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## **VỐN XÃ HỘI NGOẠI SINH: THANG ĐO DÀNH CHO DOANH NGHIỆP ĐỔI MỚI SÁNG TẠO**

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### **Tóm tắt**

Bài báo tập trung nghiên cứu vốn xã hội bên ngoài doanh nghiệp bằng cách xem xét các nghiên cứu trước đây và đề xuất các biện pháp đo lường trong bối cảnh doanh nghiệp hoặc nhóm thực hiện các dự án đổi mới sáng tạo. Vốn xã hội bên ngoài doanh nghiệp có thể được đo lường bằng ba thang đo chính: Nhóm nhà đầu tư của doanh nghiệp, Nhóm cổ vấn và Cộng đồng quanh doanh nghiệp. Đặc biệt, Cộng đồng liên quan đến doanh nghiệp là một khám phá mới được đề xuất bởi các tác giả. Vai trò và lý do lựa chọn từng yếu tố trên cũng được làm rõ trong bài viết. Các định nghĩa về thang đo và các câu hỏi mẫu được cung cấp để giúp người đọc hiểu rõ hơn về chủ đề này. Đồng thời, tác giả đưa ra một số bàn luận về ứng dụng kết quả trong thực tiễn quản lý và mở ra một số hướng nghiên cứu thực nghiệm thú vị trong tương lai về ảnh hưởng thực sự của nguồn vốn xã hội ngoại sinh đến các nhóm dự án, tổ chức hoặc doanh nghiệp.

**Từ khóa:** Định nghĩa vốn xã hội ngoại sinh, đo lường vốn xã hội bên ngoài doanh nghiệp, khởi nghiệp đổi mới sáng tạo.

## **THE MEASUREMENT OF EXTERNAL SOCIAL CAPITAL IN INNOVATION ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

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## Abstract

The article has focused on the study of external social capital by reviewing previous studies and proposing measures of external social capital in the innovative project team context. External social capital can be measured by three main scales: Team Investors, Team Mentors and Communities. In particular, Communities is a novel discovery proposed by the authors. The role and reason for choosing each of the above factors are also clarified in the article. Scales' definitions and sample questions are provided to help readers better understand this topic. At the end of the article, the authors give some discussion on the application of results in managerial practice and open some interesting experimental research directions in the future on the real influence of external social capital on project teams or organizations.

**Keywords:** External social capital definition, external social capital measurement, innovation entrepreneurship, startup teams.

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## 1. Introduction

Over recent years, there has been a rapid growth of research on the role of social capital plays as a key premise in gaining competitive advantage. Social capital is divided into internal social capital, which means interpersonal linkages that involve others already in the focal organization, and ESC, linkages that involve others outside the organization (Kim and Cannella, 2008). In this paper, in the theoretical basis of studies such as Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) or Oh et al. (2006), concentrate on measuring ESC. By utilizing external social capital, entrepreneurs are able to access important resources and more opportune information, getting benefits from financial outcomes (Omrane, 2015).

The empirics of external social capital still have difficulty dealing with particular problems at a micro-level in a convincing way. While external social capital has been extensively researched on the basis of social capital, the measurement of external social capital in entrepreneurship, especially at the level of innovation teams, remains a puzzle.

We also discovered that several of these earlier metrics are sophisticated to use and may result in responder's unintelligible. Therefore, the aim of this paper was to determine and comprehend the external SC constructs in innovation teams and to contribute to a new external SC questionnaire. The key finding of this study is the consolidation of three items that construct external SC variables: investors, mentors and communities. These three scales represent the sources of external SC in the context of innovation entrepreneurship and might have different effects and influences on innovative team performance.

## 2. Literature review

### *2.1. Theoretical basis of measurement of external social capital.*

Social capital is the sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through, and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or organization (J. Nahapiet, S. Ghoshal, 1998). Extant research classified social capital into three different dimensions: structural, relational, and cognitive social capital. The structural dimension concerns the properties of the social system and of the network of relations as a whole (J. Nahapiet, S. Ghoshal, 1998). The relational dimension concerns the kind of personal relationships people have developed with each other through a history of interactions (J.

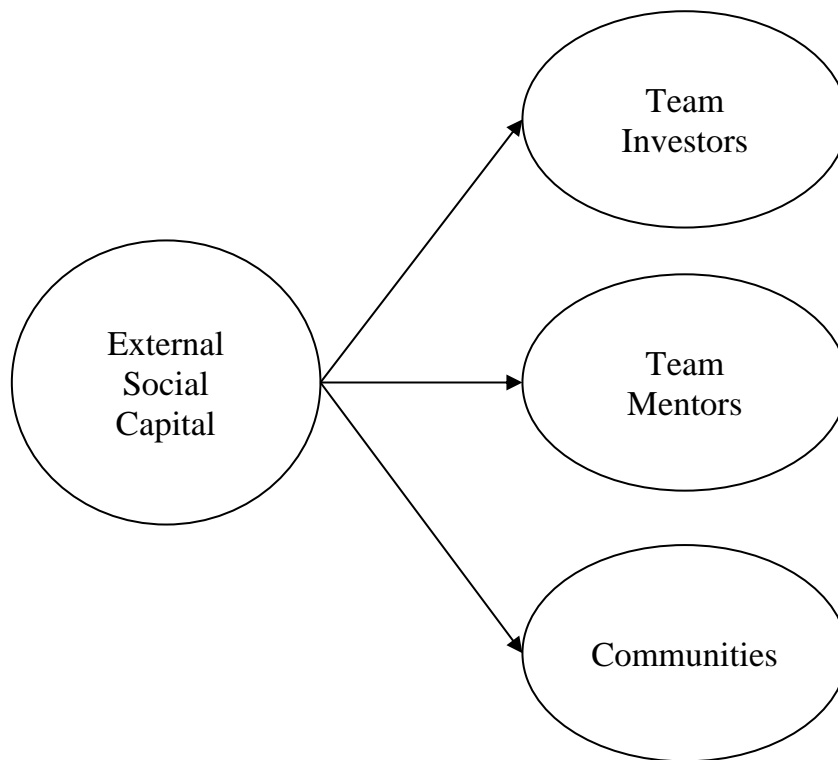
Nahapiet, S. Ghoshal, 1998). Finally, The cognitive dimension refers to resources that provide shared representations, interpretations, and systems of meaning (J. Nahapiet, S. Ghoshal, 1998).

A study of related literature divided social capital into two main sources: internal and external. Internal social capital refers to “bonding” forms of social capital, which refers to connections among members in a closed network. By contrast, bridging social capital or external social capital is defined as the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition (Bourdieu, 1985). In our study, we examine external social capital at the team level, conceptualized as the set of resources made available to a group through members’ social relationships embedded in the formal and informal organizational structure (H. Oh, G. Labianca, M. Chung, 2006).

According to the theoretical basis study of Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998), much research has determined the impacts of the three social capital dimensions. For example, Pirolo and Presutti (2010) show a positive and significant effect of weak inter-organizational social capital on the growth of the start-up’s innovation performance while strong inter-organizational social capital imposes a negative on their innovation performance. Bonfirm et al (2018) show that the relational dimension plays a fundamental role, while structural and cognitive social capital contributes to the second-fiddle role in explaining innovation. In general, researchers have emphasized the importance of building relationships as a means of promoting innovation activities (Holmen, Pedersen and Torvatn, 2005). Due to the importance of developing relational social capital to measure the external social capital in innovative entrepreneurship, we propose relationships among teams and investors, mentors, and communities as three dimensions of external SC in the mentioned context.

## ***2.2. Proposed measurement scale of external social capital in terms of innovation teams.***

External social capital can be viewed as the benefits of connections with external bodies that are related to the team. This can include team investors, as well as competitors, clients or suppliers (Tung, 2012), and the communities surrounding the team’s project. However, as these entities require a connection to the organization, the managing team members or team mentors must be included as they are using their connections as a means to achieve more advantages (Barroso-Castro et al., 2016). These advantages can range from investments to simply informational or reputational gain (Park & Tsai, 2016).



**Figure 1.** Proposed measures of External Social Capital

**Source:** Authors

The analysis of each specific scale will be presented in section 4 - Results.

### 3. Methodology

Currently, even though social capital can usually be measured through trust, social communications and relations, there is still a lack of uniformity in the standardization of researching social capital. Surveys are the most common form of research for social capital and sociological surveys can aid in creating a “road map” of transformation even if deep analysis of the numerous elements of social capital must be included as well. However, it is also worth noting that the purpose of management might change the social information required, which means a standardized way of researching social capital would be most suitable for this particular kind of research (Zharova, Apevalova & Trapitsin, 2019).

This problem of standardization can be solved by Ben-Hador, Eckhaus, and Klein’s new three stages Personal Social Capital scale (2021). The first stage of this scale is called the instrument development since it compiles all of the employees' own judgment of their Personal Social Capital, which will establish the initial validity and be the basis of the measurement for the questionnaires. The second stage of the scale requires two different studies and two different analyses for the same participants. The first analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), aims to construct the values of Personal Social Capital itself, while the second analysis, aims to validate these constructs (Ben-Hador, Eckhaus, & Klein, 2021); EFA includes Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin’s measure of sampling adequacy with the recommended value being 0.6 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012). The two studies' models vary in their separation of Personal Social Capital. The more simplified model only included Personal Social Capital as a whole while the other model separates this into Internal Social Capital and External Social Capital (Ben-Hador, Eckhaus, & Klein, 2021). The  $\chi^2$  difference test will compare the suitability of the two models (Schreiber

et al., 2006). Finally, the third stage measures workplace engagement, which would allow the analysis to have “comparable psychometric properties and established convergent validity, as well as replicating the findings of the second stage in order to confirm them” (Ben-Hador, Eckhaus, & Klein, 2021).

The development procedure of this Personal Social Capital scale must ensure a balance between complexity in informing content validity and simplicity in enhancing external validity. Therefore, a coherent definition of Personal Social Capital must be formed within the questionnaires themselves.

#### 4. Results

Based on previous studies on external social capital, the authors have proposed a measurement model as presented in section 2. This model is the synthesis to measure social capital in the most specific and complete way in the context of an innovation group.

##### 4.1. Team investors:

The investors of a team are an essential external social capital. This factor has been studied since the 1990s (Sapienza & Gupta, 1994; Ehrlich, DeNoble, Moore, & Weaver, 1994). Investors not only act as funders of a project but they also often monitor its activities and provide advice to its managers (Rock, 1991; Sapienza, 1992; Barney et al., 1996). However, the relationship between the innovation team and the investor is a win-win relationship, with a two-way exchange of information and value (Busenitz et al., 1997). Investors contribute capital and information in exchange for information and return on investment. Innovation teams agree to utilize their best efforts to achieve mutual goals, profit, and reputation...

The way to measure team investors is synthesized by the authors from two prominent studies by Lowell W. Busenitz et al (1997) and Arvid O. I. Hoffmann et al (2010). With the approach of the context of venture teams, Busenitz gave a reliable and specific scale in the relationship of venture capitalists and venture teams with the characteristics of the exchange of information, large profits and risks. To better suit the context of the innovation group, the authors combined some of Hoffmann's scales to develop a team investors scale of the innovation group. These scales are built from the studies of Tax et al. (1998), Cummings & Bromiley (1996), MacMillan et al. (2005), Morgan & Hunt (1994), Meyer et al. (1993), Mowday et al. (1979), Parzefall (2008), Pervan et al. (2009), and Moorman et al. (1993).

**Table 1.** The Team Investors’ Measure in the context of Innovation teams.

Scales	Items	Sample questions	Sources
Team investors	1. Representativeness	Our investors are willing to compromise with us.	Lowell W. Busenitz et al (1997)
	2. Explanation or information offered	Our investors have supported the development of new team ideas.	
	3. Interpersonal treatment	Our investors force us to accept their business views.	

	We can expect our investors to remain reliable partners in the future.	
4. Trust	We feel we can depend on our investors to negotiate with us honestly.	
5. Commitment	Keeping our current investors is rather a matter of necessity than desire. Maintaining the relationship with our investors deserves our maximum effort.	Arvid O. I. Hoffmann et al (2010)
6. Reciprocity	We aim to remain very flexible in meeting our investor's needs, even if we will not receive contributions at present. When our investors make a valuable contribution to our team, it is important that we show our appreciation right away.	

**Source:** Authors

#### **4.2. Team mentors:**

This scale has been studied since the success of the startup advisory system in the 1970s in Europe and the United States. Then, from the 1980s to the present, the topic has attracted a lot of attention (Ensher et al., 2000; St-Jean and Audet, 2013).

In formal mentoring relationships, the mentors provide mentees with critical resources and carry out role modeling and career development functions. Weng et al. (2010) indicated that strong mentoring functions have a prominent influence on organizational commitment, job satisfaction and quality. Furthermore, when mentors effectively perform mentoring functions, the organizational socialization of mentees is facilitated and their work adaptability is strengthened (Gibson & Heartfield 2005).

The proposed scale has been carefully synthesized and selected from two outstanding studies by Huang et al. (2015) and Ting, Feng & Qin, (2017) with sample questions like Table 2.

**Table 2.** The Team Mentors' Measure in the context of Innovation teams.

Scales	Items	Sample questions	Sources
Team Mentors	1. Career development	The mentors gave me many important assignments and presented me with opportunities to learn new skills in competitions.	C-Y Huang et al. (2015)
	2. Communication efficiency	Our channel of communication between us and mentors is appropriate.	Ting, Feng & Qin.

		The content we exchange is useful.	(2017)
		Our communication frequency is appropriate for each stage of the competition.	
3.	Intimate relations	We and our mentors trust each other.	
		We and our mentors get along well.	
		Our mentors' fields are appropriate for the field we pursue.	
4.	Matching degree	Mentors fit our team's personality.	
		Mentors have similar preferences to team members.	

**Source:** Authors

#### **4.3. Communities:**

In previous studies, this scale has not been studied and used much. It often appears under the names "social support" or "social reputation", but these terms are not exhaustive. Previous research literature has provided little empirical evidence of social support as a trigger for achievement in groups. Several authors (Osca et al., 2005; Podsakoff et al., 1997) demonstrate a positive relationship between social support from group members and objective group performance.

Therefore, this is a new scale researched and proposed by the authors. Based on reality, an innovative solution team will have target audiences and communities, networks, organizations, and support groups. So, communities here are groups of objects in society (the target audience of the project, community, network, organization, support group, forum, ...) that affect team performance and also can utilize the results of the innovative solution of teams. The support of these audiences will largely determine the success of the performance team.

The sample questions were also selected and adjusted from the studies of Bandura (1991); Luthans and Stajkovic, (1999) and Wittchen et al. (2009) to suit the research context.

**Table 3.** The Measure of Communities in the context of Innovation teams.

Scales	Items	Sample questions	Sources
Communities	1. Community recognition	Our team members tend to increase self-efficacy beliefs, role clarity; and implicit goal setting more effectively if we are positively recognized by the community. Our team group tend to increase group cohesion;	Bandura (1991); Luthans and Stajkovic, (1999);

Scales	Items	Sample questions	Sources
		and group identification more effectively if we are positively recognized by the community.	Wittchen et al. (2009)
	2. Community encouragement	Our team perceived social pressure if we are encouraged by a large number of people in the community.	

**Source:** Authors

## 5. Discussion

The empirical evidence of this study has several implications for managerial practice. Entrepreneurs should strengthen relationships with their families, mentors, colleagues, and communities, as well as absolute trust and social cohesion with their respective company partners, employees, or apprentices. Furthermore, the research demonstrates a win-win relationship between team investors and innovation entrepreneurship.

One of the most significant components in maintaining a good connection with investors is ensuring financial transparency, expenses and advantages, and developing a professional working environment. As a result, it is possible to assure seamless corporate operations and enhance enterprise creativity. Meeting with or calling entrepreneurship investors on a regular basis is the simplest technique to maintain a solid relationship. Even if both parties are too busy to catch up fast every week, the team should meet once a month to provide knowledge that can help your firm succeed. Your investor has put money into your team because they believe in you. Hence, the team should seek regular feedback and suggestions. Sending out email newsletters with links to corporate news, events, and press releases is one way to keep investors informed.

Business owners should also focus on and invest in developing mentoring activities in their businesses. 1:1 networking sessions, group coaching or monthly reviews are opportunities for mentors to observe and orient their mentees. In addition, the board of directors may need to closely monitor decisions related to raising funding, investing in mentoring activities as well as being constructive with the community. To take advantage of and maintain a good relationship with mentors, entrepreneurship can engage in regular communication activities, review the operation process, and seek and receive advice from mentors. As a result, keeping an open line of communication and maintaining a scheduled meeting is critical. Google Calendar or Microsoft Teams is highly useful for automatically setting up regular meetings. A regular check-in to see how things are going and hear about new developments is important. It thus provides some framework and gets both sides thinking about what they want to discuss at the next meeting.

While conducting this research, some limitations were encountered. First, it focuses on external social capital, while there is a close relationship between external social capital and internal social capital. Therefore, the findings may not be able to be generalized because the remaining factors have not been taken into account. Research shows the impact of external social capital on innovation entrepreneurship through 3 factors, however, this assessment has



not been generalized, specifically about the level of influence. Therefore, future studies need to use econometric models to measure. Finally, besides the factors shown in the model, there are other factors affecting innovation entrepreneurship that are not mentioned. Hence, future studies should add control variables to make the assessment more subjective.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study contributes to existing research on the subject of social capital by investigating the effects of external social capital on innovation entrepreneurship. Based on previous research by Bandura (1991); Luthans and Stajkovic, (1999) and Wittchen et al. (2009), the study synthesized and adjusted a new scale measuring Communities variable to fit the research context. Through the theoretical basis study, the authors identify three measurement scales of external social capital in terms of innovation teams: team investors, team mentors and communities. The empirical results thus suggest that Mentoring roles have a significant impact on organizational commitment, work satisfaction, and quality. Accordingly, entrepreneurs are more likely to invest in mentoring programs to promote innovation. It also points out some policy implications for improving the effectiveness of external social capital in innovation entrepreneurship. The study is the basis for building future research models to quantify that impact.

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