

**Measuring social
Capital
Towards a theoretically informed
Measurement framework for
Researching social capital in family
And community life
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<http://www.aifs.org.au/institute/pubs/RP24.pdf>

Elements:

1. Trust
2. Reciprocity

Social Capital consists of networks of social relations, which are characterized by norms of trust and reciprocity. It is the “the quality of social relationships between individuals that affect their capacity to address and resolve problems they face in common.”

Bourdieu, Putnam, and Coleman each understand social capital as a resource to collective action, the outcomes of which concern economic wellbeing, democracy at the nation state level, and the acquisition of human capital in the form of education, respectively.

Outcomes:

1. Norm of trust:
 - a. Culture – within a family group
 - b. Behavioral – family members trust one another to care for one another

Indicators:

Proximal – outcomes of social capital related to its core components of networks; e.g. Membership of formal associations and groups; display of confidence in others, as well as reciprocal acts or exchanges

Distal - outcomes not directly related to its key components; e.g. Life expectancy, health status; suicide rates; teenage pregnancy; crime rates; participation rates in tertiary education; employment and unemployment rates; family income; marital relationship formations and dissolutions; business confidence; job growth in GDP; and balance of trade.

Indicators of social capital are rarely supported by direct empirical investigation of the relationship between indicators and the core components of social capital.

Social capital is a multidimensional concept comprising social networks, norms of trust, and norms of reciprocity; second, understand social capital properly as a resource to action; and third, empirically distinguish between social capital and its outcomes.

Table 1. Core dimensions of social capital and their characteristics.

Structure of social relations: networks	Quality of social relations: norms
<p>Type: Informal ↔ formal</p> <p>Size/capacity: Limited ↔ extensive</p> <p>Spatial: Household ↔ global</p> <p>Structural: Open ↔ closed Dense ↔ sparse Homogenous ↔ heterogenous</p> <p>Relational: Vertical ↔ horizontal</p>	<p>Norm of trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –familiar/personal –generalised • Civic/Institutional trust <p>Norm of reciprocity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-kind v in lieu • Direct v indirect • Immediate v delayed

Source: *Families, Social Capital and Citizenship* project, Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2000.

Structure of social relations networks:

Network types:

Informal ties – family, kin, friends and neighbors

Formal ties – voluntary associations and the like; aspects of life described as civic/ formally constituted groups, non-group based activities.

Table 2. Types of Informal and formal networks¹².

Informal networks	Formal networks of social relations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family household • Family beyond the household • Friends/intimates • Neighbours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-group based civic relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - good deeds - individual community or political action • Associations/group based relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - antenatal - child care - education - sport/leisure - music/arts - church - charity - voluntary - self help • Work based <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - colleagues - associations • Institutional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - state

Source: *Families, Social Capital and Citizenship* project, Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2000.

Norms of Reciprocity:

Reciprocity – process of exchange within a social relationship whereby ‘goods and services’ given by one party are repaid to that party by the party who received the original ‘goods and services.’

1. Culture of reciprocity – values, ‘reciprocity and cooperation’ found in a local community than the value of an individual or family within that community
2. Behavior – reciprocal exchange among relations: two way flow... How often do you borrow things and exchange favors with your neighbors? (Often to never)
3. Benefits of network participation – sense of obligation to reciprocate or a motivation to act for the common good.

Social Capital: Challenges for its Measurement at International Level

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Workshop: Social Capital and Economic Development

Anniversary Conference on 'Sustainable Ties in the Information Society', 26-28 March 2003

“The most valuable part of all capital is that invested in human beings.” (Marshall, 1961[1890], v. 1:564).

<http://spitswww.uvt.nl/web/fsw/lustrum/papers/healy.pdf>

survey used and discussed

Key measurement issues and challenges:

The measurement of social capital may be approached at a number of levels:

- Standardised questions on trust, civic engagement, social support networks, etc, in large-scale household surveys;
- Surveys of observed or reported human behaviour such as in Time-Use surveys;
- Specific and contextual questions on relationships, attitudes and behaviour in community or organisational-specific surveys – neighbourhood, enterprise or school;
- Case-study, qualitative or action-based research which seeks to explore the meaning and interpretation of social interaction in a particular situation or context, possibly in combination of quantitative measures;
- Randomised social experiments which seek to combine measurement with active policy intervention and “laboratory-simulated” conditions.

Going beyond simple indicators

In developing survey questions on social capital a number of key analytical differentiations and considerations are important. These include:

- Levels of social capital in the population over time;
- Distribution of social capital by age, gender, educational attainment, social class and ethnic group;
- Various types of social connection (bonding, bridging and linking) and their differential impacts;
- Differential impacts of community-level and individual-level access to social capital; and
- Keeping a balance between organisational/network structure, group behaviour and shared attitudes/values.

**Citizenship, Involvement, Democracy network:

Key elements of the CID common core questionnaire include:

- Extent of active participation in various organisations and associations including voluntary donations of time and money;
- Estimates of the amount of time spent in active associational membership as well as informal social activity not connected to organisations or societies;
- Level of perceived attachment to neighbourhood, region and country;
- Sense of attachment to members of “other groups” (different social class, language, ethnicity, religion etc);
- Extent of active interest in political affairs, engagement in civic and political activity in support of particular causes;
- Extent of informal contacts, mutual help and social support both arising from organisational membership as well as beyond;
- Levels of tolerance and inclusion with respect to members of “other groups”;
- Trust (modelled on the WVS question);
- Trust in relation to governmental, law enforcement and other public agencies;
- Extent of TV watching;
- Use of internet to obtain information about politics and current affairs;
- Attitudes, values and perceptions regarding “good citizenship”;
- Attitudes, values and perceptions with regards to the “ideal society” within which one would ideally like to live in; and
- Perception of political efficacy or ability to change quality of public service (e.g. education, health) and evaluation of various strategies to bring about change.

Measuring Social Capital: Towards a standardised approach

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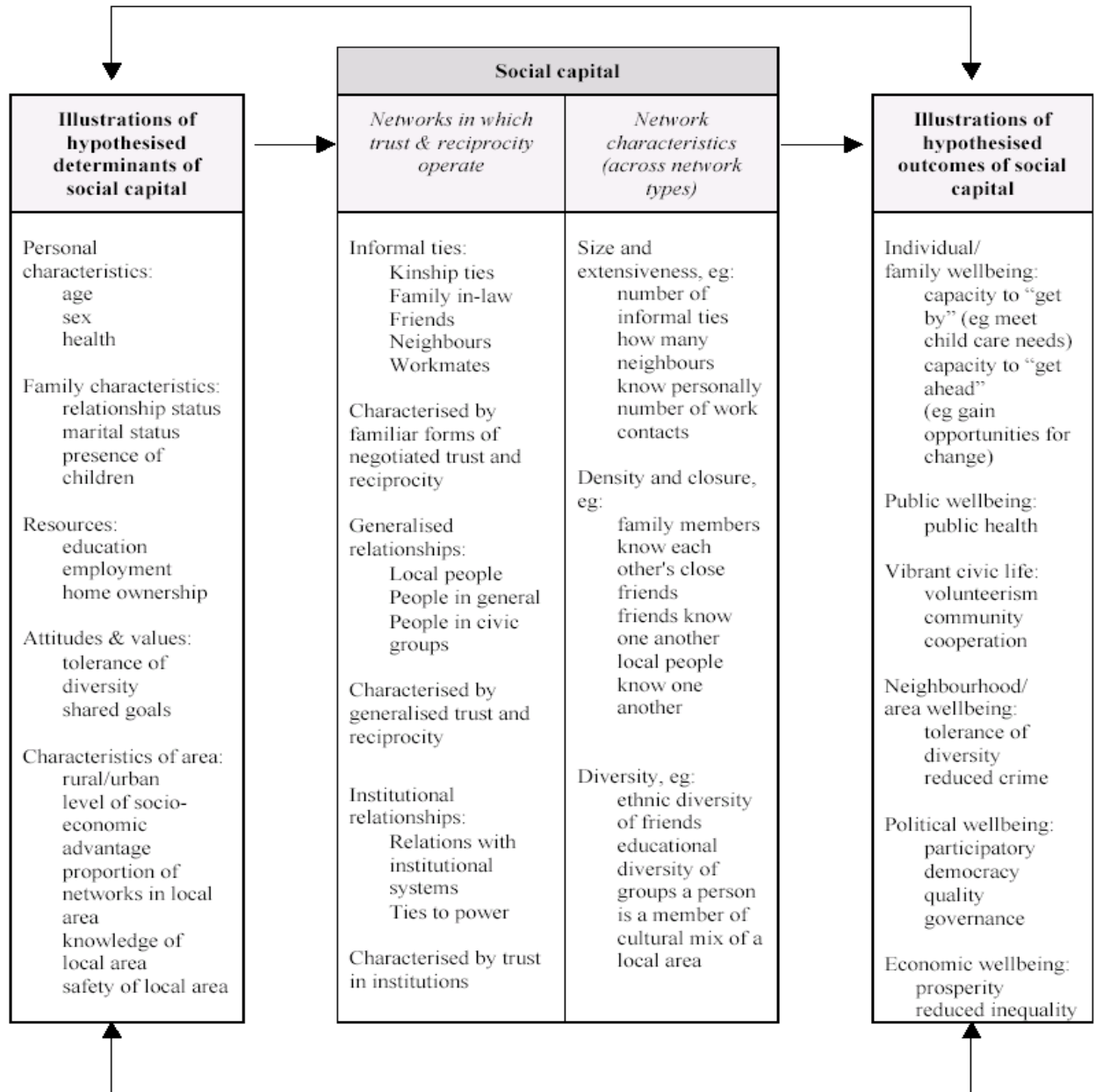
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<http://www.aes.asn.au/conference/hughes.pdf>

Figure 1. Summary of core measures of social capital, and illustrative examples of its determinants and outcomes



Source: Stone and Hughes 2002.

