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Cultural management as an element of strategy of development of school social capital

Abstract

Besides various proposals of solving current problem with education crisis, some new economic and social concepts appear, which are related to the notion of social capital. This article attempts to analyse conditions of social capital formation in the school as well as some factors that support its development. Particular attention is given to cultural management, which is perceived as a determinant of effective development of informal values and ethical standards common for the school community. In the conclusion it is pointed out that the supreme value of such strategic management of social capital is building relationships based on trust and partnership. This creates innovative organizational culture of school community. Its characteristic features are: a future orientation, elasticity and ability to act proactively. Thus, social capital becomes a bearer of cultural values that cause positive changes in the dominating cultural system of contemporary education.

The article presents the following implications for practice or educational policy:

- Educational policy makers can familiarise themselves with the main dimensions of the social organisation of the school, which in management theory are the basis for the growth of the social capital of the school.
- Administrators can take action to develop an innovative organisational culture for the school community, adapted to current and future changes in the school environment as an organisation.
- Educators can improve the individual educational environment of each pupil through cyber-learning space, which is now becoming an increasingly attractive alternative to existing methods of shaping the social capital of the school.
- The participants of the educational process should together take part in the development of innovative structures of the educational community's relational bonds through cultural management which formats the organisational culture of the school's social capital as a system of meanings understood by the pupils and collectively accepted by them.

Keywords: education, school, culture, management, capital, social policy.

Introduction

Culture and education should prepare people to use achievements of modern civilization through creative participation in the process of its further development. However, this development, which is a consequence of socio-cultural changes described as globalization, results in a state defined as crisis of culture. As a consequence, it causes turbulences in the sphere of social educational practices – hence the crises of education and changes of its functions. Therefore, previous acquisition and collection of knowledge gives way to development of abilities to find information, create and widespread it as well as the ability to establish contacts with other people, problem solving ability and teamwork. Krzysztof Wielecki (1996, p. 117) just at the end of 20th century noticed that education in the conditions of globalization should “above all help people deal with culture, understand it along with its degeneration, functional spheres and its universalism”. As summed up by Ryszard Pachociński (2006, p. 44), it means that “school of the future must help students to perceive reality in a critical way, to discover, analyze and interpret notions and meanings”. Thus, within the scope of education we should look for concepts of actions that are open to building social relations, which can results in better education in the spirit of collective responsibility and creative cooperation. This task directs attention of whole school community: students, teachers, administrative personnel and parents towards perspective of collective actions that initiate cooperation undertaken to achieve current and potential mutual benefits. The most productive economic and social approach in this area is considered to be the concept of building an intangible resource that is the social capital of the school. It is a factor that generates changes in the organizational context of the process of education for the purpose of developing civic values of the school. Development of this capital in the process of modernization of the educational structures of the school is currently very important in the face of limited opportunities for the development of material capital.

This article attempts to analyze the conditions of the formation of social capital and the factors that support its development in school as an organization. Particular attention has been paid to the significance of cultural management, which is a determinant of effective development of informal values and ethical norms common to the school community. As a result of these activities, the relationships between organizational culture and the social capital of the school are formed.

Conditions of development of school social capital

The concept of social capital owes its popularity to sociology, although it originates from the economics and theory of organizational management. The

vision of social capital appeared a hundred years ago and was hidden outside the mainstream of sociology until the eighties of the twentieth century, when it reappeared as one of the individual resources of an individual potential that supports one's education and socialization. The four social precursors of these social studies, Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, Robert Putman and Francis Fukuyama, popularized the notion of social capital in the modern sense as a structure of resources in the network of social relations. A brief description of their achievements in this field has been described for example by Joanna Juszczyk-Rygalla (2017, pp. 53–66). The cultural perspective of Fukuyama is interesting, as he perceived social capital precisely through the prism of cultural mechanisms: tradition and religion. In terms of culture, social capital is a long-term resource, which does not change rapidly as a permanent feature of social structures. In this context, Fukuyama (1997) interprets culture as the mutual relation between cultural factors and elements of the social structure, and simultaneously approaches the popular concept of culture as the sum of hereditary ethical habits. In the crisis of culture one can see the weakening of social capital, which becomes the source of an increasingly important role of written law. The less trust members of a social group have in one another, the more extensively and in detail they attempt to formalize the relationship between themselves. However, such regulations often turn out to be imperfect.

Social capital, in traditional approach, is characterized by four areas of meaning (Łobocki, 2013, p. 82):

- it is created by concepts such as trust, norms, and relationships that can increase the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action,
- it differs from other forms of human capital as it is created and transmitted by means of cultural mechanisms: religion, tradition, historical habit
- it is not planned ahead and its increase cannot be in the interest of an individual,
- it is defined as a resource, an asset, a property, and it is productive.

There is a reference to current and potential resources associated with the existence of different types of capital: social capital, economic capital, and cultural capital. The difference between these three forms of capital and the principles of their mutual conversion are precisely defined by Bourdieu (1983). What is important is the significance of intangible assets, which arise in the area created by the network of existing relations based on trust and reciprocity. This entanglement of individuals into group activities depends on the size of this network (the collective meaning of social capital – Coleman's conception) and the quality of network configurations (individual meaning of social capital – Bourdieu's concept). As noticed by Piotr Sztompka (2016, p. 290), these are just two different points of view of the same social phenomenon. Social capital functions in the form of three components: obligation and expectations, communication

relations and social norms. All of them, in an educational context, shape the mechanisms that generate social resources, which, in combination with material (physical and financial) capital, determine the development of the human capital of the students, and thus affect their school performance. In this way, social capital can at the same time be a private good for every student and teacher, and a public good for the school as an institution.

In addition to the resourceful approach, there are also process concepts (operative) that have been recently introduced, in which social capital is presented as a sequence of kinetic behaviors. Andrzej Matysiak (2008, p. 97) writes: "Social capital is a system of some regulators of interaction, which consists of: moral norms, cultural norms, legal regulations, law enforcement subsystem and social organizations (social networks)". Hence, the operability of social capital is obtained by mobilizing resources and strengthening the level of engagement in relationships such as emotional support, motivation, engagement, help, information, influence, etc. Therefore, it is a factor that generates such changes in the organizational context of the process of education that contribute to the enhancement of the school's civic values. They are identified with the wealth of existing relationships in the school community. The power of these relationships is characterized by three attributes:

- the degree of mutual understanding of communication contexts,
- the degree of involvement in interactive exchanges,
- the degree of cooperation in solving common tasks.

In the process of extending social capital, the existing relational bonds are transformed and new ones are created, which have higher value of attributes, which leads to a competitive advantage of the school on the educational market (Juszczak-Rygałło, 2017, p. 58). The logic of social capital lies in the fact that although it is difficult to observe and to measure, it is still manageable. In the social sciences there are two basic dimensions emphasized with the reference to the organization such as school: rooting and autonomy. "Social capital researchers are more and more convinced that the ideal civic community should be based on the balance between these two dimensions of social organization" (Zarycki, 2008, p. 52). In the perspective of social capital, it is Putman's distinction between its two categories: bonding capital – rooting in the local community and bridging capital – autonomy for establishing contacts and co-operation in the group of previously unknown persons¹.

¹ Presented by Robert Putman division on two categories of social capital (bonding and bridging) corresponds with two types of culture, which are mentioned in the further part of this article, that have been suggested by Andrzej Mirski (relative – integral and creative – intellectual). It corresponds also to two types of cultural management, that results from two activities distinguished by Nan Lin: expressive and instrumental.

It is also possible to determine the main elements that, in management theory, are the basis for the growth of the social capital of the school (Krawczyk-Sokołowska, 2011, pp. 171–172):

- a defined and measurable goal of increase in the value of social capital
- motivation to achieve the goal by implementing necessary changes,
- a defined strategy for implementing changes in school social structures,
- integration of the strategy with the process of managing the effectiveness of education,
- management of changes in the attitudes of the school community.

These assumptions represent the organizational scenario of the humanistic management system, which is directed mainly at the school community and the relationships between its members. Under the influence of these activities, the image of social capital of the school is developed as a kind of organization with its culture. The internal mechanisms of such an organization “cause people to behave in a certain way, not fully aware of why this happens” (Mirski, 2012, p. 16). However, they work together to achieve a common goal.

Educational environment and social capital

Various communities have a different tendency to create groups and social bonds. The school environment is, however, unique in this respect. On the one hand, it is important to have a sense of school belonging, to participate in government section and other forms of school life, and to engage in non-school social organizations and civic engagement for the local community. These activities are a prerequisite for shaping the school social capital, which takes place under the influence of individual educational environment of each student. As a result of collecting their own insights and experiences, the students build a structured mental representation of their environment in the form of images stored in the memory with attributes of its features, relationships and evaluations (Bell, Greene, Fisher, Baum, 2004, pp. 99–129). Relations between the environment and a student are mutual and are a conjugate process in the sense that the environment, through the stimulus system, affects the learner by triggering adaptive processes. On the other hand, the student’s activity causes changes in the environment. The regulatory nature of activity is expressed in the form of individual actions undertaken by the student, which changes with the emergence of new needs and aspirations in an increasingly complex environment. In this process, a virtual environment becomes more and more important and it creates a new, dynamic and infinite space for multidimensional learning (educational cyberspace). Educational cyberspace is a kind of parallel environment, which constitute a new format for educational activities, eluding the description by

means of typical measures. In spite of this, it may become an increasingly attractive alternative to the existing methods of shaping the social capital of the school. The process of building a personal environment in cyberspace remains under individual control of the student, both in the formal school environment and in personal and informal environment at home. In this way a new cognitive sensitivity is formed. There are two stages of this process (Juszczuk-Rygałło, 2015a, p. 186):

- setting up own educational goals;
- achieving the goals of education by creating a personal environment in the process of:
 - managing own didactic resources;
 - managing the learning process;
 - communicating with other participants of the educational process (content sharing).

On this basis, it can be assumed that the factor of personal activity preferences will significantly influence the shape of the social capital of the school. There are alternatives to conventional and schematic forms of activity that are typical of the standardized public education system. As Manuel Castells (2007) writes, the new culture, the culture of virtual reality, has been shaped by cyberspace, in which digitized networks of multimodal communication covered all cultural expressions and personal experiences to such extent that they made virtual reality a fundamental dimension of our reality. The ability to participate actively in this new virtual reality becomes a necessary condition, though it is insufficient to provide increase of the social capital of the school. This cognitive activity can be derived from two sources: control of external sanctions against the individual and internal motivation of the individual. In cyberspace, it can be implemented in the form of an institutionally closed and static e-learning platform and in an alternative form of dynamic content sharing through the use of social web-based tools (Juszczuk-Rygałło, 2015b, pp. 61–69). Social activity of an individual results from planned and unconscious self-learning activities. As Don Tapscott (2009) points out, the attractiveness of the Internet is that it does not violate the standards accepted by the young generation: freedom, adaptability, attention, credibility, collaboration, entertainment, speed, innovation. At the same time, the Internet provides constant self-control and a sense of active participation in the process of self-education. In this process there is a significant individual reflection of the Web surfers as a source of purposeful activities in self-directed activity. Henry Jenkins (2007) calls this process a culture of participation, because in the era of digital communication technology, the recipients of messages have a dominant role in shaping the flow of content through which culture adapts to the changing world. In cyberspace the catalysts for these changes are the following: World Wide Web resources, email, asynchronous fo-

rums, synchronous chat and chat rooms, virtual games MUD, metaworlds, interactive tools for transferring images and sounds. This environment is known as the so-called affinity space – a place of activity in which relationships are less formal and more interactive so that they can revitalize the public sphere of school social capital. However, there often may occur difficulties in this process resulting from the existence of a specific social gap. Urszula Jarecka (2004, p. 270) describes this lack of social context as a community of shadows. Therefore, most social networking sites are equipped with socialization tools, which are web-based tools that enable participants to contribute to the creation of a website and group them into specific categories: age, education, interests, or profession.

Social networking is a great tool for creating educational cyberspace, but must be properly managed. First and foremost, there must be one basic condition: in the social network, the educational space must be optional and voluntary (Tapscott, 2010). And although attempts are being made to use social networking sites to shape the school's social capital (among other things, by building school fan-page), to make this form of activity effective it should not have a clear connection to formal education.

Social capital and cultural capital

Educational cyberspace is characterized by openness (everyone has access to the content and can process it freely), ease of use (fast action and interpersonal feedback) and architecture of participation (motivating and stimulating user involvement) (Jaskowska, Dudczak, 2007, p. 356). These are the conditions that shape the preferred representation system, that is the leading sensory system identified with the visual-media perception of the world. Audiovisual means and multimedia are now the main carrier of cultural transmission. Therefore, communication activity in the area of virtual reality is connected with the acquisition of competences in acquiring cultural resources that can be then converted into cultural capital. An important determinant of the level of cultural competence is knowledge from a particular field, which means one's education. Cultural capital is a resource that requires long-term accumulation – often many year of learning, sometimes even multi-generational assimilation of cultural norms. The value of cultural competence may also diminish as a result of the development and transformation of the social world, which results in appreciation of other forms of knowledge and patterns of culture. In a way, this phenomenon is under the influence of cyberspace, where globalization opens new horizons of cognition.

Primary socialization in the family is crucial and decisive for cultural capital resources and predispositions to its further development. "Subconscious tendencies, tastes, cultural preferences and values belonging to the key category of embodied cultural capital are formed in that period. Their change is extremely difficult, and often can only be achieved at superficial level of adaptation to cultural norms" (Zarycki, 2009, p. 15). In this situation, the school's socializing function is limited and only serves as a reinforcement. The learning of culture moves into self-education areas, which take place mostly in cyberspace, where the liberalization of capital flows in various forms, including cultural capital, is widespread. The release of cultural capital for self-education is visible in various forms of popularization of virtual culture. The Google Arts & Culture project is an example within this scope. Through its partnership with more than 1,200 international museums, art galleries and institutes from 70 countries, it shares their expositions in cyberspace and becomes the biggest and most widespread source of sharing knowledge about world culture.

Nowadays, it is common to believe that the strong determinants of cultural capital are the networks of social capital (Erickson, 1996, pp. 217–250). Cultural capital is presented as a result of conversion of social capital resources or as a tool to strengthen the basic attribute of social capital – social networks (Lizardo, 2006, pp. 778–807). Therefore, cultural capital resources are a good signal for having a social capital network. It is important that capital (cultural or social) does not create anything by itself. The activity of capital is revealed only in the process of their utilization by different means of mutual conversion. The mutual interactions between cultural and social capital are to varying degrees intensive and complex. The cultural capital of individuals facilitates development and strengthening of social capital, which in turn influences the development of culture. As characterized by Tomasz Zarycki (2009, p. 17), "the permeability and conversion between social and cultural capital can be very significant and the border between them very difficult to grasp". In this context, Andrzej Mirski (2012, p. 11) introduced two ways of understanding culture and, consequently, two types of culture, closely linked to the categories of social capital. The first is relational – integral culture and corresponding bonding capital, and the second is the creative – intellectual culture with corresponding bridging capital. This distinction between two types of culture is a consequence of two approaches to cultural management (Mirski, 2012, pp. 9–10,15), and complexity of these processes requires conscious and differentiated impact on them through effective management in the form suggested by Mirski.

Managing the culture of social capital of the school as an organization

Similarities in the definition of social capital and organization are important in our discussions. On this basis, the social capital of the school can be analyzed as an organization with its own culture. In Ricky W. Griffin's (2017) view, an organization is a group of people who work together in a structured and coordinated way to achieve a set of goals. It is a definition, the essence of which is the social system organized to achieve a common goal. Thus, the social capital is similar to the organization and has its own culture, too. The social capital of a school will be functioning well if its culture is effectively managed. The goals of cultural management were defined by Mirski (2012, p. 19), which in relation to the social capital of the school can be presented as follows:

- identifying the actual culture of social capital and comparing it with existing beliefs on the subject,
- determining its shape from the point of view of the student's well-being and the educational goals of the school,
- implementing the process of managing the growth of the social capital of the school.

The complexity of the above assumptions is that the social capital of a school as a whole is difficult to be observed, and even more to be measured because it is the feature of interpersonal relations in the education process, which is based on individual achievements. However, it is possible to manage its culture, which can be carried out in two ways (suitable for the category of social capital and types of culture). This is management through expressive activity and instrumental activity (Lin, 2002, p. 21)². In both cases, relationships are built based on trust and partnership. Expressive management (which refers to relational, integral culture) is related to the need to preserve and protect existing resources that unify a social group (e.g. school or class). It increases the cultural efficiency of group members by influencing their motivation, cooperation and activity. The relationships works better that exist between similar individuals (in terms of for example character, ideology, culture or even image). They are easier to manage because they are associated with emotional involvement. Such relational bonds are also called closed relationships. These are the structures of strong bonds that play a beneficial role in building reciprocity norms and defining sanctions for their enforcement. In the case of instrumental management (creative, intellectual), relationship development involves finding and acquiring new external resources (e.g. extracurricular). Here, in turn, there are greater benefits of relational bonds between individuals with different resources (e.g. in terms of culture), and even though in this way structures of weak bonds are

² See: also footnote no. 1.

often created, they are usually perceived as superior to the strong relations as far as acquiring new resources of culture capital is concerned (Granovetter, 1973, pp. 1360–1380). It is traditionally believed that strong relational bonds are more costly to maintain and may hinder adaptation to change, and thus may slow down the performance of specific tasks of the whole social group.

Management through activity formats the organizational culture of the school social capital as a system of meanings that are understandable to learners and collectively accepted, which allow for the repetition of both individual and collective attitudes and behaviors within and outside the school organization.

Conclusions

Cultural management is a conscious development of relational bonds in the student environment, both through expressive activity (relational culture, strong bonds) and instrumental activity (creative culture, weak bonds). In these actions it is crucial to develop an innovative organizational culture of the school community, which is adapted to current and future changes in the environment of the organization. This is the main goal of the strategic management of the school social capital as a whole. Attributes of the new organizational culture are as follows: orientation for the future, flexibility and ability to act proactively. Thus, the school's social capital becomes a carrier of values that generate beneficial changes in the prevailing cultural system of modern education.

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Zarządzanie kulturą jako element strategii rozwoju kapitału społecznego szkoły

Streszczenie

Obok różnych propozycji rozwiązania aktualnego problemu określanego jako kryzys edukacyjny, pojawiają się nowe koncepcje ekonomiczne i społeczne, związane z pojęciem kapitału społecznego. W artykule podjęto próbę analizy uwarunkowań formowania się kapitału społecznego w szkole oraz niektórych czynników wspierających jego rozwój. Szczególną uwagę przywiązuje się do zarządzania kulturowego, które jest postrzegane jako wyznacznik skutecznego kształtowania nieformalnych wartości i standardów etycznych wspólnych dla społeczności szkolnej. W konkluzji wskazuje się, że nadrzędną wartością takiego strategicznego zarządzania kapitałem społecznym jest budowanie relacji opartych na zaufaniu i partnerstwie. Tworzy to innowacyjną kulturę organizacyjną społeczności szkolnej. Jej charakterystyczne cechy to: orientacja na przyszłość, elastyczność i zdolność do proaktywnego działania. W ten sposób kapitał społeczny staje się nośnikiem wartości kulturowych, które powodują pozytywne zmiany w dominującym systemie kulturowym współczesnej edukacji.

Artykuł prezentuje następujące implikacje dla praktyki lub polityki edukacyjnej:

- Kreatorzy polityki edukacyjnej mogą zapoznać się z głównymi wymiarami organizacji społecznej szkoły, które w teorii zarządzania stanowią podstawę wzrostu kapitału społecznego szkoły.
- Administratorzy mogą podjąć działania polegające na wypracowaniu innowacyjnej kultury organizacyjnej społeczności szkolnej, dostosowanej do aktualnych i przyszłych zmian w otoczeniu szkoły jako organizacji.
- Edukatorzy mogą poprawić indywidualne środowisko edukacyjne każdego ucznia dzięki cyberprzestrzeni edukacyjnej, która obecnie staje się coraz atrakcyjniejszą alternatywą dla dotychczasowych metod kształtowania kapitału społecznego szkoły.
- Uczestnicy procesu kształcenia powinni razem brać udział w wypracowaniu innowacyjnych struktur więzi relacyjnych wspólnoty edukacyjnej za pośrednictwem zarządzania kulturowego, które formatuje kulturę organizacyjną kapitału społecznego szkoły, jako systemu rozumiałych dla uczniów i kolektywnie przez nich akceptowanych znaczeń.

Słowa kluczowe: edukacja, szkoła, kultura, zarządzanie, kapitał, polityka społeczna.