Grady (1993) defined school belongingness as the students' feeling of being accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school environment. It goes beyond mere enrolment and includes forming bonds with peers and adults in the school, as well as adhering to school norms. For school children, Goodenow (1993) opined that a positive reciprocal relationship with others in the school fosters a sense of belongingness. Ahn and Davis (2020) found that a strong sense of belonging is associated with higher Social Capital among high school students and school staff. During early adolescence, the

need for belonging, support, and acceptance becomes particularly crucial as children contemplate their identity, relationships, and future investments.

E. Norm

Coleman (1990) defined norms as actions that have similar externalities for a set of others, yet markets in the rights of control of the action cannot easily be established, and no single actor can profitably engage in exchange to gain rights of control. Goodard (2003) and Yang (2017) believed that norms act as the undergird of social trust because they lower transaction costs and facilitate cooperation. Durkheim (1935) observed that society in the absence of a set of rules can undergo anarchy, which the society itself does not desire. The anomie that threatens society, can, therefore, be moderated when the members of the society follow norms that arise out of self-regulation.

Goodard (2003) demonstrated in his study on elementary school children that following the norms laid by the school leads to achieving higher academic success. Therefore, it can be inferred that when an individual's actions are in congruence with the shared beliefs of the group, group members will likely sanction those actions. A violation of norms usually engenders punitive attitudes like anger, condemnation, and blame, directed at the norm violator.

F. Solidarity

Solidarity is a powerful force that binds societies together, promoting a sense of cooperation and belonging among individuals. It requires conscious efforts to develop and maintain, fostering a collective consciousness where people work together for the common good. In schools, cultivating solidarity is vital to creating a supportive and inclusive environment. It involves students coming together to achieve shared goals, and forming strong bonds with peers and teachers. Solidarity goes beyond giving and receiving; it involves mutual support and a division of labour in social support. By nurturing solidarity, societies can better navigate challenges and build resilient communities for the future.

G. Network

Farheen and Farooq (2015) deliberated that the basis of society is the instinctive nature of man to be together with others in order to survive. Even today, instinctively our need to be in a group or with another individual has not changed. The education system is regarded as an elaborated, formal, and organized network. However, one should understand that beneath this formalized structure, many informal networks exist and even thrive in the

longer run. This informal organization can be characterized by few to many groupings based on its members and the homogeneity of the group itself. *Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching The Marginalized* by UNESCO (2010) highlighted that at a child's level, the relationships and networks that are formed are complex and can depend on the child's age, grade level, participation in the classroom, proximity to the teacher(s) and even, the proximity of the parents to schools. However, in a pluralistic country such as India, cultural factors like caste, and class plays a very important role in determining the nature and type of network a child is subjected to.

In conclusion, the dimensions, discussed were found to generate and be affected by Social Capital. Laumann and Sandefur (1998) propounded that Social Capital conveyed benefits through the provision of information, influence and control, and social solidarity. A school is a place that requires an enormous amount of support from both outside and inside and therefore, one must try to understand as Portes (1998) says the social context of the school in order to derive the meaning and explanation of Social Capital in that context.

Rationale for the Study

Education plays a vital role in shaping national cohesion, scientific temper, and independence of mind, aligning with the principles of socialism, secularism, and democracy enshrined in our Constitution. Each school has its unique culture, legends, and heroes, but certain organizational aspects are relevant to any school discussion.

Schools are viewed as social organizations where interactions with the environment shape their internal structure. They provide a crucial space for children to interact with peers, fostering social support systems. Schools are an integral part of community life, promoting parental involvement and expanding students' possibilities in both academic and non-academic realms.

Social Capital, represented by social relations and their benefits, creates a common platform for individuals to secure advantages through membership and networks. It encompasses shared knowledge, norms, rules, and expectations about interactions among individuals in recurring activities. Values like mutual understanding, empathy, tolerance, solidarity, and trust are intrinsic to Social Capital, facilitating cooperation and collective accomplishments.

In the context of children, Social Capital has been largely linked to their parents' relationships, making their social networks less visible. However, this study aims to explore how Social Capital is formed and influences the lives of students, teachers, and principals in an Indian elementary school setting. The research delves into understanding the development of Social Capital and its impact on the stakeholders involved.

Research Questions

- How is Social Capital constructed, enacted, and experienced by students and teachers in an elementary school?
- How does Social Capital influence student aspirations and student engagement in an elementary school?
- What are the challenges to the formation and use of Social Capital within an elementary school?
- In what ways does Social Capital contribute to the school climate of an elementary school?

Statement of the Problem

This thesis explores how Social Capital influences an elementary school community, impacting student and teacher engagement, and the overall school atmosphere. It aims to provide insights and recommendations for creating a more inclusive and cohesive environment for students, teachers, and principals.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the factors that contribute to the development and sustenance of Social Capital in an elementary school.
2. To investigate the impact of Social Capital on collaboration and cooperation among the community of an elementary school.
3. To study the influence of Social Capital on the aspirations of students in an elementary school.
4. To identify the challenges to the development and sustenance of Social Capital within the elementary school environment.
5. To suggest strategies that can be implemented at various levels in order to align the school's Social Capital with the community.

Implications of the Review

A dearth of studies limited to school Social Capital was observed throughout the review. Society does not function as a water-tight compartment, yet it is important to see the effect of each component to understand its proper function. In the education system, the focal point is the student, but a student is largely dependent upon the teachers, principal, peers, and other members for the fulfilment of the needs that ultimately affect education and zeal to learn.

In conclusion, Social Capital continues to be an enigma, but we cannot let our mere fascination with the past govern our present way to conduct a study on Social Capital. Therefore, it requires undertaking an idiographic approach such as a case study in order to derive meaning to Social Capital in each social context. The inconclusiveness that subsequently emerges in this study could be due to the inability of the single researcher to observe all the aspects of the research gaps found. This is primarily due to the feasibility of time and personal scope of doing research. Therefore, it requires an in-depth study at a micro-level through participatory observation, informal conversations, interviews, and other qualitative data collection tools. Hence, the researcher is keen to study how the Social Capital that inheres in school affects the perception of teachers, students, and administrators about the school itself, the teaching-learning process, their aspirations, and educational achievement.

Philosophical Foundations of the Study

Social science research entails an understanding of the ontological and epistemological perspectives in order to conduct informed research. For Gray (2009), this combination of ontological and epistemological postulations leads to the development of theoretical stance and methodological postulations, thus emerging a 'paradigm'.

The ontological standing of this research rests on reality being subjective, which is constructed by social actors who participate and engage in different social realities. Therefore, asserting a difference between natural and social reality. This allowed me as a researcher to explore perceptions of different stakeholders in a school community on various prospects with the broad one being focused on Social Capital and its meaning within a particular school community.

The epistemological position of this study stemmed from Constructivism, wherein Crotty (1998) coincided that for a social actor truth and meaning are not an existential feature of

the external world. But, a creation of the interaction between social actors as a subject with the outside world. In other words, Mertens (2007) opined that a social actor's social reality is grounded in the experience it had in that reality. The construction of meaning rather than its discovery is an underpinning of Interpretivism, that founded the theoretical perspective for the study.

Cohen et al (2007) viewed Interpretivism as people interpreting meanings about social reality and acting based on its interpretation. Therefore, without value ascription to the subjects by the researcher, Creswell (2003) pointed out that the researcher practices 'bracketing' the social actor's understanding of reality from the pre-conceived opinions of the researcher.

A Case study coherently merges the ontological and epistemological foundations as it investigates according to Pring (2000) a phenomenon in a real-life setting, wherein Yin (1992) sees the blurred boundaries between the setting and reality leading to an opportunity to use multiple sources of evidence.

This study attempted to focus on the meanings that were derived by stakeholders as perceptions about the school, and school community, and how they gave meaning to Social Capital, which was subjective and personal. The focal point of the study was the experiences, and views of students, teachers, and principals in relation to social capital (trust, sense of belonging, norms, information sharing, networks, solidarity, and reciprocity).

Research Design

This study follows a qualitative framework of research. This entails strategies where the emphasis is on 'words' rather than the 'quantification' of data. In view of Bryman and Burgess (2002), qualitative research resides in the embodiment of social reality as an individual's creation. Candy (1991) opined that inquiry is always value-laden. This is because the researcher is a part of the society. These values, in turn, influence our entire research process right from the conception of the research to the reporting of the data.

A case study is qualitative research, according to Stake (1995), that concentrates on one or more cases in their natural context. In education, Gerring (2004) defined a case study as "an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding larger or similar units." These units are bounded spatially with respect to a phenomenon, observed at one time or at different times over a large time period. In other words, case studies provide a context

by examining one's own reality, one can identify distinctive features of an institution across all the cases. Mills et al (2010) highlighted that case studies are not only done to create knowledge and understanding but also to gain experience from a phenomenon. Therefore, it is usually idiographic in nature.

The case study involves a constant interaction between the researcher and the participant. The mutual trust and the dynamics of the relationship between the researcher and the participant play an important role in the research process. According to Mills et al (2009), a case study allows a researcher to triangulate data through various sources and methods including one's own observations and discussions. The case study also offers freedom to the researcher to conduct the study and change the plans if the need arises.

The current study followed an Instrumental Case Study design with an interpretive approach. According to Stake (1995), an instrumental case study design is used to "provide insight into a particular issue, redraw generalizations, or build theory." Here the case itself is secondary yet plays a supportive role to facilitate an understanding of a phenomenon. Here the case is detailed based on its context, and the activities are scrutinized. Stake (1995) also pointed out that instrumental case study rests on the reconstruction of the experience of the researcher and the participants. It offers a 'thick description' of a certain individual, institution, site, or group(s).

However, Stake (1995) warned that an instrumental case study does not allow a scope of generalizing as done in quantitative research. Rather, it tries to identify patterns and themes that are comparable to other cases. At the same time, Stake (1995) was cautious to bring forth the proposition of the possibility of the transferability of a research finding.

An interpretive approach, from a case study perspective, focuses on human meaning, human behavior, and human action in terms of the social context; allowing it to interpret. Idiographic efforts, such as, observations are made to understand the entirety of a phenomenon, person, or group of persons. These undertakings allow one to describe social actions taken by an individual or a group of individuals. Thereby making a case study, as per Mills et al (2010) both a process and a product of inquiry.

The basis of the case study includes sampling and selection of the field, entering the field, data collection, and data analysis. Below are these points discussed in detail under separate sections.

Defining the Field

Cohen et al (2007) has commented that “The social and educational world is a messy place, full of contradictions, richness, complexity, connectedness, conjunctions, and disjunctions. It is multilayered, and not easily susceptible to the atomization process inherent in much numerical research. It must be studied in total rather than in fragments if a true understanding is to be reached.”

Patton (1990) defined a field as a physical environment that sufficiently provides support to the researcher to visualize and conduct a study. Flick (2009) elaborated that in a field, the information is recognized and collected through effective communication between the researcher and respondent. Thus, defining the field of study becomes imperative in order to establish a spatial framework. The primary aim of the study is to understand how social capital reveals itself in an educational setting, in this case, an elementary school. The state has introduced successful interventions in the form of *Lok Jumbish* and *Shiksha Karmi* at the elementary level. These were indigenous initiatives that became successful due to civic participation, one of the key dimensions of social capital according to Putnam (1995). Yet at the national level, the overall literacy rate according to Census 2011 stands at 67.09%, much less than the national average. According to U-DISE+ 2019-20 data, there were 9112 schools in Jaipur district, out of which 1990 were Private Unaided Recognised Upper Primary Schools. Thus, the total share of Private Unaided Recognised Upper Primary Schools was 21.8% in the Jaipur district. These upper primary schools are those schools that have classes from 1st to 8th only.

The SFS school is a Private Unaided Recognised Upper Primary School located in the periphery of Jaipur city. Typically, there are many schools in Jaipur city that are affiliated to the Board of Secondary Education (RBSE). The SFS school was established in 2000 by an airforce couple and was affiliated to RBSE. The school did not have any permanent building and hence would shift within an area after some time. Apart from this, the school was largely dominated by Rajput teachers and students. During my association of two and a half years, the school had shifted twice. With the dwindling numbers of students, teachers in a school that shifts its location and continued to remain functioning during and after the COVID-19 lockdown, motivated me to look upon this school as a case for conducting my research.

Sampling

For qualitative research such as a case study, Isak and Bakar (2014) pointed out that the basic purpose of the exercise of sampling is to collect information-rich, specific cases that can clarify the understanding of the concerned study. In the case study, the sampling acts as a guide in order to enable a researcher to delineate sampling strategies, and the number of cases, along with defining the unit of analysis. Here the principal focus is to select an information-rich sample, enhance the depth of information, and validate the gathered information.

The principal focus of a case study is to select an information-rich sample, enhance the depth of information, and validate the gathered information. According to Bryman and Burgess (2002), purposive sampling aims to sample cases or participants in such a way that sampled cases or participants are relevant to the framed research questions. Brumanns et al. (2008) employed purposive sampling in their study of environmental disputes among different stakeholder groups. Falk (2003) in his instrumental case study on understanding leadership intervention programs in different Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Australia, also employed purposive sampling to choose twelve VETs. Moreover, in the previous chapter on literature review studies by Eng (2013) and Roth (2013) in understanding the effect of social capital on academic achievement and on educational success and educational inequality respectively have used purposive sampling. Therefore, by using purposive sampling, in the view of Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) we can handpick the cases in the sample based on the researcher's judgment of the typicality of the cases or sought a particular characteristic.

In this study, I initially interacted with all the teachers, students, and principal. This was done so that the members of the school should not feel that they are either being outrightly rejected or the focus is on a particular group. During the pre-Covid-19 phase of my study, there were seventeen teachers and around one-fifty students in school. However, after the Covid-19 lockdown was relaxed, there were only seven teachers and ninety students in total. This was further aggravated by students switching between online and offline classes. Hence, thirty students were taken as sample who were consistently coming to the school were selected for the study. In the case of teachers, out of seven teachers, six teachers voluntarily agreed to be a part of the study. The principal was also chosen as the sample in order to understand the school structure, administration, and other aspects.

Entering the Field

Flick (2010) pointed out that entering a field entails a complex process of locating oneself and being located. The longitudinal nature in terms of time made me realize the importance of building a rapport with complete strangers. This rapport-building entails letting go of reluctance among the participants. In other words, I had to be ready for situations where I had to consciously dissociate myself as a researcher or at least be able to project that I am ready to become a part of the group.

Social capital brings focus to the importance of relationships to help us achieve goals that otherwise are not possible through other forms of capital. My breakthrough to enter the field was meeting an English teacher from Happy Rites School, Mrs. Karuna Rathore. She was the mother of my brother, Raghubir's college junior. She arranged a meeting with her former school's principal. SFS school was situated in an area called *Khirni Phatak*, which is on the outskirts of Jaipur City. I visited SFS school and spoke to the principal in the presence of Karuna Madam. The principal agreed to let me conduct the study by requesting to cause minimal disturbance to the school activities. However, she asked for a formal letter from the institution, without which she will not permit. I assured her that on my next visit, I will provide a formal institutional letter.

On the way back, I noticed that we were traveling through the Jaipur-Delhi highway, which is National Highway 8. SFS school was almost 20 km from where I was staying. Despite going to school on a two-wheeler, it took us nearly one and a half hours on each side. My formal entry into the school happened in two phases- pre-Covid-19 and post-Covid-19. This led to a distinction in the experience I had in both times.

Formally Entering the Field in Pre-Covid-19 Time

I took a permission letter from my department and handed it to the principal of SFS school. I was introduced to the whole school in its assembly. The principal asked everyone including the teachers to cooperate with me. Later, one of the teachers, in my presence shared her apprehension of bringing in a stranger into the school. The principal introduced me as a relative of Karuna Rathore. She reiterated the rules of not engaging with students and teachers during their classes, no loitering in the school, asking permission from the teachers in case I am interested to observe their classes and lastly, she added that in no way I should interact with the parents. I assured her that I shall be mindful of my movements, tone, and behaviour in the school. She seemed relieved. She kept a table and a chair for me in her cabin. I met the teacher who had apprehensions about my presence. I introduced

myself, my institution, and the purpose of the study in the simplest language. She introduced herself as Rambha Madam and asked me a few personal questions. I tried to navigate through the awkwardness. She would ask me to remain in the common area during classes, lunch breaks, and meetings since I was not part of the 'SFS family'. I observed that other teachers and the principal would not speak. I decided to show persistence by acquainting myself with the routine of teachers and students.

During my visits, I observed reluctance among the teachers. They would shut the doors if they saw me loitering near their class. I felt that I was Flick's (2010) 'professional stranger'. On the other hand, the students particularly in class fifth were curious to know who I am. They started spending their lunch break with me. Once I could not go to school for two days, as I had to attend a National Seminar in Rajasthan University. On the third day, when I came back, a student from class five asked me "Why were you not coming to school?" It was an unexpected question but I told him the reason. He looked at me and went away. Later the students of class five would ask me to come to the class during their free time. At this time, I requested the principal to give me any empty classes so that I can teach as well as interact. I received a negative response from the school on account of syllabus completion. With Covid-19 making its presence known in India, the schools were eventually closed. I came back to the University.

Re-entering the Field in Post-Covid-19 Times

During the first 21 days of the lockdown of Covid-19, I called the school principal once. We exchanged greetings on the phone and asked about each other's well-being. When I inquired about how the school is managing itself in terms of classes and examinations, she sounded assured that the school will reopen after the 21 days lockdown.

As time passed and the lockdown was extended, so did my sense of uncertainty. In later conversations, the principal shared that one of the issues that as a school they faced was the digital inclusion of all students. Most of the students of SFS do not have smartphones or laptops. In some cases, there would be only one smartphone that is shared between other siblings. Therefore, the school teachers would send videos on WhatsApp instead of taking online classes. My tenacity and insistence on accessing the videos and the responses of the students were found to have no avail. At this time, the only link between me and SFS school was the principal.

When the principal stopped responding to phone calls and messages, I resolved to wait for the schools to reopen. Meanwhile, I met Dr. Madhuri Bhatnagar, a retired professor of Sociology at the University of Rajasthan in order to gain insight and sources to understand the sociology of education in Jaipur. She was unaware of the concept of social capital. So, our sessions became fruitful as she explained to me how the caste structure in Rajasthan and its prominence even today. I would discuss my initial reflections on the school. She suggested identifying the demography of students that come to school irrespective of what the school authorities say.

I revisited the school in September 2021, as the school personnel were allowed to come but the students were being taught online. The principal informed me that the school opens for 3 hours every day and the teachers were taking online lectures. Upon reaching I noticed the lock on the door. I asked the neighbours who told me that the school have shifted. I called the principal who gave me an address. The change in the building was a piece of new information for me. I made a mental note to check my transcription of the principal's interview.

Upon meeting, I reiterated my study. She ignored my question about the change in the building and instead asked me to come on alternate days as they were trying to settle into the new building. She refused to take my help in setting up the new building. In the upcoming days, the teachers seemed to remain oblivious to my presence as they did not return the pleasantries nor would they agree to talk.

My breakthrough with teachers happened in the third lockdown. The school would open every day for two hours. Granovetter (1973) commented on the diffused yet cohesive power of the weak ties. The frequent interaction between the weak ties of two different groups can lead to the sentiments of friendship. During this time, I encountered two teachers who shared their interest in doing higher studies. They shared their life stories and experiences about school but would stop talking when I scribbled in the notebook. Reluctantly I decided not to carry one and relied on my mental ability. I noticed a shift in their behaviour to the extent that I was able to interview them and was invited to have lunch. Yet, their disinclination to talk on the record continued. I would convince and assure from time to time about the confidentiality of the conversation between us. They were surprised to know the distance between the school and my place of stay, the travel time, and my ability to drive a car on the highway.

Later, when a few children from class eight started coming to the school, I was asked by the principal if I could teach Mathematics to them. I took this as an opportunity to break the ice and meet the students. On the day of teaching, I introduced myself without adding my surname. One of the students, S-3, asked for my full name. Upon enquiring about the reason, the rest of the students said that it will be because of the surname and will they decide how they will respond to me. When I refused to divulge my surname, the students stopped responding to my questions, probing. This went on for two days. On the third day when they came to know about my surname, they seemed relieved. Their responses included solving the questions, requesting extra classes, and clearing their doubts. Soon the principal and teachers except one appeared to be at ease with my presence not only in the celebration of festivals but also in the school meetings.

Tools and Techniques for Data Collection

i. Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are one of the profoundly used tools in qualitative research. It enables a researcher to explore the aspects which otherwise are not observable or happened at a different time; yet are relevant to the study.

According to Bryman and Burgess (2002), semi-structured interviews have a contextuality tonality about the questions. Here the interviewer has the freedom to vary the sequence of questions and to ask further questions to receive a significant reply from the participants. For me, semi-structured interviews became one of the important tools to collect data as they allowed me to explore a variety of subjects. The questions put forth allowed the participants to share their experiences in a safe cocoon within the school.

I audio-recorded the interviews. Interviews spanned from 20 minutes to 65 minutes over a period of almost 2 years. This was many times punctuated by the Covid-19 lockdown that was imposed by the government from March 2020 to January 2022. However, I would ensure that the interviews of anyone are not taken back-to-back. Rather I would keep a gap of 1-2 weeks before contacting the participant again. This allowed the participants to have a certain degree of mull in their response. In many cases, the recorder caused hesitation among respondents to which at times I had to resort to pen and paper. The transcriptions of interviews helped me to revisit the participants with more areas to explore and fill the gaps that were encountered.

ii. Informal Conversation

Webb et al (1966) pointed out that irrespective of the interaction between the researcher and participant, the behavior of the participant will change when they feel they are under evaluation by the researcher as opposed to when no evaluation is taking place. One of the lessons I learned during my data collection was not everything can be always recorded. The casual conversations with teachers, principal, and students provided insights about their feelings and views about various aspects such as their feelings about schools, their perception about the leadership and many more. Initially, the teachers would ask for my recorder and ensure that it was turned off. A change in the behavior of teachers was observed as they became more open. Thus, informal conversations became one of the mainstays of my source of data. The informal conversations happened with teachers outside the schools, in staffroom and during lunchbreaks and preparation for a festival celebration or any other event. With the students, it was limited to during their classroom teaching and lunchbreaks. By the aid of these informal interactions and conversations, the scope of information increased as sometimes the participant would engage in a conversation, which they might not had they been aware of being on-record.

iii. Participant Observation

Participant observation is one of the best techniques to collect data from participants. However, for me, this did not happen in a day or two. Being a participant observer works as a two-way street. By merely deciding for oneself, participant observation is not possible. Gold (1958) points out the spectrum of observers that allows the extent of one's participation.

My initial detachment is credited to the naivety I had as a researcher. While there was a fear about how to navigate myself in a new environment. I observed that it was a new experience for them as well. I observed that whenever I stopped by a class, the teachers would stop teaching and ask me if I need anything. I would be asked to leave the room during the meetings. However, with my persistence for more than two years, I became a part of the school activities. This according to Levine (1980) causes a risk of 'becoming native'. At all times, I consciously reminded myself about my intentions of being in the field, interacting with participants by equally being empathic to them.

iv. Field Notes

According to Bryman (2012), field notes are generally used as a reflective tool by ethnographers as a “detailed chronicle of events, conversations, and behaviors.” It is important that as a researcher we accept the threat posed by the frailties of the human mind can be misleading. Field notes, here, are written as quick notes about an incident or behavior on the field. The inconspicuous prompts added in it can serve as a trigger to write an elaboration about the day on the field.

I relied on Sanjek (1990) and Lofland and Lofland (1995) classification of field notes. While I initially carried a notebook with me and would instantly note down if I am unable to record it. This caused reluctance among the participants about talking to me as they would insist on sharing what I was writing, a persistent issue faced by researchers as per Lofland and Lofland (1995). Later, I would record the field notes in my voice while I am in the field, which were later transcribed. I also depended on making mental notes where it was not feasible or could be deemed inappropriate, such as attending the staff meeting. I would later write it down the moment as soon as I got some space away from the participants. Thus, these field notes became an important pillar of my study.

v. Using Listening Skill

As a researcher, Parul (2016) highlighted that it is important to listen to the participants. This listening is not merely limited to being focused on getting the answers we want. In one of the semi-structured interviews, the interviewee talked about her family life, husband, divorce, and life as a single mother. I could not find anything conclusive in that recorded interview during my transcription. But the behavior of that interviewee changed towards me who would later come upfront and later became an informant about the school. In retrospect, I realized that listening, as Palmer-Mehta (2016) pointed out is a powerful tool that can bring a potential change in our interactions. By realizing the importance of listening, I consciously tried to create an environment where the respondents can talk freely. This increased my confidence in myself over the probable organic nature of the information I secured through semi-structured interviews, informal conversations, and even during my observations. It was through listening I noticed the shift in the usage of words, ideas, and perceptions that participants had about the school, colleagues, students, and even me. This difference of opinion was indicative of the hesitation and distrust that the participants still harbored; the causes of which I explored.

vi. Documents

The realm of research is founded on proof. While doing research documents such as research articles, journals, theses, publications, and reports helped me to frame my research questions. Later, I used the information and findings of these studies to corroborate my findings. This was done to provide much stronger support to my findings, thereby adding to the existing body of knowledge about social capital in a regional context that resonates closer to Indian roots.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis involves organizing, coding, synthesizing, and identifying patterns in the data. It helps convert raw data into meaningful findings. The analysis began from the start of data collection, facing challenges regarding data sources and validity. I followed the framework of Miles and Huberman (1994) in three stages: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. In the following sections, I elaborate on the steps involved in transcription, organization, coding, thematic generation, categorization, interpretation, and reporting.

a. Transcription of data

During my stay in the field, I interacted with different members of the school through semi-structured interviews and informal conversations. While I recorded the semi-structured interviews as audio, I would write the conversations that were off-record in a small notebook. This formed a part of my transcription. I transcribed the semi-structured interviews verbatim in English and Hindi. This was done so because many times teachers and students would answer in Hindi. I avoided the transliteration of the data and have therefore written in Devnagari script. Despite coming from the same region many times, the teachers would use local dialect and words, whose meanings I would ask a friend in case I am unaware of them.

b. Organizing, Coding, and Categorizing

While I was in the field, my primary focus was to gather data. I periodically transcribed my interviews. I would read them again in order to understand how to proceed ahead. However, during data collection, I collected data from so many sources that at one point I became flustered about how to organize it. Therefore, once I finished my preliminary data collection, I began organizing of data. This was done by separating semi-structured interviews, informal conversations, and observations that I noted in my field notes into different codes and categories. By doing this step, there was an ease of identifying patterns.

c. Thematic Generation and Thematic Categorization

Once I was able to categorize, I was able to identify themes. By corroborating with the research questions and objectives, I generated more categories that in turn led to a much clearer understanding of the pattern. This helped me to gain much-needed clarity for interpreting the data and reporting the findings.

d. Interpretation and Reporting

For reporting I employed a narrative style of writing. This was to ensure to report the findings from the words and dialogues of the participants. Throughout the analysis of data and its interpretation, it was ensured that the reporting of information is founded on the facets of social capital such as its dimensions (trust, information sharing, norms, solidarity, sense of belongingness, reciprocity, and network), and its effect on the aspiration of the members of the school. These interpretations were drawn by triangulating data gathered from different sources.

Ethical Considerations

As an ethical investigator, I followed principles such as respecting participants' readiness, morality, confidentiality, and experiences. I obtained institutional permission with a formal letter explaining my study's objectives and methods. Transparent communication with school authorities ensured clarity on the study's nature, duration, and participants involved.

Interviews were mostly conducted within the school, and I maintained privacy by not discussing content with others. Initially, I focused on understanding the school's routine to build trust and rapport. Pseudonyms were used for school, principal, teachers, and students, ensuring anonymity. Personal field notes and transcriptions retained actual names.

These ethical measures safeguarded participants' rights and privacy while conducting the research with integrity.

About the Case Study School

The upcoming section talks about the case study school under two sub-sections. These are school infrastructure and interaction between student-teachers-principal.

School Location

The SFS School is in Hanuman Nagar of Jaipur district. Earlier, it was situated in the *Khirni Phatak* area. The school is difficult to locate as it shifts within 2-3 years. During the time of data collection, after the Covid-19 lockdown, the school was located at Hanuman Nagar Extension, which is in the south of Jaipur city. The area is nearly 15 km

from the old city of Jaipur also known as the Walled city. The school is situated near the railway tracks. Right opposite the school is located another school, LBSSS.

School Building

The school began in a farmhouse at Maharana Pratap Nagar. However, since it was a rented place, a few years later the school was shifted to different places within the same area. Before the Covid-19 lockdown, the school building was a residential bungalow that had many rooms. By seeing the structure of the building one could conclude that it was meant to be run as a commercial set-up. The staff room and principal room were different. There were separate rooms for different classes. There was a playground in the backside of the school where there were swings and slides. Apart from this, there was a separate toilet for students (boys and girls), teachers (male and female), and principal. There was a porch which was converted as a waiting area for the school.

However, after the Covid-19 lockdown, the school shifted. The building of this school was small. The principal, staffroom, and office were in the same room. However, the toilet for boys, girls, and staff members was separate. There was a make-shift kitchen, for the preparation of food in case of any celebration or serving tea to the teachers. It also had a water cooler for students. There was no waiting area and parents would come directly to the office. The entrance of the school was towards the North, near *Guddu ka Chauraha*. Adjacent to the building was a Brahma Kumari center and opposite to it was a secondary school and a holiday home. The Playground was non-existent, instead, it was a small lawn of nearly 10x10 size. The school had a parking space, where children would park their bicycles. The teachers would come by school vehicle.

School Office

The office had a display board that had pictures of annual functions and other events. There was a quote by Rahim Das that talks about how the teacher helps to reach the divine. There was a bust of Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi. In addition to this, there was a statue of Goddess Saraswati and a picture of Guru Nanak. The office also had cabinets that were labeled with different names based on the content inside the cabinets. There were two tables on opposite ends. On one table, the principal would sit and on the other table, the teachers would sit. The library of the school was not separate, hence one of the cabinets was labeled as books where the teacher would give books to the students for one week.

Curriculum

The SFS School was affiliated to Board of Secondary Education (RBSE), and therefore would follow its curriculum. The District Education Office (DEO), Jaipur issues a plan of work, which the school was expected to follow. The medium of instruction was English. But the conversational language among teachers and students was in Rajasthani language. The students of different classes were taught subjects including Mathematics, Science, Social Science, English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Computer, Art and Drawing.

Classroom

During the data collection, the classes 6th to 8th were arranged in a multigrade setting. This was done due to a smaller number of rooms and students. Each classroom had a chair, table, and benches. The blackboard in the classroom were wooden and were removable. The windows of the classroom were broken because of which pigeons would fly into the room.

Teachers

Earlier the school had seventeen teachers before the Covid-19 lockdown. However, after Covid-19, many teachers and students left. Thus, there were seven teachers in school after the lockdown. Out of these seven teachers, one of the teachers was the principal of the school. In addition to this, there was only one male teacher who taught Hindi and Sanskrit in the school. Most of the teachers hailed from Rajput community. There were two teachers who were from Uttar Pradesh. One of the teachers hailed from Baniya community of Rajasthan. All the teachers lived around 3-4 km from the school. The teachers were either graduates or post-graduates in their subject, but all the teachers possessed a B.Ed. degree.

Students

Before lockdown, there were nearly one fifty students, which dropped to ninety after lockdown. Out of this nearly thirty students of different classes would attend the classes in the offline mode. Most of these students were from Rajput community, few students were from Nepal of Chettri community. Before the lockdown, there was a small group of students from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar who left the school. Most of the student were studying in school since nursery or kindergarten.

School Uniform

Earlier the uniform was white shirt, skirt (for girls) and shorts or trousers (for boys). The students also had a coat with the school emblem in the winter. However, due to financial constraints, the school did not order new uniform because of which for 2-year post lockdown the students would come wearing civil clothes. There were two brothers who would come wearing uniform which was torn from the back. The teachers asked the father to send them wearing civil dress instead of torn clothes. The students continued wearing the torn uniform which meant that the parent did not heed to the request of the school.

Interactions in the school

The daily interactions involved interactions between students, teachers and principal. During these interactions, the values and beliefs of the students, teachers and principal could be visualized.

The students start coming at 8:30 am, where they would often play until the start of the assembly. The teachers and principal would ask them to stand in the line for the assembly. The assembly would begin with a prayer song “Daya kar Daan Vidya ka”, followed by pledge (alternating with Hindi and English on separate days), thought of the day, news and celebration of birthday of students. The principal would then deliver a speech in form of a story or would make an announcement. The assembly ends with the National Anthem followed by students collective greeting by students “good morning teachers, good morning principal, good morning my dear friends”. The students would go to their respective classes. The students of class 8th would guide nursery and kindergarten students towards their classes and would carry their bags if someone arrives late. The teachers would then go to their respective classes, with some staying in the staffroom, preparing for their lecture or attending parents. In the multigrade classroom, the teacher would give some work to two classes while teaching the other, thereby rotating the cycle of teaching. Since the school was in a transitory state, due to reemergence of Covid-19 from time to time, the school authority did not allow a lunchbreak for classes 4th to 8th. The school would be over by 12:30 pm. The students would wait for their turn to go in the van, few would go on their personal bicycles, some of the children walked. The mothers would come to pick some of the children wearing the traditional dress, *Poshak*.

Tentative Findings

1. The school is an important social organization that offered support to its teachers in form of setting time-table according to the need, not deducting salary. Thereby showcasing that a school has a potential to manifest and mobilise social capital when the administration of school is prepared to invest in relationships with its teachers.
2. The school's credibility is equated to its material capacity in form of school infrastructure and transportation followed by its quality of teaching-learning process. Since the school did not have a permanent building, it was forced to shift locations within an area, leading to decreased trust between parents and school administration.
3. The extent of exchange of social capital between school and community determines the school success.
4. The access of social capital within a school community is mediated by or a combination of social class, caste, ethnicity or gender. Thus, affecting the affinity and aspiration among the participants in the school.
5. Social capital plays a vital role in molding a student's teaching-learning behavior, interaction with peers and teachers.
6. In the light of Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown, the association of students and teachers with school was found to be reduced.
7. The students experienced a loss of social literacy due to covid-19 lockdown, that was supplemented by financial woes of the families.
8. The social capital in school was also positively affected by practices such as participating in morning assembly, competition, and celebration of festivals.
9. The leadership of the school is an important determinant, thus affecting the overall school climate, that in turn affects social capital among the members of the school.
10. The teachers exhibiting higher trust on the school administration not only had a higher sense of belonging, but were involved in lesser conflicts with parents as compared to others.

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Peer Assessment: Roadblocks to Success

Article

The world of children has been an enigma to the adults. Right from the acquisition of language to acquisition of social skills, there have been countless experiences that have been studied by the adult world. In education, a child has very little control over the way to be taught and assessed; this could result in development of undesirable and deviant behaviors. Peer Assessment is a form of assessment where learners consider and assess the level, value and quality of a product or performance of their equal-status learners. This further leads to an elaborated discussion based on feedback, and appraisals are done between assessors and assessed with the ultimate aim of achieving a positive and constructive outcome. In times when self-paced learning has become the buzzword, Peer Assessment further strengthens the trust of the learner as it takes control of the entire learning process including assessment. Peer Assessment can also offer support to the development of social skills like cooperation, trust, reciprocity, acceptance, accountability and a sense of ownership towards the consequences. It can act as an icebreaker between the teacher and students. An exercise of assessment through peers indicates the readiness of the teacher to trust the learners and their sense of judgement while they offer the feedback. Yet, Peer Assessment falls short of being wholeheartedly accepted by the teachers. In this paper, the author shares concern over a few areas that require attention to effectively deliver the promising capabilities of Peer Assessment.

Education plays a prominent role in an individual's life. Irrespective of differences on the basis of gender, caste or region, education is unequivocally accepted as a potent equalizer. The education system stands on the three pillars viz. educational objectives, pedagogy, and assessment and evaluation. Educational objectives, be it "long-term" or "short-term," "big" or "small," help an educator to prepare an instruction more effectively, to express concern over a behavioral aspect to be considered more seriously whilst dealing with the student and lastly to ensure transmission of the philosophy, tradition and culture of the society. Pedagogy, on the other hand, focuses on the meaningful interactions between students and teachers; it brings "context" of teaching into play and derives many of its facets from the cultural paradigms of the society at large. Assessment and evaluation are two different terms but are often used ignorantly interchangeably. Evaluation is defined as the means

to determine the extent to which educational objectives have been achieved whereas assessment is a method to judge the quality of students' knowledge, ability and motivation (Allan, 1999; Ekhatani & Pierson, 2000). Assessment, on the other hand, is a vital process to the whole education process as it doesn't limit itself to the certification or feedback on the learning of the learners; but it contributes to the lifelong learning beyond the four walls of the education institution (Boud & Falchikov, 2006).

Traditionally, the relationship between teacher and student is generally viewed as unequal and hierarchical. This means that it is the teacher who decides what to teach, how to teach, how to evaluate, how to assess, and how to provide the feedback to the learners. In other words, teacher-centric assessment techniques mostly concentrate on determining the performance and grading of the learner. Thus, a learner assumes a passive rather than active role (Rowntree, 1987).

Therefore, it is imperative to provide opportunities to the learner to engage not only in the learning and enhancing skills but also to understand the responsibility, accountability and consequences of their actions not only to oneself but also to others. This co-construction of knowledge, social skills and accountability can be achieved by the teacher in the classroom through Peer Assessment.

Peer Assessment

The term peer means "a group of individuals who share one or more characteristics, such as age, social status, economic status, occupation, or education" (Retrieved from <https://dictionary.apa.org/peer-group>). This implies that members of a peer group not only interact with each other at equal level but to some extent

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influence attitudes, emotions and behaviors over each other.

Peer Assessment is an educational arrangement for learners to consider and specify the level, value or quality of a product or performance of equal status learners either qualitatively or quantitatively (Topping, 2010). This could include writing, oral presentations, portfolios, test performance or any other skilled behavior (Topping, 2010). This means that learners use certain criteria, apply standards, reflect, discuss and corroborate to understand, learn and judge the works of their peers. This could result in improvement in qualification of both assessors and assessee (Falchikov, 2005; Roberts, 2006).

Peer Assessment emphasizes on process, encourages learners to clarify, review and rearticulate their ideas. This understanding and articulations of ideas in form of values and standards can provide an alignment with the "community of practice" (Wenger, 1999) wherein the members construct their own structure, practices and identities (Wenger, 1999 cited in Falchikov, 2007). This is done by initiating community to hear, experiment and eventually internalize norms of the community and society.

Peer Assessment offers a way to lessen the power imbalance between teachers and taught; in addition to this, gives learners a chance to enhance its status in the learning process. This happens because Peer Assessment provides an opportunity for students by facilitating learning apart from being a tool in order to get a clearer and obvious picture of their respective performance (Cheng & Warren 2000). It acts as an interactive way of assessment where learners keep up with teachers to attain their goals.

When viewed from the lens of formative assessment, Peer Assessment helps learners to identify their strengths and weaknesses, focus on areas that require remedial action and develop personal and professional skills. This gives

learners a chance to understand how to improve and what to improve. It can also be used as summative assessment where learners use tools like rubrics to grade the final performance of their peers. However, this can also lead to a principal yet basic question: Is a learner who lacks training, skill and experience to evaluate, assess and feedback, capable enough to perform duties towards its peers?

Undoubtedly, a peer's feedback is available in greater volume; with greater immediacy; and has greater impact than the teacher's feedback (Topping, 2018). Having talked about it, it is essential to understand that an ill-planned Peer Assessment can wreak havoc on students' self-concept, social relations and behavior. Thus, the author has attempted to identify the areas where the teacher should prepare oneself and students' before introducing Peer Assessment as an assessment technique in its purview of the teaching-learning process.

Issues & Concerns for Implementing Peer Assessment

During initial effects, it will be unjust to get desirable results. Hence, the author has identified a few concerns which could be pondered upon to introduce Peer Assessment in the classroom.

Teachers' Role

The assessment procedures provided to students to assess their competencies by teachers usually focus on reproduction of content instead of problem-solving communication, critical and analytical thinking skills, teamwork and respect for each other. Unfortunately, the traditional method of assessment procedure fails to present the real picture of the quality of the skills (Tan & Keat, 2005). Peer Assessment is a tool that requires students to make notes or score or both about their peer's product or performance based on some criteria.

At the same time, many believe that learners don't have appropriate skills and proper experience and knowledge on how to evaluate. This

further strengthens when the teacher himself believes that learners lack competency to judge each other (Topping, 2009). In the author's own opinion, in this case, an in-service teacher should remember his/her days of pre-service teacher training period where they were mentored not only by the teacher educators but were also given ample opportunities to enhance their skills of constructive judgment through simulation teaching and microteaching.

The first step of any teaching learning process is the need to teach it to the students. This need is framed into objectives which are either content-oriented or life-oriented. These objectives, either at philosophical level or at strategic level, form the blueprint of the entire teaching-learning process. They provide a roadmap to a teacher about the aim of education, process to follow, methods to achieve them and apposite assessment techniques to check the extent of its achievement.

In a classroom, the teacher should, therefore, formulate an instructional objective that provides opportunities for learners not only in learning but also in assessing each other's performance and progress. While formulating objectives, the teacher should focus on the aptness of using Peer Assessment with respect to the context, content and age of the learners. The teacher should also take the social, mental and emotional background of the learners while planning to introduce Peer Assessment in the classroom. A learner in school is impressionable and learns many things through observation and interaction with the surrounding. The teacher can use modeling techniques like scaffolding to transmit skill, knowledge and concept about Peer Assessment.

Social Dynamics in Classroom

Peers play an important role in children's lives. The experience of being accepted by their respective classmates incepts right from pre-



primary school and extends to later years of life. The relationship that a child develops with peers not only helps the child from escaping the loneliness but also develops social skills like cooperation, flexibility, accepting criticism, communication, reciprocity, etc.

The strength of Peer Assessment lies in its ability to offer learners a chance to collaborate, discuss and review their work and related feedback to it. This leads to inculcation of subtle helping and reciprocity among the learners. This results in benefiting both assessor and assessed by the whole process as learners help each other to make sense of their gaps in their learning, promoting understanding to have more grasped of the learning process (Kvale, 2006).

Peer Assessment also leads to reduction of friction between prominent units in education—students and teachers (Topping, 2009). Here teachers can make an attempt to introduce Peer Assessment as an 'ice breaker' between him/her and the learner. This will instil confidence in the learner that they are in control not of their own learning but also of their assessment. At the same time, Peer Assessment can help a teacher to inculcate social skills, improve the social dynamics of the learners.

From the learner's side, Peer Assessment helps in cementing of bonds based on their shared interests. The skills like praising, attitude towards criticism, encouragement, positive outlook, effect of judgement, manner to criticize, helping others etc. which are equally important in one's life can have an effect through Peer Assessment (Topping, 2018). Peer Assessment when used as an advisory by the teachers can also limit the overdependence of learners and other stakeholders on teacher's verdict about the learner's ability, capability and strength and weakness.

Nature of Reinforcement

The entire narrative of any form of assessment revolves not only around to understand the extent to which the objectives of learning have been achieved, but also provide a feedback to the assessed in order to improve their performance or behavior at large. Built around B.F. Skinner's theory of operant conditioning, reinforcement is an important trait of the entire teaching-learning process. The idea that behavior can be taught by controlling the consequence to action has long back found its way in teaching. The success of any teaching process depends on how learners are being reinforced. The way reinforcements are given with respect to task, time and type also has an effect on the relationship between teachers and taught. An effective teacher is the one who not only possesses content knowledge or good communication skills but is the one who can integrate reinforcement with content, pedagogy and evaluation.

Feedback is the key for improving behavior and performance of learners; it helps a learner to diagnose problems and suggest solutions. Peer Assessment also has a potential to offer a range of activities that include students in the act of evaluating and providing feedback on the work of their peers (Pearce, Mulder & Baik, 2009). The art of giving feedback has to be transmitted by the teacher where the learners should be directed towards constructive feedback, its accountability and its acceptance. This will ensure that the learners remain motivated and focus on improving their performance.

Feedback can help teachers to understand the undercurrent relationships among children of the classroom. It highlights the social crescendos of the classroom. There have been instances where feedback has a positive effect on reciprocity (Bunnk & Schaufeli, 1999; Almaatouq et al., 2016), trust (Arslan & Polat, 2016) and normative behaviour (Chang, 2004). At the same time, events of social loafing (failing to participate), free rider effects (having

the work of others accepted as one's own), diffusion of responsibility, and interaction disabilities (Salomon & Globerson, 1989) have been reported and found to have negative effect on the overall social process in the classroom.

Reliability & Validity of Peer Assessment

Reliability and validity are the two most important and fundamental features of any evaluation technique. Reliability is defined as the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results. Validity is defined as the extent to which an assessment tool accurately measures for which it has been developed (Heale and Twycross, 2015). The essence of reliability and validity lies in the creation of transparency in any form of assessment process.

In Peer Assessment, learners give feedback to their peers. This can also result in becoming aware about the criteria of judgment and expectations. Many purported studies of reliability and validity have compared marks, scores, and grades awarded by peers and staff, rather than upon more open-ended formative feedback (Magin & Helmore, 2001). But one must always pay attention to the degree of correspondence between Peer Assessments made by students and the assessments made of student work by their teachers; bringing in the debate the extent of reliability and validity of teacher's assessment technique itself (Topping, 2010).

At the same time learners often find they are overwhelmed and hence become hesitant to judge their own peers harshly. This can be due to reasons like the attempt of the learner to be accepted by the prominent social group, in case of adolescents; or the learner doesn't like to evaluate his/her friend at all. These can mislead the teacher if s/he fails to monitor the performance of the class from time to time, resulting in false sense of achievement of objectives (Topping, 2010).

This brings a huge doubt over the process of assessment of learners through their peers as it could have a certain degree of bias between assessor and assessed (Topping, 2010). This could be reduced by employing triangulation techniques i.e. discussion, negotiation, and joint construction of assessment (Karegianes, Pascarella, & Pflaum, 1980; MacArthur, Schwartz, & Graham, 1991). The reliability and validity of any assessment is vital for its widespread usage, acceptance and success. Thus, attempts should be made by the teachers to make Peer Assessments more reliable and valid by using the support of training, checklists, exemplification, assistance, and monitoring.

Conclusion

Teachers are seemingly ready to relinquish some part of classroom content and management and have now been attempting to involve students in learning. There has been a reasonable talk about the concerns of assessment of the learners by their peers. The consequences of summative assessment are somewhat paramount and thus the concern is reasonable. Thus, the teacher should make an explicit attempt to implicitly introduce Peer Assessment as a formative assessment to check whether the desirable behavioural change has happened or not.

The focal point of Peer Assessment should be to help students plan their own learning, to understand whether actual learning is happening or not, to aid in identification of learner's strength and weakness and developing of metacognitive and other professional and personal skills. Thus, the learners will not assign final grade to their peers but will help each other towards their holistic development.

Peer Assessment can also help one to understand the power struggle in the classroom, friendship, mutual understanding, trust, reciprocity, relationship among norms of the classroom and the smaller groups

within it. The anxiety and stress that is often experienced by learners in school due to the 'marks' and 'grades' can somewhat be reduced by introducing positive and constructive Peer Assessment at the formative stages. Apart from this, Peer Assessment can also inculcate a sense of ownership, responsibility and motivation in the assessor.

Peer Assessment requires training, practice, monitoring and moderation in order to make it a successful cognitive and affective experience. Hence, guidelines should be prepared and steps should be taken to remind students of the need for conducting this form of assessment. Careful attention should be given to the developmental stages of Peer Assessment that can make it a more sophisticated, valid and accurate form of alternative assessment technique.

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NEP 2020 Implementation: Transforming Elementary Education through Social Capital

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ABSTRACT

The education policy of a country indicates the change it is ready to undergo. The policymakers of that era in which a policy is formulated converse with the legislation and stakeholders about their vision, intent, plan of execution, and the expected result in the years to come. The National Education Policy 2020 was a much-awaited policy that educationists, academicians, and educational researchers were demanding. It is anchored in our culture and hints at moving away from 'Macaulayism' that has limited our nation's potential. Social Capital is a newly accepted formal term for relationships that are built on social cooperation, norms, trust, and many other social and moral virtues. Social Capital is slowly finding its way into the process of policymaking, implementation, execution, and evaluation. This paper is an attempt at how Social Capital can transform our school education through its recognition and formal incorporation into our policy lexicon.

Keywords: Social capital, Elementary Education, National Education Policy 2020, Implementation

Introduction

Our Constitution recognizes that Education is a key enabler for our people in terms of social, economic, cultural, political, and spiritual welfare. The Preamble of our Constitution begins with 'We, The People'. These carefully chosen and arranged words play an important role to present a summary of what the makers expected from the citizens of the newly independent nation. It simultaneously puts an onus on the citizens to perceive their identity as a collective rather than socially atomizing themselves. The Education Policies of 1968, 1986, and now 2020 were deeply entrenched in the soul of the Constitution. Although several commissions and committees have incessantly pointed out the glimpses of *Macaulayism* in our education system. Each criticism was attempted to be overcome by introducing educational changes at various levels- from schools to the university- either through the legislature or governance. Yet we are still far from achieving 'Education For All' in access and retention.

Over the past few decades, social capital has formally entered our lexicon. The American sociologist James Coleman (1988) defined social capital as the group dynamics and cooperation of individuals to achieve collective goals by subserving their own goals. Fukuyama (2002) viewed social capital as people working together to achieve a common goal through shared norms and values. Fukuyama (2002) also believed that recognition of social capital is an important ingredient to facilitate development and reforms. An attempt has been made to articulate and formalize the integration of social capital with the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020 hereon).

What is Social Capital?

Social Capital is a term with multiple meanings that were discoursed in different contexts. Yet, somehow social capital remains a source of conjecture. Pierre Bourdieu (1985) emphasized the fungibility of varied forms of capital- economic, cultural, symbolic, and social. He accepted that each of these forms of capital was necessary to acquire possession. Bourdieu (1985) focused on social capital by acknowledging that individuals accrue benefits through sociability and participation in groups. Therefore, Bourdieu (1985) defined 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 or recognition". It is important to

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appreciate Bourdieu's understanding of social capital was classical in the sense it made clear that social relationships are not natural rather they are strategically constructed to evolve as a reliable source of support and access to resources.

Loury (1977) critiqued the neoclassical theories that explained racial income inequality in his views on social capital. This paved way for Coleman (1988) who defined social capital by its "function" that has two common things- social structure and actions of actors of that social structure. In later conceptualizations, Coleman (1990) attempted to elaborate on "mechanisms of social capital" like reciprocity, expectation, enforcement, and acceptance of group norms, access to information or source of information, being a part of a social organization, and their consequences. Baker (1990) conjured social capital as a "resource that actors derive from specific social structures and then use to pursue their interests; it is created by changes in the relationship among actors."

Contradicting his predecessors, Burt (1992) pointed out that dense networks often lead to the transmission of redundant information. Therefore, it was the 'structural holes' or relative absence of ties that facilitate the mobility of individuals and resources. This was elucidated in his definition of "friends, colleagues and more general contacts through whom you receive opportunities to use your financial and human capital." Fukuyama (2002) believed that culture plays an important role in society. Hence, he perceived social capital as "shared norms and values that promote social cooperation, instantiated in actual social relationships." At the same time, Fukuyama (2002) suggested that not all norms and values lead to culture, and therefore, not all forms of culture lead to economic growth. This demonstrated that not all societies have an equivalent amount of social capital.

It can be inferred from the above definitions that social capital is the collective effect of all the elements as described by the sociologists and others which are: (a) donor actors of social capital (b) recipient actors of social capital (c) social structure (d) motivation/incentive/ expectation (e) density of networks among the actors (e) state of information channels (f) norm and value system (g) individual's ability to sub serve self-goals over the common goal (h) resource itself (i) culture. Consequently, making social capital more of a public good than a private one, as Fukuyama (2002) concurs. Therefore, social capital involves a social structure, where individuals

are appropriated properly facilitating an easy transaction without putting any undue stress on those involved through contracts or any other cumbersome procedure.

Elementary Education in NEP 2020

In 1835, when Macaulay wrote his minutes after being in India for some time, he made his intention clear of what he wanted Indian Education System to look like in years to come. His idea of “**a class of persons Indian in blood and color and English in taste, opinions in morals and intellect**” still mars our education system. The general criticism that our education system faces is a lack of quality education, stress on marks-based learning, rote memorization, disjointed curriculum from the industry, and good quality teachers. Over the past seven decades, attempts have been made by governments to tackle the shortcomings of our education system.

On 29th July 2020, when the world was gripped by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Union Government of India released its New Education Policy 2020. The policy was applauded and was seen as a stepstone into New India. The policy underpinned India as *Vishwaguru*- a country that emerges as a global leader in all aspects-thought, spirit, intellect, power, knowledge, value, character, skill, actions, commitment, and well-being. It reiterates again and again that the current education system is disjointed from Indianness and hence, it's time to visit our past, learn from our ancient traditions and culture, and apply that ethos that builds a Nationalistic Global Citizen.

A first step towards achieving this was radical changes in the entire education system that is currently existing. Instead of the current 10+2 system, the policy suggested a 5+3+3+4 system of school education. The upheaval of the school education system meant that the current elementary education which was from 1 to 8 will now be divided into- foundational (The foundational stage includes Anganwadi, pre-schools, and *Balwadis*), preparatory and middle stages.

According to the ASER (Rural) Report 2021, 5.5% of kids were not enrolled for the 2020–21 school year, up from 4% in 2018. The youngest kids (ages 6 to 10) are the ones who exhibit this disparity the most, probably because they have "not yet secured admittance to the school." A whopping 5.3 percent of kids in this age range are now not enrolled, up from 1.8 percent in 2018. With the interruptions in education in form of lockdown and repeated closing and opening of schools, a question comes to the mind of the authors among this excessive focus on cognition,

textbooks, and learning, how will this grandiose policy ensure that education is accessible; those who have dropped out in last two years can be brought to the mainstream and how an ideal classroom and school environment can be created. This has been accomplished through a discussion of social capital vis-à-vis NEP 2020 to situate social capital in the Indian School Education System.

Social Capital for School Education w.r.t. nep 2020

For the successful implementation of any policy, it is imperative to have a strong economic foundation. The NEP 2020 lamented that the governance fell short to increase expenditure on education to 6% of GDP as proposed in the Education Policy of 1968, 1986, and 1992 (pg. 60). Our country still spends around 4.43% of its GDP on Education (NEP 2020). According to the Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education in 2019-20, the budget estimate of expenditure on elementary education in percentage of GDP was around 1.89. This provides an opportunity for the government to include other stakeholders in the decision-making process, just as they did when they released the Draft of Education Policy in 2017.

Helliwell (2006) said that people value their engagement with others; which makes them more empathic towards their social context. This could be seen in the declaration by the erstwhile MHRD in 2019 that they received over 1.5 lakhs suggestions from various corners and strata (<https://www.education.gov.in/en/nep-new>). Ergo, social capital offers a sociological perspective in form of power, trust, and interests of the stakeholders as they plan to analyze the social institutions with an aim of developmental interventions says Woolcock and Narayan (2000). This could lead to a shift in dynamics between the stakeholders and the organization in question. The interventions, therefore, have to be planned and implemented cautiously to avoid any form of friction between formal and informal organizations and networks.

The Commission of Social Justice (1994) deliberated that our social fabric is in a dynamic stage and is fractured in many instances. In order to repair it, we must focus on building a collective moral and social identity which could be possible through our willingness to invest in social capital. Social capital allows understanding the process of consensus-building amid the haves and have-nots. Any intervention in the education system such as the upheaval of the education

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system to 5+3+3+4 from 10+2 requires equal participation from all the stakeholders irrespective of their socio-economic-politico-cultural status.

NEP 2020 has emphasized the accountability of education to its stakeholders. But the major question is- will all the stakeholders readily accept to shoulder the responsibility of being accountable? *Lok Jumbish* in 1992 is an excellent example of community participation facilitated through governance; members of the community who were closely associated and had rich networks came together to carry out the teaching-learning process in their contexts. Therefore, Social capital can provide leeway to the stakeholders to be informed citizens via the open access and *jugalbandi* of governments and civil societies.

Social capital fills the vacuum that exists in our socio-politico fabric by engaging and mobilizing social relations and interactions among different factions. Social capital as said by Fukuyama (2002) is a public good. Hence, social capital can be put to use in such a way that opportunities in terms of decision-making, execution, and assessment are not limited to any dominant group(s).

Conclusion

The soul of NEP 2020 foresees a possible way to return to the golden age of education of the past. It should therefore take a leaf from the successes of both government and non-government organizations before embarking on a new journey. Social capital is an alchemy that hides in plain sight and remains unacknowledged. The collective effect of trust, loyalty, openness, identity, and many others can lead to commitment and fraternizing which is one of our constitutional goals.

Unequivocally says Johnston and Percy-Smith (2003) social capital is a confusing and debatable concept, yet it cannot be discarded like a sack of rocks. It needs to be contextualized as per our demands in this case our school education system, especially at the foundational and preparatory stages. Thus, in our journey of re-engaging with the past, we can look, identify and apply the instances where social capital became an important ingredient in the success of different developmental interventions in education leading to the formation of an equal and just nation, truly the *Vishwaguru*.

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