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Dichotomy in the value of social capital: Does it strengthen individualistic or community-oriented schools?

Abstract: This paper focuses on dichotomous views on the value of social capital and attempts to analyse its potential and limitations in the school context. It starts from the thesis that the nature of the value of social capital, which can be social or instrumental, determines the manifestations of social behaviour in school. The analysis shows that the underlying theories of social capital have contributed to weighting social capital with an instrumental value. Social behaviour in this context is primarily a direct and calculable investment in social relationships. The instrumentalised view of the benefits of social capital in schools supports and shapes individualism rather than promoting community orientation, altruism and humanity. To support the latter, community building should be integrated as far as possible into school activities. The dichotomy in the value of social capital highlights the diversity of its effects on both individuals and communities, provides an opportunity for further critical thinking about didactic approaches to its promotion in school and contributes a new perspective to understanding social behaviour.

Keywords: dichotomy of the value of social capital, instrumental value, social value, social behaviour, school, community.

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Introduction

School represents »the child's/young person's everyday experience of relationships with people« (Mikuš Kos 2019, p. 297) and »is the place of many social relationships« (ibid., p. 271). It should be an environment »that provides the general goods of well-being – a sense of acceptance, safety, support, opportunities for learning and creative activity« (Mikuš Kos 2017, p. 259). The emotional and social well-being of children is »an integral part of children's rights« (ibid., p. 254) and plays a role in protecting children's mental health. The latter depends largely on the experience of relationships, a sense of safety and connectedness with others in the immediate and wider community. At the same time, the very behaviours that contribute to this, such as prosocial behaviour, altruism and humanity, are declining (ibid.). We wonder how the reinforcement of these behaviours can be influenced in school, which is a social space and a learning environment for interpersonal relationships and a source of natural (ibid.) social networks for the child.

The importance of social networks and interpersonal relationships is endorsed by social capital theory, the basic proposition of which, in this context, is that interpersonal interactions provide the potential for cooperation and trust in each other and enable individuals to build a community (Hanifan 1916). Social capital theory also includes the belief that social capital has both a direct and an indirect impact on children's social and emotional well-being (Bassani 2007), which is reflected in their educational success and behaviour (Van Rossem et al. 2015). Turley et al. (2017), who believe that social capital is a powerful tool for achieving change, find in a study of the causal effects of social capital on children's behaviour, involving 3,084 families, that social capital improves children's behaviour, attributing this to social relationships. Responding to children's behavioural expressions of their emotional distress and basic needs should be a pedagogical priority in schools. The authors (ibid.) also note that the school's partnership with parents has an important impact on children's behaviour, and consequently on their achievement, and that a key role of the school in this regard is to help strengthen social capital through activities that promote social relationships, both quantitatively and qualitatively, as well as to facilitate the participa-

tion of those concerned in these activities.

The link between social capital and education can be found in the theory of the three most important writers on social capital. Bourdieu (1986) emphasises social inequality in education, Coleman (1990) highlights school as an important source of social capital and the impact of social capital on educational achievement (Coleman 2000) and Putnam (2004) emphasises the impact of education on social capital and vice versa. The basic theoretical schools of social capital have sparked researchers' interest in the links between social capital and education (e.g. Allard 2005; Bassani 2007; Behtoui 2017; Comer 2015; Field 2003; Croniger and Lee 2001; Munn 2000; Murray et al. 2020; Plagens 2011; Stanton-Salazar and Spina 2000; Turley et al. 2017; Van Rossem et al. 2015) but, as some authors point out, empirical research is often limited, mostly due to conceptual ambiguities (e.g. Bassani 2007; Dika and Singh 2002; Lee 2010; Mikiewicz 2021; Turley et al. 2017). It is therefore important to continue to develop and apply alternative conceptualisations of social capital (Dika and Singh 2002). Allard (2005) also points out that the meaning, quality and context of social capital are not sufficiently considered in research. For this reason, we believe it is useful to draw attention to the broader dimensions of the value of social capital, which highlight a different aspect of the issue in schools.

In view of the erosion of »genuine, direct social contacts, altruism, [and] mutual help« (Mikuš Kos 2017, p. 372), this paper stems from an interest in the value of social capital in schools and attempts to analyse its potential and limits. The context described above leads us to consider how the implementation of theoretical insights about social capital into the didactic model of the school as a community supports emergent behaviours that contribute to children's emotional and social well-being. In other words, how can the school use its resources for community-oriented action through conscious action within the concept of social capital? Building communities at different levels of individual action, including at school, is considered an effective tool for problem solving (Mikiewicz 2021).

In this paper we use a comparative descriptive method to analyse the theory that contains the first known mention of the concept of social capital (Hanifan 1916, 1920) and the theories of the established theoretical schools of social capital (Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 2000; Putnam 1995), paying particular attention to the definition of the value of social capital. We refer to a hitherto relatively overlooked feature of social capital, namely the dichotomy of its value, in order to highlight a controversial situation in the uncritical attitude to the value of social capital. We assume that the imprecise definition of the value of social capital causes problems for operational action (including in schools) in connection with the concept of social capital. We were interested in how the value of social capital was first defined, and we selected the theories of three leading authors in the field of social capital because they have established themselves as the basic theoretical schools on which most subsequent research is based.

The paper is based on the thesis that the nature of the value of social capital, which can be social or instrumental, determines the manifestations of social behaviour in schools. The aim of the paper is to show a dichotomy in the value of so-

cial capital that explains how its strengthening can contribute to an individualistic or community-oriented school and to the individual. Social capital as a product of the school can be an individual or a community resource or both. The didactic approach to building social capital that contributes to one or the other of the two values of social capital determines what impact it has and who benefits from it. Paying attention to dichotomy as a core feature of the nature of social capital can help to determine the effectiveness of didactic approaches used in schools to reinforce social attitudes and behaviours. It also assists in reaching a didactic solution in reinforcing those behaviours that are desirable in a community-oriented school. In addition, it assists in identifying those people who support an individualistic orientation.

The dichotomy in the value of social capital illuminates the latter from a neglected perspective that has not received much attention from researchers. Efforts to reform the education system are based, among other things, on the realisation that individualistic attitudes are widespread and on the search for answers to the question of how to reinforce social behaviours in decline. Based on this thesis, we ask whether social capital is indeed one of the »main pillars of school quality« (Mikuš Kos 2017, p. 379) today and what value it has in this context. Almost half a century ago, Tolsdorf (1976 in Stanton-Salazar and Spina 2000) defined the so-called network orientation as the tendency or reluctance to solve problems by activating resources from social networks, whereby an individual's orientation is based on their expectations of the potential usefulness of their social network. With the network orientation, the author emphasises the instrumental motivation of the individual to activate social capital. The goal of »learning to live together« (Delors 1996, p. 20) was one of the priorities of education and training almost three decades ago, but has not yet been realised or is even further away from realisation, given the erosion of the behaviours that contribute to it. The main purpose of this paper is to link the dichotomy in the value of social capital to the problems highlighted in schools today. We pose the research question of how the value of social capital is defined by the original explanations of the concept and by the underlying theoretical schools of social capital.

Hanifan's description of the value of social capital

In defining the value of social capital, we first refer to the first known mention of the concept of social capital in 1916, when Hanifan (Hanifan 1916, 1920; Putnam 2000; Putnam and Goss 2002) uses it to describe the social potential to improve the living conditions of the whole community and as beneficial to both the individual and the community. He emphasises that for the individual, connection with others means help, affection and friendship. When individuals connect with each other and their togetherness becomes a habit, then social capital begins to work for the benefit of the community and individuals can reap its benefits. Therefore, »the first thing to do is to accumulate social capital in the community« (Hanifan 1920, p. 79). The historical tracing of the concept of social capital shows

that it first appears in the context of instrumental value, as it signifies a means to an end. However, with the idea of the benefits of social capital for the community, Hanifan also creates the conditions for its social value. Hanifan's main research interest is how to improve the conditions for strengthening the community. He highlights the example of the so-called success story of the »rural school community centre«, which succeeds in developing and utilising social capital. Among the most important building blocks of success, he counts the school staff's interest in the community itself, in its history and in the current issues and concerns of those involved. It provides space for conversations and encounters in the heart of the community, that is, in the school and living environment. As a teacher, Hanifan was convinced that the school was the centre of the community and an important place for people to come together and connect. He believed in the power of their work and the benefits for the whole community. In the way he wanted to bring about change, we recognise the principles of gradualism and sequencing. For individuals to contribute to the betterment of a community, they must first come together and then identify for themselves where change is needed. Hanifan believed that children in school (along with teachers) form a social nucleus, a micro-community, and together with other so-called social units in their micro-environment, such as families and neighbours, build communities up to the level of the country. He believed that all the problems of the macro-community could be solved precisely and only on the basis of the social attitudes already learned and functioning in the micro-environment (Hanifan 1916, 1920).

In his idea of the usefulness of social capital for the community, we also recognise the idea of the surplus value of social capital. According to Hanifan, social capital is built up on the basis of the individual's social needs for »friendship, sympathy and social contacts« (Hanifan 1920, p. 78). Although the satisfaction of social needs benefits the individual, the aim is to promote the well-being of the community. Individuals are socially powerless if left to their own devices, but through networking they can satisfy their social needs and contribute to the betterment of the life of the community as a whole. This is an example of the empowerment and utilisation of social capital when its instrumental value to the individual is transformed into a value for the community and its well-being. However, even this recognised value of social capital to the community remains within the scope of the instrumental value of social capital, but it works for the good of the community.

Given the prevalence of individualistic attitudes in modern schools, the challenge for schools today is to contribute to a social capital that works for the good of the community and to translate the instrumental value of social capital into its social value. We should strive for a school that acts socially from the outset, without relying on reimbursement. In this context, Plagens (2011) speaks of so-called spontaneous behaviour that benefits the community. Hanifan introduced the term and the basic conceptual idea of social capital into social capital theory, drawing on its development and application. His placement of the school at the core of the community, strengthening it, is still inspiring today. It seems that, at least in smaller towns, where schools are often located at the heart of the community, his ideas could easily be tested in practice. Otherwise, Hanifan remains somewhat in

the shadow of the highlighted authors in social capital theory. Among the later established references, only Putnam (2000; Putnam and Goss 2002) refers to him.

The value of social capital in theoretical elementary schools

Bourdieu's theory of social capital refers to the advantages that individuals derive from belonging to a group and from consciously establishing contacts in order to develop resources that they can use (Bourdieu 1986). He defines social capital as »the aggregate of actual and potential resources associated with the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relations of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or, in other words, with belonging to a group – which offers each member the support of a collectively transmitted capital, a ,recommendation' that entitles them to trust in various meanings of the word« (Bourdieu 1986, p. 248). As can be seen from the definition, association is made possible by belonging to a group, which forms the basis for solidarity and brings benefits. Bourdieu understands social capital as the sum of three indicators of social capital – social networks, reciprocity and trust. The social position of an individual is determined by the relationships within a network of relationships and is »the product of individual or collective investment strategies aimed consciously or unconsciously at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are of immediate benefit in the short or long term, i.e. the social relationships of the individual and the social relationships of the network of relationships in the transformation of contingent relationships such as those of neighbours, work colleagues or even relatives into relationships that are necessary and optional and contain lasting bonds that are subjectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship, etc.) or institutionally guaranteed (rights)« (Bourdieu 1986, pp. 250–251).

According to Bourdieu's theory, social capital consists of two parts – the social relationships that give individuals access to network resources, and the extent and quality of network resources. The functional value of social relationships is emphasised, and social capital is located in interactions with other types of capital. It is based on kinship relations and is rooted in a relatively static model of social hierarchy in which exchanges are not dependent on affection for the other, but are movements in a cultural world with a given position. It is presented as the property of the elites, securing their relative position, and as an advantage for the privileged and a means of maintaining their superiority. It does not follow from this theoretical school that less privileged individuals and groups also benefit from their social ties; on the contrary, for them these ties, together with other types of capital, are important determinants of social inequalities and social immobility. Bourdieu's theory clearly defines and demonstrates the instrumental (economic) value of social capital. He attributes an important role to social capital with regard to understanding the reproduction of social inequalities, including in the field of education, where children do not enter with the same capital stock and are therefore unequal from the outset. Furthermore, social inequalities are maintained, deepened and reproduced in the educational process. The school is understood as

a socially organised structure that produces all other social developments at the micro and macro levels of society (Bourdieu 1986; Bourdieu and Passeron 1996).

Coleman uses social capital theory to explain the dilemmas and the way we work together. He emphasises that individuals who choose to cooperate do so because it is in their interest (Coleman 1990). Social relationships are thus »a means for« (Coleman 2004, p. 383) and dependent on individuals and, conversely, individuals are dependent on social relationships (Coleman 1990, 2004). The function of a relationship is understood as the gain or benefit that an individual derives in order to satisfy their interests and goals. According to Coleman, social capital is »defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a series of different entities that share two characteristics: They all consist of some aspect of social structures and facilitate certain actions of actors – either individuals or organisations – within the structure« (Coleman 2000, p. 20). Another definition by Coleman specifies social capital as »a set of resources reflected in family relationships and the social organisation of the community that are useful for the cognitive or social development of a child or adolescent. Different people have different resources, and these can make an important contribution to the development of children and young people's human capital« (Coleman 1994 in Field 2003, p. 24). Both definitions imply that social capital is a useful resource that is accessible through social relationships and enables achievements that could not be realised without it, and therefore has a productive value (Coleman 2000, 2004). In addition, kinship relationships are emphasised, with the family being the archetypal cradle of social capital or the original social organisation and social leadership of society (Coleman 1990).

This school of theory also assumes that social capital consists of a series of resources that are reflected in the structure of relationships and emphasise the functional value of social relationships. However, it is not possible to identify key indicators of social capital from the definitions. It is assumed that an individual's ability to connect is determined by the sum of their skills and knowledge, but also depends on the degree of shared norms and values of the community and the extent to which individual interests are conditioned by community interests (Coleman 1990, 2000). Underlying this school of theory (Coleman 1990; Field 2000) is, among other things, an interest in the relationship between social inequality and academic achievement in education, which Coleman links to levels of social capital (Schuller et al. 2000), demonstrating its applicability to education (Coleman 2000). There is no doubt that his theory also defines the instrumental value of social capital. But he also shows it in its compensatory role and as such identifies it as an opportunity in different social groups. In doing so, he helps to extend the value of social capital from elite groups to the poor and otherwise disadvantaged, and shows that social capital is also of great benefit to marginalised groups (Coleman 2000). His theory is based on the notion of rational individual behaviour with a tendency to satisfy self-interest, whereby the compensatory power of social capital in the face of a lack of other forms of capital assigns it a dynamic, bridging position, whereas Bourdieu's theory assigns social capital a static role.

Putnam's theory defines social capital as »the form of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enables members to work together more effectively in pursuit of a common goal« (Putnam 1996 in Field 2000, p. 32). Among the highlighted indicators of social capital, trust is a fundamental component, without which there can be no exchange. Among the norms, reciprocity is identified as the most important in two forms. Balanced or specific refers to a simultaneous exchange, while generalised or diffuse refers to a continuous exchange relationship that is not bound by time and simultaneity, as it involves the mutual expectation that a favour from the present will be reciprocated in the future. Putnam borrows the phrase for this kind of reciprocity from Cicero, who says »There is no greater duty than to return a favour. No one trusts the one who forgets favours« (Cicero in Putnam 2003, p. 184). The basic idea of Putnam's social capital theory, however, is the value of social networks (Putnam 2000; Putnam and Goss 2002). In this context, social capital is presented as the social virtue of returning favours and has the property of 'moral resources' (Hirschman in Putnam 2003, p. 182). It is strongest when it is embedded in a dense network of reciprocal social relationships in which it is reinforced, whereas it is not reinforced in a society of isolated individuals (Putnam 2000; Putnam and Goss 2002). In dense networks, the individual extends the sense and care of self to others as it »develops the 'I' into a 'we'« (Putnam 1995, p. 68). Putnam's theory also ascribes instrumental value to social capital by focusing on utility and the exchange of favours, whereby the obligation to reciprocate favours is linked to a moral duty that transcends social action for individual well-being and leads to communal well-being through the obligation to reciprocate favours. However, this obligation to reciprocate still separates it from its social value, which goes beyond the moral obligation to reciprocate and requires altruistic behaviour with no expectation of reciprocation. One could argue that Putnam is aware of the dual value of social capital and wants to go beyond its instrumental value.

Putnam's division of social capital into two forms (Putnam 2000) is presented here because of its applicability in the school context. Bridging or integrative social capital manifests itself in the integration of different social groups and entails heterogeneous connections. It is metaphorically described as »WD-40« (Putnam 2000, p. 23). It occurs in distant relationships, is characterised by weaker, less dense, heterogeneous ties and acquaintances and is important for the acquisition of information and opportunities. Binding or exclusive social capital refers to strong ties, for example, in the family, among relatives. It is metaphorically described as »superglue« (Putnam 2000, p. 23). It is »reserved« social capital that is tied to relationships in relatively homogeneous groups and is anchored in everyday relationships. Applied to schools, this means that bonding social capital can be strengthened at the micro level of the school, in individual classes, while bridging social capital can be sought at the macro level of the school as a community. Using a sample of 1,036 children from 60 classes in Dutch elementary schools, Van Rossem et al. (2015) found that bonding social capital is the most important form of social capital in elementary school. Of relevance to this paper, we mention their interesting finding that in a social system such as a classroom, most children can

provide each other with the resources they need and therefore there is little need for more purposeful social relationships. They also note that while more interconnected social networks, such as the classroom, contribute to better individual performance, they also increase the likelihood of problem behaviour. Conversely, weaker connectedness does not contribute as much to individual performance, but creates a climate that reduces the likelihood of problem behaviour (*ibid.*). Murray et al. (2020), based on an analysis of nine schools, find that schools can create a more equitable and inclusive environment by working in partnership with parents to simultaneously strengthen both bonding and bridging social capital. They emphasise that school practices that support bonding capital should become routine in school operations as they strengthen community-oriented schooling. However, if schools reinforce only bonding social capital, this contributes to the accumulation of opportunities only for the privileged and perpetuates the original inequalities. The results are consistent with Putnam's finding that strong ties between individuals, such as kinship ties and close friendships centred on a closed circle, are less important for maintaining a socially cohesive community and collective action than weak ties, such as acquaintances and membership of secondary associations that bring together individuals from different and separate groups (Putnam and Goss 2002).

As Coleman (2000) has shown, Putnam (2004) is in no doubt that social capital has an impact on educational achievement and suggests that educational policies concerned with the development of educational standards, such as textbooks and teacher training, should also take into account the social context of education. He also points out that, conversely, education has an impact on social capital, which is even more important in the context of how schools can contribute to strengthening declining social attitudes. The nature of the school, and more specifically how staff act, what they pay attention to and what they do not, creates the conditions that support or do not support social behaviours that contribute to community well-being. It is the school that determines the behaviour and identity of the actors involved in pedagogical activities, so that changes in school culture depend on changes in the attitudes of the school (Putnam 2003). In this context, Comer (2015) emphasises a holistic, coordinated approach at the school level, as opposed to partial and fragmented activities, even if there are many of them. Croninger and Lee (2001), in their study of forms of social capital in a sample of 11,000 young people, recognise that social capital based on socially supportive relationships with teachers is particularly important for young people who lack support and guidance elsewhere, have learning difficulties and are at risk of academic failure.

A comparative look at the definition of the value of social capital in the main theoretical schools shows that all three authors focus on the instrumental value of social capital, where it serves as a means to achieving other goals. For Bourdieu it is a means among inherent privileges, for Coleman it is a compensatory benefit and for Putnam it is a promissory bill in exchange for favours. While Bourdieu and Coleman, albeit each in a different context, undoubtedly emphasise the purely instrumental value of social capital, Putnam's theory is not quite as clear in its

depiction of its value. As Hanifan's account of social capital suggests, Putnam's account of social capital also points to its social value, with an undeniable emphasis on community well-being, thus going beyond social capital as a means to the exclusive well-being of the individual – as such it is explicitly defined by Bourdieu and Coleman. While Putnam does not distinguish between one value and the other, which could be due to a conceptual ambiguity, he clearly does not remain in the realm of instrumental values and does not limit himself to individual well-being. His theory develops the idea of integration and social activity as the basis for social inclusion and the well-being of the community. In this we recognise the possibility of a surplus of action based on moral obligation when social action becomes a value. Life is easier in communities with a large stock of social capital (Putnam 1995). Putnam understands social capital in a broader sense as a resource that operates at the community level (Field 2000). In the context of the issues raised in schools today, the theories of Bourdieu and Coleman can help in understanding the existing situation and defining the value of social behaviours, but Putnam's theory – alongside Hanifan's earlier orientations and in light of the findings on the dichotomy of the value of social capital – seems to be the most relevant and useful for implementation in everyday school life.

Challenges in building social capital for community-oriented schools

Analysing the value of social capital in the underlying theories has helped us to explain and understand why, in some communities, individuals work together to help solve common problems, while in others individuals work only according to their individual interests. The answer lies in identifying the relational function that can help explain the outcomes of individual relationships, both for the individual and at the community level. Based on an analysis of the underlying theory in the field of social capital, we assume that the first known use of the concept of social capital, when it was described as a means to an end, characterises it to the present day, where this definition is still predominant in understanding its value and use. Moreover, the instrumental value of social capital is strongly emphasised by Bourdieu's explanation of the productive properties of symbolic forms of capital, even if they are invisible in comparison with economic capital, because they benefit from it. Coleman's interpretation of social capital as a means of achieving educational success bolsters the idea of its instrumental value. Hanifan's idea of the contribution of social capital to community well-being, which we have defined as adding value alongside individual well-being, seems to have been overlooked. Putnam's recognition of the social value of social capital also remains obscure.

It could be argued that the use of the phrase 'social capital' to describe the concept has contributed to the attribution of instrumental value to it. The association of the word 'capital' with economic discourse automatically triggers an analogy with economic capital, which is the reason for the dominant recognition and use of its instrumental value. The word 'capital' has such conceptual or linguistic power that as a noun it can completely overshadow any adjective that may

define it. The dichotomy of the value of social capital presented here entails that it must be described as a means to an end when it has an instrumental (economic) value, and as an end in itself when it is not based on calculability and has a social or ultimate value. The dichotomy of the value of social capital illustrates the problem of a simplistic understanding of this concept and consequently an uncritical (purely) instrumental strengthening of the social capital of the individual and/or the community.

In this debate, we have attempted to develop a conceptualisation of social capital that focuses on its value. More specifically, we have focused on the dichotomy of the value of social capital, while being critical of its general value. The analysis leads to the conclusion that an instrumentalised approach to the utility value of social capital in schools supports and shapes individualism and does not promote community orientation, altruism and humanity. With a community orientation, individuals do not expect to benefit from what they have done. An instrumentalised approach to the implementation of social capital theory, however, promotes a deliberate and calculated investment in social relationships, in interconnections, in the exploitation of the social, or even just for the individual's or community's own benefit that does not operate within the context of the societal value of social capital. The difference is determined by the purpose of the action, the behaviour itself, the effect or benefit and the resource, whether individual or community. The impact of social capital depends on the goals of the social behaviour (Van Rossem 2015). If social capital has instrumental value, it is in the role of manipulating the possibilities and opportunities that social relationships provide for the individual and the community. The dichotomy of the value of social capital highlights the diversity of its impact on individuals and the community and provides an opportunity for further critical reflection on didactic approaches to its promotion in schools and a new perspective on understanding social behaviour. In each case, the important question arises as to how the concept of social capital can be implemented in the school context. This means that appropriate solutions must be found, depending on the context and current situation in schools.

The social or ultimate value of social capital, which has interested us in the context of the thesis on which we have built this paper, is hinted at in Hanifan's description of social capital, but is only later recognised in the Putnam school. It identifies the establishment of a pedagogy and curriculum that has lasting and consistent effects on social integration into the local community in later life as a necessity for community well-being. It emphasises the promotion of teamwork, peer collaboration – both in learning and in solving problems and conflicts – and the promotion of social inclusion, which helps to overcome diversity and strengthen social cohesion. It also highlights the architectural importance of physical space, which can promote collaboration or isolate and confine individuals, and the importance of norms, emphasising the smallness of the school and its cellular organisation (Putnam 2004; Putnam and Sander 1999). This is consistent with Hanifan's idea and is seen as a concern to strengthen the individual micro-cores of the community as support for the macro-level functioning of the community. In light of these considerations, the school could also contribute to strengthening

networking and implementing the theory of social capital with regard to the realisation of its social value in the school sector. Starting from the area of what social action is in general, Uphoff (2000) formulates four levels of social capital that could be followed by didactic approaches in schools. These are minimal, elementary, real and maximum social capital. Minimal social capital manifests itself in a lack of interest in the well-being of others and in acting to one's own advantage at the expense of others. Elementary social capital can be recognised by the fact that people are primarily interested in their own well-being and only cooperate with others for their own benefit. The value of minimal and elementary social capital could be defined as instrumental at the level of the individual. Real social capital shows action for the common good, in which participation has a broader dimension and includes a benefit for others. This recognises the transition of instrumental value from the individual to the community level. Maximum social capital is reflected in actions for the benefit of others, where participation is not limited to self-interest but primarily serves the common good. This social capital is consistent with action at the value level and has a social value.

In line with the thesis and the results of the analysis, the paper concludes with the realisation that the underlying theories of social capital have led to the weighting of social capital with an instrumental value. In this context, social behaviour is primarily a direct and calculable investment in social relationships, which have become a key factor for school success (Comer 2015). In schools, the relationships that have emerged as the most important are those that benefit individuals the most (Plagens 2011), provide an educational advantage (Munn 2000) and contribute to individual well-being through individualism and acting in one's own interests. To support community orientation, altruism and humanity, community building should be integrated as much as possible into the school's activities, starting with the individual micro-core communities, as already highlighted by Hanifan. Both the pedagogical actors and the other stakeholders in the wider school community should immediately begin to create and improve the circumstances and conditions that would make this possible. As the analysis shows, the social behaviours learned in the micro-communities have the potential to easily reinforce the desired macro-communities. Schools face the challenge of shifting from an instrumentalised to a community-based approach to reinforcing social behaviours. Even if this shift is partly utopian, it is so important – because of the fundamental potential of social capital and schooling and the risk of disintegrating humanity – that we should be aware of it and include it in discussions about education system reform. It requires an answer to the question of whether we, as a society and as individuals, are (still) able and willing to renounce the instrumental value of social capital.

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DIHOTOMIJA V VREDNOSTI SOCIALNEGA KAPITALA: KREPITEV INDIVIDUALISTIČNO ALI SKUPNOSTNO NARAVNANE ŠOLE?

Povzetek: Prispevek se osredotoča na dihotomno vrednost socialnega kapitala in je poskus analize, ki bi v kontekstu šole pokazala na njegov potencial in omejitve. Gradi na tezi, da vrsta vrednosti socialnega kapitala, ki je lahko socialna ali instrumentalna, določa pojavne oblike socialnega vedenja v šoli. Analiza pokaže, da so temeljne teorije socialnega kapitala prispevale k obtežitvi socialnega kapitala z instrumentalno vrednostjo, socialno vedenje v tem kontekstu pa je predvsem direktna in preračunljiva investicija v socialne odnose. Instrumentaliziran pristop k uporabni vrednosti socialnega kapitala v šoli podpira in oblikuje individualistično naravnane posameznike in ne krepi skupnostne naravnosti, altruizma in človečnosti. V podporo slednjega bi bilo v največji možni meri treba upoštevati in v delovanje šole vključiti krepitev skupnosti. Dihotomija v vrednosti socialnega kapitala razkriva razliko njegovih učinkov tako na posameznika kot skupnost, ponuja priložnost za nadaljnje kritične premisleke o didaktičnih pristopih k njegovi krepitevi v šoli in prispeva nov vidik razumevanja socialnega vedenja.

Ključne besede: dihotomija v vrednosti socialnega kapitala, instrumentalna vrednost, socialna vrednost, socialno vedenje, šola, skupnost

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