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Review of Social Inclusion, Social Cohesion and Social Capital in Modern Organization

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Abstract- The issues of social capital, social cohesion, and social inclusion are increasingly gaining interest in economics, sociology, and politics, mostly in regards to addressing poverty and designing related policies. In this paper, we explain how social inclusion, cohesion and capital differ from each other and different factors that can affect group cohesion as well as benefits. It outlined the understanding of differences between these concepts and how they fit together in individual decision making processes in every organization. In carrying out this study, we had relied upon the use of secondary sources such as journals and other publications. The study found that social inclusion and group cohesion are crucial for the success of any enterprise and concluded that social capital has various social policy functions that relate to bridging, bonding or linking relationships and thus play a critical role in the survival of modern organizations.

Keywords: *social inclusion, social cohesion and social capital.*

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Review of Social Inclusion, Social Cohesion and Social Capital in Modern Organization

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Abstract- The issues of social capital, social cohesion, and social inclusion are increasingly gaining interest in economics, sociology, and politics, mostly in regards to addressing poverty and designing related policies. In this paper, we explain how social inclusion, cohesion and capital differ from each other and different factors that can affect group cohesion as well as benefits. It outlined the understanding of differences between these concepts and how they fit together in individual decision making processes in every organization. In carrying out this study, we had relied upon the use of secondary sources such as journals and other publications. The study found that social inclusion and group cohesion are crucial for the success of any enterprise and concluded that social capital has various social policy functions that relate to bridging, bonding or linking relationships and thus play a critical role in the survival of modern organizations.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of studying the concepts of social inclusion, social cohesion, and social capital in modern organizations in this research is to examine their theoretical applicability. It had for long been held by most researchers that every organization must focus on productivity and factors empowerment in determining growth and development, which will increase individual recognition that will contribute to their economic growth. Furthermore, recent research had confirmed that working together in a team is a smarter way of enhancing organizational performance and productivity. Introducing the main character in Ellison's classic novel as cited by Oxoby (2009), is a good example of the excluded individual, gifted and talented which he found the door closed to public institution society. This character represents the poor in modern society where he has been excluded from participating in social and economic activity, which leads to decreases economic policies. While not necessarily the opposite of exclusion, economic, and social inclusion (generally characterized as a situation in which individuals are integrated into the economic, social, and political framework of society) are increasingly viewed as

essential in developing successful growth strategies, fighting poverty, and increasing the well-being of all in an economy.

This paper aims to review the concepts of social inclusion, social cohesion, and social capital in modern organizations as many researchers have turned their attention towards issues such as social capital and social cohesion, trust and trustworthiness, and reciprocal altruism in understanding organizational and national economic performance. Therefore, the paper proceeds with a brief discussion of the chosen keywords and a conclusion is provided to summarize the idea of the whole paper.

II. SOCIAL INCLUSION

Social inclusion is based on briefs of belonging, acceptance and recognition and entails the realization of full and equal participation in economic, social, cultural and political institutions. It is where everyone being recognizing and valuing diversity; it is about engendering feelings of belonging by increasing social equality and the participation of diverse and disadvantaged populations (Jones, Miller, Pickernell & Packham, 2011). Issues of diversity and social inclusion have an impact on how programs and services are delivered to meet a wide range of client needs. As a result, the concepts of diversity and social inclusion have become critical to the evaluation of programs for governmental and community organizations. Giving all the citizens the right to participate in deciding their present and future is hugely complex and its success depends on the availability of significant resources that are necessary to give cohesion to what naturally may drift in the conflicting directions of self-organization and fragmentation (Bula & Espejo, 2012). This complexity needs practical clarifications where citizens can contribute differently to the creation, regulation and production of social meaning. Social inclusion is the process of improving the dignity, ability and opportunity regardless the basis of the identity to take part in society. Jaghoub (2009) argues that the goal of using information technologies with "marginalized groups" is not to remove the digital divide but rather to further the process of social inclusion. There is no cognitive divide between those who are technologically literate and

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those that are not as such literacy has different gradations and types. In fact, most people are more interested in engaging themselves in new social practices than in acquiring a specific cognitive skill.

As outlined by Wong, Fearon and Philip (2007), social inclusion can be promoted through the development of e-Governance for national good as this can promote concepts such as e-Democracy and e-Community through stakeholder participation and partnership. This will increase the economic well-being of both profit oriented and non-profit oriented organizations. Organizations can encourage social inclusion only through participation in organizational development training programs where the employers and their employees need to participate synchronously (Jones et al, 2011).

III. SOCIAL COHESION

The idea that a society has a certain level of cohesion is an old one that had been approached and understood from a variety of disciplinary traditions. This brings a lot of confusion about what cohesion (Sage, 2013). According to numerous interpretations, social cohesion relates to the social relationships, their importance, proximity and strength in society and how these are embedded between individuals, groups and place.

However, academics have tended to divide these relationships into different dimensions (Berman & Phillips, 2004; Chan et al., 2007; Oxoby, 2009). According to them, the first dimension is civic norms and values which refer to the trust and support of people for civic and democratic institutions. The second is the "social order and solidarity" this is when there a lack of class conflict and high levels of trust across the society. The third is the "sense of identity" which involves people's attachment to a place, symbolic bond to people, past experiences, ideas and culture. However critics argued that to explore social cohesion deeply, one have to consider both the macro and micro-levels of social relationships. This would be analytically problematic as the above dimension solely focused on the broad, macro-level. For example, Berman and Phillips (2004) have argued that a failure to measure the micro-level of social behavior could limit the conceptual validity of social cohesion. Chan et al. (2007) subsequently argued that the theory of social capital was based upon on the valid definition of social cohesion, which according to Smith and Polanyi (2008) relate to connections among individuals- social networks and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. Thus, social capital - compared to more traditional notions of social cohesion - is concerned with individual actions and behavior. By putting together the above three dimensions of social capital - the civic participation, associational activity and

social networks - into the definition of social cohesion, it becomes possible to capture the quality and cohesiveness of social relationships at different levels of the society.

However, Social cohesion has been an enduring subject of inquiry and review for both sociologists and psychologists. Groups are cohesive when they possess group-level structural conditions that produce positive membership attitudes and behaviors and when group members in their interpersonal interactions maintain these group level structural conditions. Social cohesion can affect the academic achievement of a vulnerable student whose commitments to schooling is weak and is further compromised by schools with weak social cohesion. Although the definition of social cohesion is difficult to combine or reconcile, it can be defined as the bonds or glue that maintain stability in the society. According to Verhoeven (2008), the possible connections between communications management and social cohesion, social integration and diversity can be explored only by looking at the concept of social capital. Social cohesion consists of reciprocity based on general standards and trust which is the social glue that can either be good or evil (Stovring, 2012).

a) *Benefits of cohesion*

Group cohesion is crucial in any organization to succeed as it motivates people to work towards the target goals. Daniel (2011) identifies some of the following benefits of cohesion in any organization. In this respect, Rogers (2007) suggests that the cohesion existing in the group determine the extent to which individuals feel that they can suggest new ideas without fear of censure from their colleague. In the same line (Muñoz & Nieto, 2012) consider that the interaction that arise in work group significantly affect the effort that members exert when carrying out their tasks, and serve as a mechanism for increasing the pool of knowledge and skills available in the group, there by facilitating the generation of new knowledge and ideas from member. The benefits of cohesion are as follows:

i. *Promotes adherence*

Recent research had found that most employees adhere to rules and regulations in organisations where there is social cohesion than in organizations where there is no such cohesion.

ii. *Fosters cooperation*

Social cohesion in most cases had led to greater cooperation among employees and this had ultimately led to improved performance, increased productivity and organizational profit.

iii. *Encourages better performance*

Following from the above, group cohesion had inevitably led to synergy which flows from individuals

cooperating for the achievement of a common organizational goal. This had in most cases led to better performance individually and collectively.

iv. *Improves communication*

Social cohesion engenders improved communication in a group. When group members that are working together are encouraged to freely express their opinions, there will be improvements in their communication flow.

b) *Factors influencing group cohesion*

As it is posited online by Luttu (2010, 08:15) identifies the following factors as those that influence the level of group cohesion. According to him, a cohesive group is one in which all members act toward the achievement of an agreed goal and everyone assumes a position of responsibility with respect to this.

i. *Status of the group*

The status of the group plays a very important role in influencing the level of its cohesion. Thus, a newly formed group will only be loosely cohesive in comparison with another group that had been in existence for a long time and the members had together weathered the storming stage.

ii. *Communication*

Proximity can also play a very important role in the level of group cohesion. Cohesion among members are working in close proximity are usually tight as they are able to resolve issues easily among themselves than among those scattered in far-flung distances.

iii. *Location of the group*

The location of a group can have a serious effect on the level of its cohesiveness. Thus, a group located in a free society where members can express themselves freely could easily attain high level of cohesiveness than a group located in an area where opinions cannot be expressed easily.

iv. *Leadership style*

The leadership of a group is one of the major determinants of the level of cohesiveness in any group. In a situation where the leadership of a group is democratic, for instance, the level of cohesiveness will be very high in comparison to another group where the leadership is autocratic.

v. *Management behaviour*

The management behaviour has a direct bearing on the level of cohesiveness in a group because the never ending task of management is to make sure that all employees (that is, group members) are keeping to target and deadlines. Thus, the managers must see that there is high level of cohesion among individuals and groups to ensure that they are on target. Failure to do this by the management could be disastrous for an

organization as the goals of the organization might not be achieved.

vi. *Socio-economic security*

The socio-economic security of group members could be indicative of the level of their cohesiveness because when group members are not socially or economically secure the level of individual member's loyalty to the group might be very low in comparison to groups where members are well off.

IV. THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Bueno, Salmador and Rodríguez (2007) defined social capital as a sum of current and potential resources incorporated in, available in, and derived from the network of relations possessed by an individual or social unit. Social capital is basically the sum total of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationship of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) cited by Sherif, Munasinghe and Sharma (2012). Bridging social capital refers to calculative upward social interaction with diverse industry, political, bureaucratic and cultural elites (Johnson, 2007; Putnam, 2000; Stalker, 2008; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). This relation enhances the acquisition of novel intellectual resources that facilitate career mobility, status attainment, and managerial performance (Brown and Konrad, (2001); Burt et al., (2000); Pappas and Wooldridge, (2007) cited by Lee & Tuselmann (2013). Ihlen (2007) stated that social capital is at the heart of public relations as cited by Verhoeven (2008). Modern organizations use social cohesion and integration as link between communications management and public relations. According to Grabner-Krauter (2009) and Cope et al. (2007) the concept of social capital is widely used in social sciences and can be viewed as an umbrella theory that brings together many related concepts which are: social interaction, trust, and share values which cover the multitude of relationships as cited by Carlos and Pinho (2013).

Parra-Requena, Ruiz-Ortega and Garcí'a-Villaverde (2012) argue that the network of relationships of social capital provide an avenue to the agents whereby individuals, firms or communities can explore and obtain benefits from resources placed in these relationships. In their view, social capital is an aspect of social life, network, norms and trust that allow the participants to act together more effectively in order to pursue shared objectives. In other words, it refers to the social connection and the attendant norms and trust.

a) *Bonding social capital and bridging social capital*

Bonding social capital refers to the intra-community ties that members can depend on in situations of need. Such ties can be sources of valuable

services, ranging from house mending to job referrals and emergency cash assistance. As cited by Wallis, Killerby, and Dollery (2007), Kozel and Parker (2000) found that a social group provides essential bonding and bridging social capital in the form of protection, risk management and solidarity functions, especially in the case of poor communities in rural areas.

V. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SOCIAL COHESION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

Although these two concepts look similar to each other, there are some important differences between them. Social cohesion refers to the extent of connectedness and solidarity among groups in a society. Jackson, Reino, and Motsmees (2012) outline that Social cohesion has two main broader-intertwined features of society:

- i. The absence of latent social conflict – essentially all group members are expected to adopt a positive attitude towards each other thus eliminating the possibility of any latent social conflict.
- ii. The existence of strong social bonds – good faith is required if the group is to meet the challenges posed by its ambivalence about success. Thus, in most cases, the existence of good faith among group members, usually lead to strong social bonds as they could trust each other.

VI. DISCUSSIONS

Before we begin it is considerable to define the concept of inclusion, cohesion, and capital. The concept of inclusion has been used as a user-friendly term addressing the manner in which individuals can access resources and institutions to their benefit, although the significant definition has been a problem to define this concept. Arrow (2007), suggest that these terms had been abandoned and that research focus be shifted to studying specific social interactions. Social inclusion is now being promoted only in the use of ICTs as it increases the participation of individual stakeholders and partnership.

In terms of economics research, while the literature has explored issues of social capital (Glaeser et al., 2002) and social cohesion (Gradstein & Justman, 2002), there is far less economics research on the issues of inclusion and exclusion. Indeed, this relative paucity of research on inclusion and exclusion is largely due to the lack of clear definitions for these concepts. As discussed by Atkinson (1998), the term social exclusion “seems to have gained currency in part as it has no clear definition which means all things to all people.” That said, there does exist (broadly speaking) a general consensus on the meaning of social and economic inclusion/exclusion.

Szreter and Woolcock (2004) had attempted to provide an insight into these terms by explaining that while bridging social capital depends on a minimum degree of understanding among the participants in a network, bridging social cohesion is the relationship that spans people and groups of inherent social and economic differences and requires solidarity and cooperation than the more in intimate relationship that are found in the bonding group of family and friends. To them, exclusion is associated with social stigmatization, blame and isolation, which can translate into low self-esteem, a feeling of not belonging and not having been given a chance to be included in society (Curse, Raab, Han & Loenen, 2012).

While poverty may be a result of exclusion, exclusion is not only simply mean poverty. For example, exclusion can lead to the abandonment of mainstream norms (Haddadeh & Weerakkody, 2011) and the development of separate subcultures, similarly, exclusion (while potentially leading to non-participation in the labour market; may also manifest itself in withdrawal from social and political life. Thus, the effects and manifestation of exclusion may be highly nuanced. Under the rubric of inclusion, discussions focus on access to (and relative success with) economic, social, and political institutions.

Overall, it is vital for organizations to hire employees with similar educational backgrounds and skills level as group members as they are more likely to feel comfortable among themselves. In this kind of support of social support group, members come together to motivate each other as well as coordinate their gains. Working in a cohesive group also means working with a team which implies that there is a realistic give and take among them; with each member trying to balance his/her needs and wants with those of the other group members.

VII. CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, social inclusion is the process of opportunity enhancement for building or re-establishing social bonds by facilitating the access of all citizens to social activities, income, public institutions, social protection and programs and services for assistance and care. In term of academic contribution to corporate social responsibility, social inclusion should be used to identify the collective responsibility of stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs. This increases the economic well-being of all firms and is therefore regarded as fundamental to the development of a nation's status and other societal concepts such as democracy. For this reason, it had been found useful for organizations to hire employees with the same educational levels in order for them to cooperate well with each other. Group cohesion at workplace is vital for the success of any business as it promotes personal responsibility. Social cohesion refers

to the process of social solidarity that is based on shared values, common norms and common bonds within a national population or community. Social capital is now widely regarded as a resource that can be derived from social relations and harnessed for building durable social cohesion. Besides, it also promotes social inclusion and the empowerment of local communities.

Social capital has a various social policy functions that relate to bridging, bonding or linking relationship. It is a flow of individual investments. Groups are cohesive when they possess group level structural conditions that produce positive membership attitudes and behaviors and when group members' interpersonal interactions maintain these group level structural conditions. Social capital is an individual's sacrifices in terms of time, effort, and consumption that were made in an effort to promote cooperation with others. Exclusion is, as a rule, associated with social stigmatization, blame and isolation, which translates to low self-esteem, a feeling of not belonging and not having been given a chance to be included in the society. Exclusion as a social process is the denial of access to opportunities and other social rights to an individual. Finally, social inclusion and group cohesion are crucial for the success of an enterprise while social capital has a various social policy functions that relate to bridging, bonding or linking relationships and thus play a critical role in the long-term survival modern organizations.

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