


## FUTURE PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIAL CAPITAL RESEARCH AND SOCIAL INNOVATION: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to carry out a Systematic Literature Review (RSL) on the themes of Social Capital (CS) and Social Innovation (SI) in to identify and reflect on existing research gaps. The Scopus database was used, covering the period 2014 to 2021, totaling 10,739 publications. After screening the abstracts, objectives, titles, keywords, and words related to the subject, 16 articles were selected for qualitative analysis. It was observed that there is ample space for research on social capital and social innovation, enabling studies in various environments. Particularly, in the perspectives of social innovation that emerge from difficulties related to the environment, social and economic, in addition to offering opportunities for research that uses triangulation of methods. These methods can capture

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how elements of social capital promote social innovation in different contexts, using diverse research instruments and techniques. It is concluded that there is a universe of research possibilities involving social capital and social innovation, with several approaches to be explored. Therefore, our review not only contributes to the academic understanding of the topic, but also has the potential to impact practices and policies in various spheres of society, promoting a more effective use of social capital to drive social innovation.

**Keywords:** Social Capital. Social Innovation. Systematic Review of the Literature. Scopus.

## INTRODUCTION

The relationship between Social Capital (CS) and Social Innovation (SI) has been widely discussed in the academic literature. However, there is still an evident and significant gap with regard to the critical synthesis of these researches. Certainly, it is necessary and urgent to carry out studies that enable a real view of the contemporary panorama on the aforementioned themes to assist with robust knowledge of possible public policies and decision-making regarding governance practices and territorial development.

Although several individual studies have highlighted the importance of trust and cooperation networks in helping the implementation of social innovation, the lack of systematic reviews. This gap prevents the formulation of evidence-based guidelines that could guide effective practices and policies, which can limit the potential for sustainable development and social inclusion. However, the understanding of the process of connection between the respective constructs contributes to the perception of the dynamics of social capital x social innovation.

This systematic review aims to fill this gap, consolidating the "findings" of existing research and providing a comprehensive and critical analysis. The main findings indicate that social capital plays a crucial role in promoting social innovation, but there is significant variability in the measurements and applications of this concept in different contexts, a fact that may possibly influence the results.

From this perspective, Social Capital (CS) is a "soft capital" and is based on the assumption of the accumulated in social relations, used by individuals or organizations to achieve specific objectives (Hua; Dong; Goodman, 2021). The respective authors state that the existence of this construct is not a "recent find", considering that its existence dates back more than a century. However, it was only from the 1990s onwards that it gained visibility through the studies of Putman (1998). It is observed that, undeniably, the uniqueness of social capital lies in its potential as a significant contribution to society, with emphasis on the positive impacts on improving the quality of life of society.

However, this complex and challenging concept combines the neglected "social" with the omnipotent "capital", and highlights a challenging perspective, highlighting that non-monetary forms and relations can be important sources of power and influence. Therefore, it goes on to demonstrate the contrast of the traditional view in which power is the exclusive influence of economic resources (Pattussi *et al.*, 2006).

On the other hand, social innovation is based on the protagonism and mobilization of the social actors involved in the specificities of each arena, addressing economic and social challenges not met by the State and the market (D'amario, 2018). In this scenario, social innovation gained notoriety and expanded its investigations through various disciplines, such as sociology, political science, administration, economics, and public administration (Magalhães; Andion; Alperstedt, 2020).

Researchers Tonial *et al.* (2017, p. 2) emphasize that social innovation "is an alternative to create new and more effective responses to the challenges currently faced by the world", developing in all sectors (public, non-profit and private) from collaborative initiatives between different sectors, involving stakeholders and beneficiaries.

In the globalized context with constant changes and transformations, reality has shown that teamwork overcomes catastrophic situations, and proves the strength and the various transformative faces made possible by the relationships of individuals. Therefore, the role of social capital, that is, the value arising from the connections between individuals, is incalculable in view of the possibilities of transformations that they provide to social actors, with reflections on culture, economy and environment.

Thus, the objective of the study was to carry out a systematic review of the literature on social capital and social innovation to identify, stress and reflect, in a critical way, on research gaps. To achieve the proposed objective, a process composed of nine steps was used to carry out the RSL in the *Scopus* database, in the period from 2014 to 2021.

This study is justified for academic reasons, as it advances in the discussion of an approach that is already consolidated and another that is still emerging, through a qualitative analysis of international scientific production, thus contributing to the advancement of science.

In addition, while some studies demonstrate a positive correlation between social capital and social innovation, indicating that communities with strong social ties tend to be more innovative and resilient, others point to the need for public policies that strengthen these networks to achieve lasting impact. Thus, our findings complement and expand on the existing literature, by providing a comprehensive and critical overview of the available evidence, highlighting the need for more integrated and contextually sensitive approaches to maximize the benefits of social capital in promoting social innovation.

This study has the following structural design: introduction, theoretical framework, methodology, results and discussions, final considerations, references.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This framework underlies the central concepts of the study: CS and SI. Both are explored from the theoretical contributions of renowned authors, highlighting their perspectives and relevance for the development of related practices and studies.

### **CAPITAL SOCIAL**

The concept of SC was consolidated and developed with sociologists Pierre Bourdieu (1980; 1986), James Coleman (1988; 1990) and Putnam (2000). The SC is analyzed from the perspective of economic and social development, emphasizing a direct connection with interpersonal relationships and collective actions that, in cooperation, converge to the development of the collectivity. It is observed in communities, where relationship networks are established as premises of trust and civic values existing in social groups (Melo et al. 2015).

Social Capital is the ability to prioritize trust in society, in its entirety or in part (Fukuyama, 1996). This concept is analogous to that addressed by Putnam (2002), when he states that trust operationalizes and protects social relations. The different approaches to SC revolve around its nature and the object of study (Serageldin; Grootaert, 2000). It is a continuous series of exchanges in which recognition is always affirmed and ratified, providing gains proportional to the size of capital (Bourdieu, 1980).

The progressive way in which CS has become a predominant term in the social sciences and political sciences, as well as a resource in social struggles, in the form of power and, as a product constituted by the action of individuals in their networks (Bourdieu, 1986; Portes, 1998). Thus, the SC is typified by issues related to the structural, relational and cognitive dimensions, components of the links of social interactions (Nahapiet; Ghoshal, 1998).

According to Baquero (2015), the higher the level of the trust variable in relationship networks, the greater the contribution to the composition of social capital. In this context, the SC would be related to mutual help between individuals in social networks, and can be mobilized to benefit the citizen or the social class in search of the common good. In conclusion, according to Baquero (2015), where there is a significant degree of trust, there is also greater cooperation and reciprocity between the subjects.

## SOCIAL INNOVATION

The concept of SI is old and its theoretical discussion is fragmented into several areas of knowledge, as well as its various contributions, which gives it an interdisciplinary characteristic (Bataglin, 2017). According to this author, SI is a term widely applied today, especially by Western political administrations, which have allowed the social dimension of innovation to become a broad and approved idea. This has raised the expectations of communities, especially the most needy, in relation to the social performance of governments. Furthermore, public policies are Bataglin guidelines and guiding principles for the action of the public power that reveal one of the forms of the social dimension of innovation and that, theoretically, are characterized as SI, whose procedures aim to respond to the demands, especially of the marginalized and vulnerable sectors of society. These are government actions aimed at solving certain public needs (Cohen; Franco, 2016).

SI's basic purpose is to create solutions that meet social needs and generate value for society in general, without specific benefits to private interests (Bataglin; 2017). In the face of the bankruptcy of the welfare state and the conventional capitalist market, SI emerges as a necessary argument to face the growing social, environmental, and demographic challenges (D'amario, 2018). This concept is related to a new way of doing things, aiming to meet human needs and represents the rupture of old paradigms, providing a new look to solve chronic adversities of the current management of modern States (Franzoni, 2019).

For Correia (2015), SI initiatives are sensitized by the human condition, by the need for social inclusion, with the lack of social gains, by the desire for social transformation and by the mobilization that constantly seeks to improve the provision of services for the development of living conditions and well-being of the community.

It is important to emphasize that all these factors related to the theme are inserted in the economic, political, social and cultural contexts. Therefore, SI needs a systemic vision to drive its implementation and thus enable a sustainable approach.

## METHODOLOGY

### PROCEDURES AND METHODS

The research aimed to carry out a Systematic Review of the Literature (RSL) on SC and SI to identify, intend and reflect on research gaps. To this end, the empirical focus was

directed to searches in the *Scopus* database, from December 2014 to May 2021, totaling 19,808 articles (empirical, theoretical, and systematic review articles). For a more accurate review of the publications, 10,739 productions were analyzed.

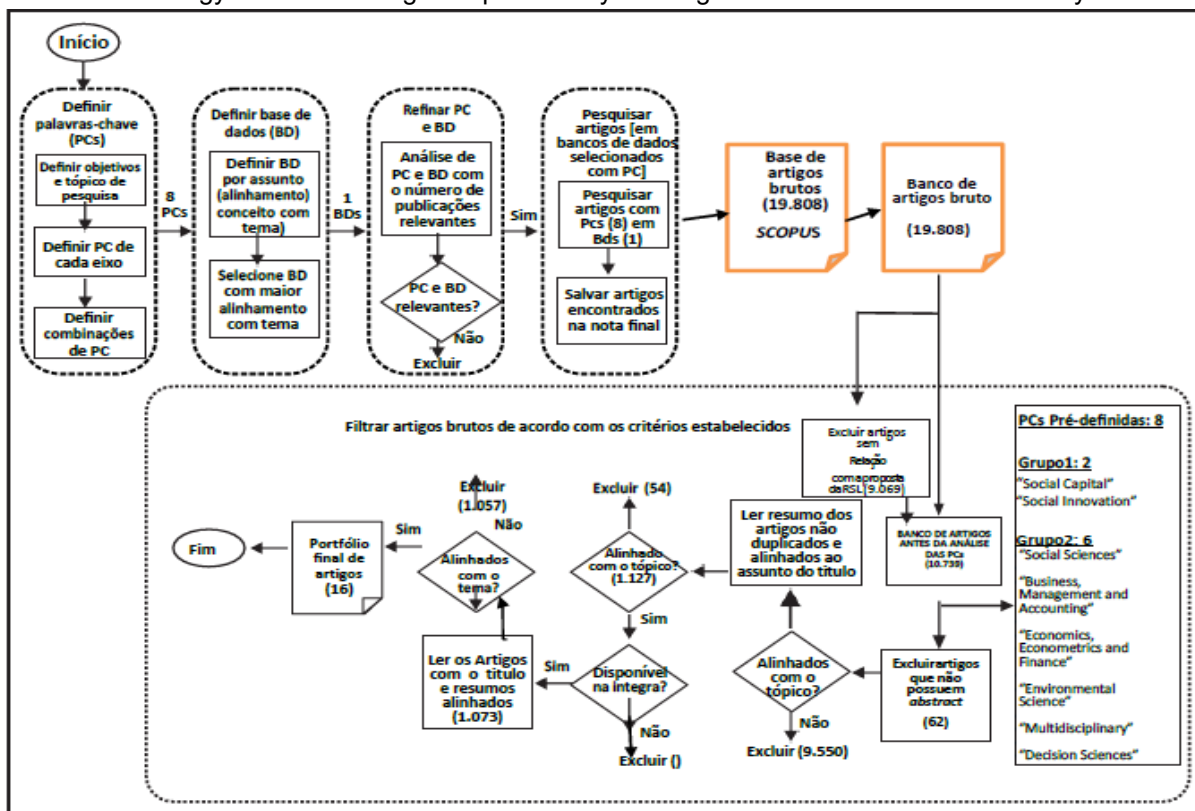
The operationalization of the investigation went through the following stages:

- Stage 1: To carry out the search, the descriptors "social capital" or "social innovation" were used with a search in the items "title", "abstract" and "keywords" in the Scopus electronic database and when associating the selections by subareas of knowledge: "Social Sciences", "Business, Management and Accounting", "Economics, Econometrics and Finance", "Environmental Science", "Multidisciplinary" and "Decision Sciences", 19,808 articles were selected;
- Step 2: The elected articles were imported into the Excel spreadsheet editor;
- Step 3: With the Excel database, several pieces of information about the articles were pre-defined, divided into columns and, after the column described as abstract, three more columns were created, which are: "Exclusion?", "purpose of the article" and "words related to the article", such as: "consumer default", "universities" and "religion", among other words;
- Step 4: A careful reading of the abstracts of the selected articles was carried out and, with this analysis, the column "Exclusion?" was used - when the subject of the manuscript was useful, the word "no" was written and, when it was not interesting, the word "yes" was written. Also, we filled in the column "purpose of the article" and the column "words related to the article". The reading of the abstract aimed to understand what the article was about and thus have an overview of the work;
- Stage 5: 10,739 articles published in the analyzed period were extracted.
- Step 6: In the Excel database, we filtered the articles that did not have an abstract, at the time of import, resulting in 62 articles. Now, we have excluded articles without abstracts, totaling 10,677 articles so far;
- Step 7: The articles that had the word "yes" written in the column "Exclusion" were selected. That said, it resulted in 9,550 articles. This exclusion criterion left only the studies with the word "no", totaling 1,127 articles;



- Step 8: Filtering was used in the Document Type column, where only the review documents were selected, totaling 54 articles. Remaining for analysis 1,073 articles;
- Step 9: And finally, after Step 8, there was another detailed and rigorous reading of the abstracts, objectives, titles, keywords, and the words related to the article in the excel base. In addition, there was a thorough and precise analysis centered on the individual works by each author of the article and, above all, the holding of meetings with them, so that decision-making was correct and then, the selection of the abstracts of the articles that were part of the RSL was defined and, finally, trying to reduce the research bias as much as possible through discussions and analysis of the items already described. Figure 1 below presents the step-by-step data collection through the RSL methodology of preliminary investigation for the selection and analysis of articles.

Figure 1: Methodology of the RSL stages of preliminary investigation for the selection and analysis of articles.



Source: Elaboration by the authors (2024). Adapted from Ensslin, L., Ensslin, S. R., Dutra, A., Nunes, N. A., & Reis, C. (2017) *apud* GOHR, Cláudia Fabiana et al., 2021.



## RESULTS

### QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Based on the understanding that social capital is associated with individuals and organizations, Putnam (2002) emphasizes and defends the idea that the connections established between individuals or organizations focused on social actions are based and supported by values of trust and reciprocity in social relations. Therefore, relationships are necessary for the engagement of all their participants in favor of effective and real direction for social action, always considered as a collective action (Becker, 2011).

Thus, it was identified - and determined - that 16 articles would be the basis of the qualitative analysis, according to chart 1, in which the respective qualitative analyses are presented, as well as the names of the authors, year, country of study, database, objective and keywords.

Chart 1: Articles selected for qualitative analysis, *Scopus* database, December 2014 to May 2021.

Author/Year/Country	Title	Objective	Keywords
Kuo; Cheng; Chang (2021) Taiwan and the United States.	How social capital affects the intention to support: the mediating role of the identity of the place.	This study applied the cognition-affect-behavior model to identify the relationships between social capital, place identity, and intention to support tourism at festivals.	Community party; Festive tourism; Identity of the place; Share capital; Intention to support; Tourism development.
Hua; Dong; Goodman (2021). China and Australia.	How to leverage the role of social capital in pro-environmental behavior: a case study of the express waste recycling behavior of residents in China.	Measure and analyze the relationship between social capital, situational factors, and individual difference variables in the context of Express waste recycling behavior.	Express delivery of packaging waste; Express waste recycling behavior; Pro-environment behavior; Share capital.
Ludvig <i>et al.</i> (2021). Austria and Finland	Impacts of policy on social innovation in forestry and vice versa: Institutional change as a driver and outcome.	Investigate how policies can impact social innovation with empirical examples from Europe.	Europe; Governance; Institutional innovation; Multipurpose silviculture; Rural development; Social inclusion.
Naranjo-Valencia <i>et al.</i> (2020). Colombia	From social entrepreneurship to social innovation: the role of social capital. Case study in Colombian rural communities victims of armed conflict.	Understand what social capital is generated by social enterprises when inserted in a social network and how this favors social innovation.	Colombia; rural communities; Share capital; social enterprise; Social Entrepreneurship; social innovation; social network; violence.
Osei; Zhuang (2020). China	Rural poverty reduction strategies and social capital linkage: the mediating role of female entrepreneurship and social innovation	This paper presents new insight into the extent to which social capital, social innovation and women's entrepreneurial activities	Ghana; rural poverty alleviation; Share capital; female entrepreneurship.

		contribute to rural poverty reduction.	
Sabet; Khaksar (2020) Iran	The performance of local government, social capital, and residents' participation in sustainable rural development.	To investigate the relationship between local government performance in promoting residents' social capital and their participation in sustainable rural development in villages around the metropolis of Tehran.	Villager participation; Share capital; sustainable development; the performance of the local government.
Son; Survey; Embi (2020). Malásia	Role of government in the development of social capital in Indonesia.	Investigate the role of government in the development of social capital in Indonesia.	Development of solutions; Government; Regulation; Share capital.
Hassan; Harun; Abdullah (2020). Malaysia	The Formation of Social Capital in the traditional settlement of Malay.	Identify the values of social capital that have influenced the sustainability of social capital in traditional Malay settlements.	Inheritance; Traditional Malay Settlement; Share capital; Sustainability.
Martens; Wolff; Hanisch (2020). Germany	Understanding social innovation processes in rural areas: empirical evidence of social enterprises in Germany.	Contribute conceptually and empirically to a better understanding of rural innovation processes related to the provision of public goods.	Class action; Cooperatives; Governance; Research in innovation; Provision of public good; Rural development.
Vercher <i>et al.</i> (2020). Spain and the United Kingdom	Whose narrative is it, anyway? Narratives of social innovation in rural areas – a comparative analysis of community-led initiatives in Scotland and Spain.	Examine the content of social innovation narratives in rural areas and how actors construct, disseminate, and modify them.	Forest-dependent communities; Leadership; narrative analysis; political framework; power relations; rural development.
Trigkas; Partalidou; Lazaridou (2020). Greece.	Trust and other historical references of social capital: are they important for the promotion of social entrepreneurship in rural areas of Greece?	Discuss methodological issues that can be learned from the use of historical terms, such as trust and social capital in a rural area.	Mountainous areas; rural entrepreneurship; Share capital; social economy; Social Entrepreneurship
Lombardi <i>et al.</i> (2020). Italy.	Impact on the Network of Social Innovation Initiatives in Marginalized Rural Communities.	Propose a framework for short-term evaluation of the effectiveness of an IS initiative in terms of reconfiguring the structure of the social network.	Farmer Communities; marginalized rural areas; Network Intervention; Rural Pole; Social Innovation; Social Media Analysis
Handay; Setyavati; Noorkamalachari (2020). Indonesia	Social capital contribution and community-based waste management in the city of Cirebon.	Analyze the implementation of waste management and the contribution of social capital to waste management.	Share capital; Waste management.

King <i>et al.</i> (2019) Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands	Navigating shadows of social capital and trust to leverage rural innovation opportunities.	Understand the impact of relational trust, embodied in the social capital of bonding, bridging and bonding, on rural innovation.	Agricultural knowledge and innovation systems; Companion; Competence and commitment, trust; Composition of the innovation network; Rural innovation projects.
Covarrubias (2017). Spain	Analyzing how a social base impacts economic development and competitiveness strategies in a cross-border context: the case of the Laredo region.	Explore the impact that Social Capital and Social Innovation (a Social Base) have on economic development and competitiveness strategies in a cross-border context.	***
Murphy <i>et al.</i> (2017). United Kingdom	Innovation, social capital and regional policy: the case of the Communities First programme in Wales.	To analyse how and why different forms of social capital are associated with different forms of innovation within the <i>Communities First</i> programme in Wales.	Communities first; Innovation; Regional policy; Share capital; Wales.

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021.

Kuo, Cheng, and Chang (2021) report in their findings that it was possible to identify how trust, norms, and social networks are important variables to develop possibilities for grouped work in households for the benefit of local development. In addition, social networks enable greater interaction with residents to achieve common goals and local development, but it is necessary to develop them.

This principle, verified by the authors referenced, is also perceived in the work of Hua, Dong and Goodman (2021), who emphasize that within the scope of social capital variables, such as community trust and community relationships, they are directly influenced by the opportunity to create social networks that allow communication between residents. The intention is to consolidate and evolve the bond of trust between them, improving relations with the community. This study reveals that trust is a significant variable in the establishment of common goals.

Following the principles analyzed about the SC, it is clear that in the investigation by Sabet and Khaksar (2020) trust plays a crucial role in sustainable rural development, thus contributing to the participation of residents in planning and processes. In this way, the findings demonstrate that residents have voluntary participation in projects and trust in the expected results of them, realizing that what was planned will be achieved effectively.

Similar principles about SC were analyzed in the study by Putra, Suraji, and Embi (2020), which show a contribution to groups and social networks, transforming them into

dominant variables with influence on regional social capital. This ratifies the role of the Indonesian government and consequently fostering mutual trust and cooperation, revealing an active and valuable CS for communities. In addition to thinking about the collective for the achievement of a common goal, this Asian country stands out in the realization of good governance, indicating that compliance with rules has helped the community to shape patterns of behavior and social relations to maintain economic, social, and political ties. Guidelines were established allowing an organized development for the solution of various problems and adjustments of institutionalized and ingrained habits in the community over time.

The principles of CS raised in this research, as well as in the traditional Malay settlement communities investigated by Hassan, Harun and Abdullah (2020), structure their social capital through various development practices and the constitution of distinct social connections. These interactions resulted in the formulation and incorporation of human values such as tolerance, understanding, reciprocity, trust, respect, commitment, enthusiasm, and cooperation. In the case of the bridge HC, the participation and collaboration of the actors were shaped, resulting in a set of activities developed by the communities. These connections were only possible thanks to the elements of social capital, such as understanding, tolerance, sharing, and cooperation. Therefore, the elements of social capital gain relevance by involving the actors in the process of preserving traditional Malay settlements.

In understanding the principles of CS in this research, Trigkas, Partalidou and Lazaridou (2020) show that trust is a central part of the discussion for the promotion of social entrepreneurship in mountainous rural areas of Greece. Their evidence indicates that institutional standards (State, European Union and Local Municipality) have low levels of credibility, except for the church, which has moderate levels of reliability. Covarrubias (2017) highlights that trust in certain institutions works in different cross-border contexts, being established through archaic sensations rooted in the members, who consider everyone as a family and encourage the search for common goals for the community, stimulating loyalty and sincerity. Businesses share a sense of social and economic well-being for the region, and circumstantial trust was identified in the survey.

The discussion by Trigkas, Partalidou, and Lazaridou (2020) reveals that trust between colleagues and scientists is satisfactory when social entrepreneurship is stimulated in mountainous rural areas of Greece. The data show that trust in close

networks of relatives and family members is much greater than in mapping the other elements, as in Mark Granovetter's 1973 discovery known as the "theory of strong ties". However, in the studies Handoyo, Setyowati and Nurkomalasari (2020) reveal that the implementation of household waste management programs is a consequence of social capital, in which citizens trust and share feelings that make the community manage their waste together, sustained by a sense of belonging and responsibility to the environment.

Contextualizing the principles of SC by Handoyo, Setyowati and Nurkomalasari (2020), it is reiterated that the social networks built by the community were established together with several organizations, allowing their acceptance by society. In addition, the group of people designed by the community with the public and private sectors contributed to the achievement of support in waste management. In this sense, Covarrubias (2017) reveals that in the cross-border environment, the presence of social networks developed by the members of the institutions has an active participation in the installations and events with various actors on both sides of the border, enabling participation in local development.

In the context presented, the RSL will demonstrate the interrelations between SC and SI from the discussion of recent research reported to unveil how the interrelations are presented.

The perception of Naranjo-Valencia, Ocampo-Wilches, and Trujillo-Henao (2020) in relation to the interaction developed indicated that social enterprises, when articulated in a social network through a multilevel productive alliance, develop and generate collective and participatory learning, as well as institutional change. Often, this change is fragmented in rural post-conflict communities. The investigation revealed that diversity in the pattern of social capital favors the importance of SI. In addition, research demonstrates that trust is evidence of bonding social capital, which is produced by integrating community members into productive associations. The findings reinforce that the bonds of solidarity existing in the communities stimulate involvement in productive associations.

The research by Osei and Zhuang (2020) indicates a correlation between SC and SI when verifying the dimension of relational social capital. They point to a significant performance in the growth of female entrepreneurship and the reduction of rural poverty as consequences of strengthening their social networks. This reflects positively on the elements of trust, obligations and reciprocity contained in their social networks. The results prove that these variables are essential to build and maintain network relationships, aiming at future business activities in the rural context. However, the findings reveal that the

structural dimension (strength of the relationships established between the actors and the network configuration formed by them) of social capital does not have a significant and direct impact on the performance of entrepreneurship growth. On the other hand, there is an indirect effect of this same performance through SI.

Even so, it is possible to verify the link between HC and SI in the research of Covarrubias (2017), which indicates how SI in bridge institutions can emerge and, regardless of their social needs, legitimize the ability to build social networks and relationships with different institutions, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local governments, regional industries, companies, and academic institutions. This enables the possibility of these institutions to socially innovate their relationships. The innovative activities or practices were the results found in the research, through the creation of a newly formed network of companies united by a common interest in corporate social responsibility. This result promotes a methodology capable of bringing together several companies with the same objective. In addition, bridge institutions foster economic, strategic and competitiveness development in the region, encouraging transitional institutions to help in the process of cross-border public policies of apparent social inequality.

The implications of lack of trust and the impact of bad relationships are crucial elements for not building a relational capacity. Therefore, focusing on relationships to be able to build trust is evidenced in the study by King et al. (2019), which validates how CS and trust can leverage rural innovation opportunities. However, this requires time and energy, which are efforts that must be invested in this construction. In addition, informal meetings favor the development of trust and relationships. The results reveal how social networks make a difference in the process of building trust. Therefore, establishing a solid network based on the trust engendered in individuals provides advantages in sharing ideas and develops better ways to build relationships.

It is also important to glimpse the research by Lombardi et al. (2020), which reveal that the social relationships developed from SI initiatives showed significant results in their investigation. In the case of the participants, the creation of new relationships provided a reduction in the isolation and fragmentation of the networks of the investigated actors, in addition to allowing interaction and the maximization of social relationships. The findings demonstrate the qualitative improvement of relationships through the functioning of the SI, being built by engagement, the exchange of information and professional agreements that



were guided by values and, mainly, by the high trust generated by their coexistence. Local relational capital is highlighted in this investigation through the SI initiative, improving and transforming existing relationships and assisting in new active relationships.

In view of the above, it is also worth highlighting the perception of Murphy et al. (2017) about the relationship between CS and SI, when they indicate that the bonding social capital and the bridge social capital were predominant for different forms of innovation. The trust established in the "Communities First" program was the result of the linking of social capital that translates more effectively to IS activities. Social Innovation must be seen in a holistic way to promote and implement measures aimed at the development and evaluation of public policies with the purpose of recognizing SI in an explicit and comprehensive way in society.

Social Innovation would be, to a certain extent, the result of public policies. Based on the perception of the texts studied in this investigation, it was clear that, in addition to the relationships and characteristics of Social Capital with Social Innovation, another perspective needs to be presented that complements the scenario: the role of policies that impact on IS initiatives.

To demonstrate the forms of policies that infer in SI, Ludvig et al. (2021) point out that this relationship occurs in three ways: *top-down*; *bottom-up* and, in some cases, there is no support. In the conception of Martens, Wolff and Hanisch (2020), the *top-down* policy is not enough to initiate IS processes. The private sector has more relevance than the public sector in this type of initiative. However, it is civil society in rural communities that gains prominence, especially in the *bottom-up* process of activating IS processes. Therefore, what was researched by Martens, Wolff and Hanisch (2020) shows an important factor in the figure of the institution as the "local government". Working together with the support of the government is significant and relevant to start the process in question through the instruments that enable SI. Therefore, even from a *top-bottom* perspective, policies are relevant in this process.

It is possible to perceive that, in the texts studied, some forms of policies that refer to SI, regardless of their effectiveness, develop relationships. This perception was observed when Putra, Suraji, and Embi (2020) evidenced *top-down conduct* in their study. However, the regional government has failed to transfer the SC without at least having the ability to define its real meaning. Therefore, for the regional government, the SC has not become a priority in the regional development programme. On the other hand, it can be seen that



Handoyo, Setyowati and Nurkomalasari (2020) emphasize the development of a partnership with the government (prefecture) and the community in a *top-down* approach, contributing to training in domestic waste management. Such collaboration is grounded in shared values, with a sense of belonging, mutual trust and respect, honesty and proactive community.

However, there are demonstrations in researched articles that demonstrate the need for State support in policies that interfere with SI. Vercher et al. (2021) agree with Martens, Wolff, and Hanisch (2020) on the *top-down* and *bottom-up* perspective. However, Vercher et al. (2021) reveal that there is a lack of public support for the development of SI, since the process of civil self-organization "per se" alone is not sufficient for the construction of SI in rural areas. Even so, it helps to obtain this support from the public sector. The narratives show that the public sector should maximize its presence in rural areas, acting as an intermediary and contributing to the exchange of knowledge and information with communities. In addition to assisting in training and promoting co-construction and co-learning activities within a *top-down* reality. Other findings present a *bottom-up approach* in rural regions in the process of IS development, promoting and stimulating the participation of external public actors in local mobilization, as well as in public support.

With the understanding of how policies interfere in SI, it was possible to extract among the analyzed texts the contribution of SC to the effectiveness of SI. Since Ludvig et al. (2021) state that SI, in terms of institutional change, has provided new ideas from the involvement of collective actors. In this sense, the research points to strengthening the networking activities and coordination of project ideas through a multi-actor approach, obtaining an effective and efficient SI.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study proposed to carry out a systematic review of the literature on Social Capital and Social Innovation to identify and critically reflect on research gaps. Thus, in the RSL, it was observed that social capital has been studied, mainly, in rural and settlement regions with the purpose of sustainable rural development for the promotion of social entrepreneurship in mountainous rural areas and in a cross-border environment.

In this phase, "trust" was observed as a central variable of the review, a fundamental element, since it is from it that social networks are established over time, that is, from the imbrication of the variable "trust" and social networks, favorable conditions are created for

the achievement of the expected resources. Social networks are emphasized and intertwined with trust to understand how community actors promote their organization in order to achieve social well-being and quality of life.

Collective work was also highlighted in the literature as a SC variable, essential to achieve common goals and solve social, economic, and environmental problems. These challenges directly affect the actors who live and carry out their daily activities in these territories. The review emphasized collective work as a crucial element to solve and subsidize the needs of these communities and, consequently, the territories.

Another impact of these variables in the SC study was the reconstruction of post-conflict communities, the strengthening of female entrepreneurship in mountainous rural areas and extreme poverty as a source of poverty eradication and improvement in the daily lives of actors. The cross-border environment has also benefited from the HC, transforming itself from an isolated territory to an area with connections of actors and better use of available resources.

There is contemporary research that narrows the relationship between CS and SI in the context of social entrepreneurship in rural areas, social enterprises, and programs developed by regional policies. Research indicates that social networks, norms, reciprocity, bonding capital, bridge capital, bonding capital and, especially, the trust of the SC are fundamental for the development and promotion of SI. Public policies also have a significant impact on SI in marginalized communities and rural areas.

From this perspective, the SC and the SI enable studies in different territories, especially from ideas of SI that emerge from difficulties related to the environmental, social and economic environments. The theory of SC is consolidated, presenting fundamental elements for the appreciation and analysis of research involving the phenomenon of SC. However, SI is still in formation, being multifaceted and polysemic in the explanation of phenomena. The RSL revealed possibilities for investigations that adopt triangulation of methods, allowing us to capture how the elements of the SC provide SI in other contexts through the use of different research instruments and techniques. It is concluded, in general, that there is a universe of possibilities for research involving SC and SI.

While our systematic review provides a comprehensive and critical view on the role of social capital in fostering social innovation, there are some limitations to consider. Most of the studies included in our review focus on specific contexts, such as certain geographic regions or industry sectors, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future

research could expand this approach to include a wider variety of contexts, examining how different types of social capital influence social innovation across diverse cultures and economies.

Another limitation is the predominance of cross-sectional studies, which observe the situation at a single point in time. Longitudinal studies, which track changes over time, would be valuable in understanding how social capital and social innovation evolve and interact. Furthermore, while our review synthesizes existing findings, there is a need for more empirical research to test the hypotheses generated and explore underlying causal mechanisms.

Therefore, although our systematic review contributes significantly to the understanding of the role of social capital in social innovation, future research should focus on standardizing methodologies, broadening studied contexts, and adopting longitudinal approaches to deepen and expand our knowledge on this crucial topic.

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