"It's not what you know, it's who you know"?

Social capital in transition(s) to 'early adulthood' – A longitudinal study

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Context: Epiteen Project

Longitudinal study**: cohort** born in **1990** (Oporto, ISPUP, UP)

Waves: (surveys & medical exams)

13yo (2003/4) – n=2160

17yo (2007/8) – n=2512

21yo (2011/13) – n= 1761

24yo (2014/15) – ongoing

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Social Capital

- **Resources** that are potentially available in our **social ties** and can be mobilized for different needs (Bourdieu, 1980; Lin, 2001).

- **Dimensions:** bonding
  bridging

  Affects young people **differently**, depending on social class or ethnicity (McDonald et al., 2005; Holland, 2007; Reynolds, 2007)

Research Questions

1. Which **socio-demographics** are associated with perceived **bonding** and **bridging?**

2. Does **social capital** change in **transition** to **early adulthood**?

3. How do young people **describe** and **perceive** their social capital?

Methods

Epiteen project: 17 (n=2512) & 21 years old (n = 1761)

Mixed-methods approach:

- Survey data: Wave 2 & 3, **n = 1650**, 52% F (analyzed with LCM, Wilcoxon tests, logistic & ordinal regression)
- Semi-structured interviews: Wave 4, n = 70 (analyzed with thematic analysis)

Measures

Bonding = emotional + financial support from close ties (informal networks).

Bridging = emotional + financial support from weak ties (formal networks).

Latent Class Modeling

	Bonding 17			Bonding 21			Bridging 17		Bridging 21	
	Class 1 Medium	Class 2 Low	Class 3 High	Class 1 Medium	Class 2 High	Class 3 Low	Class 1 Low	Class 2 High	Class 1 Low	Class 2 High
Class Size	0.6148	0.213	0.1723	0.7095	0.2449	0.0457	0.9027	0.0973	0.7474	0.2526
Economic Support										
Never	0.4684	**0.9867**	0.0073	0.3007	0.0033	0.8928	**0.997**	0.2991	**0.9979**	0.5463
Rarely	**0.1724**	0.0126	0.0223	**0.2035**	0.016	0.0871	0.0016	**0.3369**	0.0021	**0.2309**
Sometimes	0.2833	0.0007	**0.3021**	**0.2978**	0.1693	0.0184	0.0013	**0.2882**	0	0.1612
Often	0.0758	0	**0.6683**	0.198	**0.8114**	0.0018	0.0001	0.0758	0	0.0616
Emotional Support										
Never	0.0522	**0.6833**	0.0001	0.006	0	0.6366	0.9929	0.4956	0.9995	0.8142
Rarely	0.1535	**0.2296**	0.0028	0.1131	0.0004	0.3248	0.0068	0.2931	0.0005	0.1123
Sometimes	**0.474**	0.0809	0.1067	**0.4884**	0.0438	0.0378	0.0001	0.1747	0	0.0545
Often	0.3203	0.0062	**0.8904**	0.3925	**0.9558**	0.0008	0.0002	**0.0366**	0	**0.019**

Note: The entries in bold refer to the categories that best characterise each class

$$\pi_{i_1 i_2 \ldots i_P} = \sum_{s=1} \pi_X(s)\, \pi_{Y_1|X=s}(i_1)\, \pi_{Y_2|X=s}(i_2) \cdots \pi_{Y_P|X=s}(i_P)$$

Predictors of Bonding

- **At 17**: **Gender** (M) **>** high bonding ($p < 0.05$)

  Parental education (M & F) **>** high bonding ($p < 0.05$)

- **At 21**: **Gender** (F) **>** high bonding ($p < 0.01$)

  Education > high bonding ($p \leq 0.001$)

  Parental education (M & F) **>** high bonding ($p < 0.01$)

Predictors of Bridging at 17 & 21

Bridging (17)*	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Occupation mother - inactive	.936	.385	5.921	1	.015	2.550
Lived with both parents at 13	.906	.421	4.624	1	.032	2.474
Constant	-2.983	.239	155.616	1	.000	.051
Bridging (21)**	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Gender	-.620	.119	27.079	1	.000	.538
Mother's schooling (number of years)	-.080	.013	37.780	1	.000	.923
Constant	2.092	.459	20.816	1	.000	8.101

* $X^2(2)$= 10.367, p = 0.006; x^2_{HL} (1) = 0.004, p = 0.948; R^2_N = 53%, R^2_{CS} = 21%; model classified correctly 93% of cases.

** $X^2(2)$= 61.209, p ≤ 0.001; x^2_{HL} (8) = 11.017, p = 0.201; R^2_N = 66%, R^2_{CS} = 49%; model classified correctly 60% of cases.

Changes in transition(s)

- **Change (>)** in **levels of bonding** in transition to adulthood: Z = -12.962, $p ≤$ 0.001.

- **Change (>)** in **levels of bridging:** Z = -21. 944, $p ≤$ 0.001

Voices of Young People: Close ties

- **Family-based social capital** in life trajectories:

"*My parents really support me*" (Filipa, 24)

"*I would have taken a different direction, but as I had this pressure to help out my father I ended up having to get a job...*" (Julia, 24)

- **Friends**:

"*largely due to them...they helped me to integrate...these people helped me to overcome barriers*" (Paulo, 24)

Voices of Young People: Weak ties

- Other '**significant adults**' (non-kin)

"*I had a teacher who ended up helping me a lot, through her I discovered a professional field*" (Alice, 24)

- **Institutional**

"*I always had one or two organizations, who had a lot of influence on my life decisions*"(Julia, 24)

Conclusion

- Significance of **education, gender,** & **parental education** for social capital: **cumulative social advantage** (Merton 1968; Rossiter 1993; Lin & Erickson 2008).

- Form of **social resilience** (dif. types of social capital): case of bridging.

- **Importance of parents** in transitions, but its **ambivalent role** as parental bonding facilitates and constrains.

Final remarks

- **Changes** in **transition** to early adulthood: does social capital increase over time or are participants more aware of it at 21?

- "Networks of individualized social capital" (Raffo & Reeves, 2000) – not easy to isolate networks, since young people present a **mix of weak, strong, changing,** and **fluid** social capital.

Thank you!

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