Role Of Social Capital In Sustainable Development

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ABSTRACT
Social capital is a network of associations linked the man to the other members of society. This attachment is necessary to move individuals and society further to the path of economic prosperity and sustainable development. The present study explored the relationship between social capital and sustainable development. The effect of both sources and consequences of social capital has been investigated with the improved community's quality of life. The cross-sectional survey study is performed. The data was collected from 452 respondents residing in the rural areas of Punjab by using an interview schedule. The responses of the respondents were recorded on a five-point Likert scale. The descriptive analysis showed that bonding and bridging social ties were adequate, whereas linking social ties was low among communities. The levels of immediate relatives and neighborhood trust were also sufficient. The institutional trust was lower among the community dwellers. Among the consequences of social capital, participation and committees' performance were adequate. The multiple regression analysis showed that the different aspects of social capital are responsible for an overall 47% variation in the community's quality of life. Among the beta values of each element of the social capital, the social ties have a minimal beta value of .19, and committees' performance has a maximum beta value of .42 for improvement in the community's quality of life. So, it can be concluded that the rich stock of linking social links results in greater participation and better committees performance leads toward improved quality of life in the community.

Keywords: Social capital, Sustainable development, committees, quality of life, social trust, social networks

INTRODUCTION
Sustainable development has varied meanings and approaches across countries and scholars. But there is one point common in all the approaches towards development, and it involves the interface approach of environmental, social, and economic spheres. These triple bottom lines are the must
meet criteria for any development. The discipline of economics used the capital's approach towards the concept of development. This approach explains development as the maintenance and, or an increase in the total stocks of a variety of capitals, including manufactured, natural, and social capital.

The social capital approach framework is most popularized to address social sustainability (Lehtonen, 2004). Sustainable development with its approach towards empowerment participation resource mobilization has much relied on. These principles work well in the presence of increased social cohesion. And social cohesion is well built when the community is rich in social capital. Social capital is a network of associations linked the man to the other members of society. This attachment is necessary to move individuals and society further to the path of economic prosperity and sustainable development. Social capital has diverse meanings and approaches. One thing common in all approaches towards social capital is this it's a wide array of networks at each level within a community. These networks are organized and function so that the aim of their existence is the community's wellbeing. The social capital will work to formulate such civic associations, and decentralized institutions will fill in gaps left by the states (Putnam, 1993). The relationship between social capital and community development is direct. Social capital provides universal access to social support systems, makes investment strategies work effectively, and harnesses the participation of financial institutions that are not yet available for development purposes (Kilpatrick and Falk, 2003).

The survival and human society's sustainability capacity depends on the member's actions and relationships. The consistency, coherence, and empathy among a group’s members are represented by the level and depth of connections among its members (Sabet and Khaksar, 2019). Members of the community are those important structural aspects whose participation has a vital role in improving sustainable development in any region. Social capital is the most influential component to affect the participation level of the community in any development initiative (Boutilier, 2017). Social capital is a web of social relations that connect people. It includes trust, norms of reciprocity, and associational membership. Social capital carries the distinguished networks of people familiar with each other, cooperate, and participate in different exchanges, including friends, community members, kinship connections, and social media contacts. These ties by themselves will be sufficient to qualify its social dimensions, regardless of cultural and material content at play in these relations (Martinez and Frutos, 2018).

The effective planning for an increase in social capital will increase the level of social awareness of rural dwellers, social cohesion, trust level, and well-developed social networks. This will improve participation in development initiatives which will help rural communities to pursue their common goals effectively and efficiently by diversifying their economic activities, optimal usage and distribution of resources and facilities, reduction in production costs, increase in labor productivity and employment, and protection and restoration of natural resources (Buck-Mcfadyen et al., 2019). Social capital accelerates and facilitates the formation and development of local network structures, ultimately leading towards development (Shen et al., 2019). The present study has explored the relationship among sources (the extent of bonding, bridging, linking social ties.
and trust) and consequences (participation and collective action) on the improvement in the quality of life of the community.

LITERATURE REVIEW
The term "social capital" refers to a network of social relationships characterized by trust and reciprocity standards. These characteristics, when taken together, are said to support civil society and allow people to behave in mutually beneficial ways (Winter, 2000). Bonding social capital makes the accumulation of human and economic capital achievable. These effects of bonding social capital are identified by the community's bridging social levels, which is found in micro-level networks within a community (Mladovsky et al., 2013). Woolcock (2001) defines that the bonding and bridging social capital stems from each other. The bonding includes the relationship between family members, close friends, and neighborhoods. The bridging links are the relationship with more distant people who have friends, coworkers, and associates, the horizontal connections among community members. "Connecting social ties" are the vertical social links that harness resources, information, and suggestions.

Grootaert (1998) commented that social capital is both an input and, at the same time, an output of the development process. Networks are an essential tool for overcoming some obstacles to long-term community development. They are, however, just human interactions in which trust and reciprocity play a significant role, and they might be closed or open, homophilic or diversified (Newman and Dale 2005). Outside resources are reached via 'bridging' relationships, whereas decision-makers and authoritative people are reached via 'vertical' ties. These relationships are significant for bridging structural gaps inside a community and inter-and intra-institutional solitudes, silos, and stovepipes (Dale, 2001) on the outside. The evidence from farmers' communities with a higher generalized trust suggests more willingness to finance (Zhang et al., 2006). The fundamental 'building blocks for generating social capital have been identified as associations. It has been suggested that community associations could change "bonding" relationships into "bridging" ties to "reach out," as well as create "connecting" links. These relationships assume that tying links with an external intervener would result in a stronger bond (Vervisch and Titeca, 2010). Social capital impacts collective action—the structural aspects of social capital influence cooperation through homogeneity and norms of trust. The norm of cooperation further affects participation and increases participation (Pinto, 2006).

Development with a focus on continuity and preservation of the explored resource for enlargement is approached as sustainable development. Creating the sustainability aiming a community required that the members and organizations have skills, knowledge, values system, capacity, and motivation to face the challenges of the complexity of issues that emerged on the way of sustainability. The cultural, environmental, social, and economic implications almost touch the whole population (Adebola, 2007). The social capital approach is the most proposed framework for addressing social sustainability. It points out that social capital is as necessary as any other capital. Social capital consists of networks, norms, and people's trust. The outcome of social capital involves the individual, family, and community wellbeing, civic life's vitality, wellbeing in the...
surroundings, political and economic wellbeing to cover the participatory democracy, prosperity, and equality (Lehtonen, 2004). The different dimensions of social culture affect the subjective wellbeing of the community residents. Social networks, social trust, and institutional trust highly correlated with subjective wellbeing of the community (Portela et al., 2013).

Narayan and Pritchett (2000) study also reported the positive connection between social capital and sustainable development. The increased participation level of parents results in increased quality at school. The villages rich in social capital were more likely to participate in road construction and have a higher adoption rate of improved agricultural practices. Kusakabe (2012) The study results showed the significant role of social capital accumulation and achieving sustainability. The bracing type of social capital plays a vital role in sharing goals and the flow of resources. Berry and Welsh (2010) study also documented that higher levels of participation are related to higher social cohesion and (better) health. Households with bridging and connecting social capital, defined as participation in groups, access to external institutions' knowledge, and adherence to group norms, were more likely to be food secure. Food security was also higher in households with cognitive, social capital, defined by adherence to generalized norms and mutual trust. However, the social capital is insufficient on its own. It should be supplemented by human capital development. Development interventions aimed at establishing community groups and networks in order to improve food security fund activities that improve cognitive social capital and human capital abilities. Mutual goal setting, trust development, and clear communication among actors are examples of such activities. Both official and informal community education activities should also be encouraged to enhance social capital and increase food security (Sseguya et al., 2018). Lisaka (2006) explored the link between happiness and social capital. The people rich in social capital have a higher probability of meeting fundamental needs. Strong community ties are linked to a higher likelihood of successful collective action (Call and Jagger, 2017). As a result, one of the most significant aspects of rural regions' development is social capital. (Popovych, 2018). Bridging social capital can provide a positive societal function by offering a key source of assistance to persons experiencing socioeconomic hardship or are ill. And bridging social capital can improve growth, employment, and economic development. (Claridge et al., 2018). Sharing interests allows the local community to gain individual and collective initiatives in terms of economic, social, political, and cultural benefits (Blore, 2015). According to Brewer (2003), denser networks increase the likelihood of people pursuing collective action. The outcomes of collective action are enhanced by the improved 'social networks' (Muller and Pere, 2019). Traditional leaders have played a significant role in preserving and mobilizing social capital at the family level, which has resulted in enhanced collective action results for project participation (Blore, 2015). According to Sanginga et al. (2007), social capital, defined as shared norms, trust, and horizontal and vertical social networks that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutually beneficial collective action, is increasingly seen as essential. Enhancing social capital, a critical component in changing resource use and improving sustainable rural development indices is central to the local government's role. Furthermore, higher degrees of networking
accomplishment predict how centrally situated a person is in their network, but centrality does not predict concurrent achievement. (Bond et al., 2017). Social participation in the process of sustainable development is capable of adapting a model that allows local communities and villagers to participate in various levels of development in the decision-making process, including benefit-sharing and determining the type and scale of sustainable development in their area of residence (Esfandabadi et al., 2016). High social trust results in villagers’ increased participation in plan implementation, social activities, and economic investment in villages increasing the mean of sustainable rural development (Sabet and Khaksar, 2020). To put it another way, allowing innovation processes needs committee and dedicated brokers that offer bridging social capital and exemplify competence trust to build participants' trust (King et al., 2019). Societies that are more cohesive and have a high level of trust are better at dealing with external and internal shocks (Woolcock, 2001). Jennings and Stoker (2004) performed a study on three preceding generations to assess the level of social trust and citizens' participation in volunteer work and involvement. A higher level of trust results in higher civic engagement.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Data
A cross-sectional face-to-face research approach is used for the current study. The people of the rural areas of Punjab province were the population of the study. A multistage random sampling technique is used to select a sample of 452 respondents. In the first stage, four districts were selected out of 36 Districts using the lottery method to meet the minimum criteria of 10%. In the second stage, three Tehsils from each District were chosen randomly. In the next step, one union council from each tehsil is selected. A total of 12 union councils was selected to draw the sample. In the final stage, one village from each union council was chosen, and 40 households from each village were included in the study. An interview schedule was used to conduct the interviews with respondents. The interview schedule is prepared in six parts; part one covers the socio-demographic information of the study participants. Part two assesses the level of social trust, part three of the research instrument covers the extent of bonding, bridging, and linking social relations. Part four evaluated the community's level of participation in different development initiatives. Part five covered the performance assessment of different committees in the community, and part six covered the improvement in quality of life in the community in the last three years. Table 1 below presents the details of the socio-demographic features of the respondent.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of the respondents</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 years and less</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 years to 30 years</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Data and Data analysis

The social capital sources assessed the extent of social relations, including bonding, bridging, and linking social ties. The trust level within the community on three dimensions: immediate relatives, neighborhood, and institutional trust. The participation of the community in development initiatives and the performance of different committees are assessed as the consequences of social capital. The development in the area is evaluated on the improvement in quality of life in the last three years. The effect of sources and consequences of social capital is assessed on the improvement in the community's quality of life.

A total of 17 items were used to measure the trust level on a five-point rating scale assigning categories from 1 to 5. 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree. The concepts of bonding and bridging social relations were measured with the help of four sub-concepts for each. The extent of linking social ties within communities was assessed on six sub-set of concepts. The committee's performance was evaluated through 14 sub-concepts. The participation of community residents in development-related activities was assessed on five sub-sets of variables. The development in the area was considered by improvement in the quality of life among community residents.
residents over the last three years. A total of 17 variables were used. The participants' responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 through 5, from strongly disagree to agree strongly. Cronbach's alpha value for each construct is calculated to ensure the validity of each concept. The detail is mentioned in Table 2.

**Table 2: The Reliability Analysis of the Constructs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. no.</th>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Cronbach's alpha value</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Immediate relatives trust</td>
<td>.799</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Neighborhood trust</td>
<td>.842</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Institutional trust</td>
<td>.781</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bonding social capital</td>
<td>.904</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bridging social capital</td>
<td>.921</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Linking social capital</td>
<td>.888</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Performance of committees</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Participation level</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Development</td>
<td>.886</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Empirical Findings and Discussion**

The study's findings were reported in two parts: the descriptive statistics used mean scores standard deviations. The mean score for each variable is calculated by calculating the average response of each participant on all the items belonging to that variable. The scale mid-point is the center of the rating scales—the present data collected on a five-point Likert scale. The mid-point for each variable is 2.5. The second part of the findings used a multiple regression analysis technique to investigate the effect of social capital sources and outcomes on the development of the community.

**Table 3: Descriptive Analyses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Mean score</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Mid-point of scales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate relatives trust</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood trust</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional trust</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean score for bonding levels</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean score for bridging levels</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean score for linking levels</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean score for participation</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean score for committee’s performance</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean score for improvements in community</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 describes the mean scores for trust, social capital, committees' performance, participation level, and overall improvement in the quality of life in the community. The mean score for trust in immediate relatives is 3.71 above the midpoint of the rating scale with an std. Deviation of .760. It indicates an adequate trust level for close relatives in the communities. The mean score for trust level in the neighborhood is 3.70, above the midpoint of the rating scale, and an std. Deviation of .92. It indicates that people have a sufficient level of trust in their neighborhood.

The mean score for institutional trust is 3.01 and above the rating scale's midpoint with an std. Deviation of .800. Among all three aspects of the trust level in the community, the institutional trust is lower than the close relatives and neighborhood trust. The mean score for bonding social ties is 4.09 with an std. Deviation of 1.17, which is above the midpoint of their rating scale. They indicate that the community members have good relations with their close relatives.

The mean score for bridging level relations is 3.44 with an std. Deviation of .89 is also above the midpoint of its rating scale. It indicates a sufficient level of bridging relationships within the community, but the bridging relations are lesser than bonding social ties.

The mean score for networking social ties is 1.61 with an std. Deviation of 1.12. the mean score for linking social capital is below the midpoint of the rating scale. It indicates that the linking social capital is lacking in the community. The bonding and bridging social capital levels are adequate, but the community lacks networking social capital. The mean score for the participation of community dwellers in the different stages of development is 3.12 with an std. Deviation of .85. Among the midpoints of rating scales. It indicates that the community dwellers have a sufficient level of participation in the community's development-related tasks.

The mean score for committees' performance in the different fields to improve the community's wellbeing is 3.39 with an std. Deviation of .58. It is also above the midpoint of the rating scale, indicating the satisfactory performance of different committees in the community. The mean score for development in the quality of life in the community is 3.12 with an std. Deviation of .69. the improvement in quality of life over the last three years is also satisfactory.

Multiple regression analysis is used to explore the effect of social capital sources and consequences on the quality of life within the community.

Table 4: Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R-square</th>
<th>Adjusted R-square</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>F. statistics</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.692</td>
<td>.479</td>
<td>.474</td>
<td>7.54089</td>
<td>102.43</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Predictors: social relations, trust, participation, and committees' performance
Dependent variable: improvement in the quality of life of the community
The value of the R-square of .479 in the above Table of the model summary indicates that the extent of bonding, bridging and linking social relations, level of trust, committees' performances,
and status of participation are responsible for 47% variation in the improved quality of life in the area. The F-value of 10.24 is also indicating the significance of the model.

Social capital with trust increased the chances of participation of community members, which improved the committee's performance and led to improvement in the overall quality of life. The individual impact of each independent variable on the improved quality of life is discussed below.

Table 5: Regression Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regressor</th>
<th>Beta coefficient</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t-ratio</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>.305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonding, bridging, and linking social relations</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Trust</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee’s performance</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation level</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>8.47</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bonding, bridging, and linking social relations**

The beta value of .19 with a P-value of .00 indicates a significant association between the extent of social relations and improved quality of life in the area. With an increase in social relations, the quality of life also improved. According to Sanginga et al. (2007), social capital facilitates coordination and cooperation for mutually beneficial collective action and improves sustainable rural development indices. Claridge et al., (2018) said that bridging social capital can improve growth, employment, and economic development. Popovych, (2018) study reported that one of the most significant aspects in the development of rural regions is social capital.

**Trust level**

For trust level, the beta value is .25 with a P-value of .00, indicating the significance of trust on the improved quality of life in the area. Improved trust level affects the quality of life. Sabet and Khaksar (2020) also asserted that increased trust results in participation and leads toward an increase in the mean scores for different dimensions of sustainable development. Sseguya et al., (2018) show the greater sustainability regarding food security in communities with a raised level of trust.

**Committees Performance**

The beta value of .427 with a P-value of .00 indicates that the committee's performance is the primary determinant for the development in the present study. As the committee's performance increased, the quality of life also improved in the area. Jennings and Stoker (2004) reported that a
higher level of trust results in greater people's engagement in development activities. Call and Jagger (2017) study said strong community ties are linked to a higher likelihood of successful collective action.

**Participation Level**
The beta value of .358 with a P-value of .000 indicates the significant effect of participation in development activities on the improved quality of life in the area. As the participation increased, the quality of life also enhanced. Sabet and Khaksar (2020) study also consistently found that increased participation results in an increase in the mean score in different dimensions of sustainable development. Blore (2015) also find that greater participation results in an improvement in the community's wellbeing. Esfandabadi et al., (2016) study also reported the consistent findings that increased participation leads towards sustainable development.
The determinants of improved quality of life ranged from .19 (minimum) to .42 (maximum). Among the determinants, the social relations alone have the minimum effect (.19), and committees' performance has the Maximum effect with a value of .42. Overall, the findings of the study are consistent with the Narayan and Pritchett (2000), Portela et al., (2013), Esfandabadi et al., (2016), Bond et al., (2017), Popovych, (2018), and Sabet and Khaksar, (2020).

**CONCLUSION**
In recent years, the development paradigm has shifted from just growth towards sustainability. The sustainable development approach is considered only the way to survive through the adversity of expansion and growth. The sustainable development approach has some basic principles on which its philosophy is laid down, including empowerment, maximum participation of the community dwellers, decentralization, and resource mobilization. These principles prove to be productive when they operate in an environment of well-built social cohesion. A raised level of trust and strong networking links helps people organize themselves in the forms of committees/associations/communities, which results in increased participation in community improvements actions. The bonding and bridging of social links provide a base for networking social relations. Resultantly the community has improved its quality of life. Overall, in the present study, social capital was significantly associated with improved quality of life. Bonding, bridging, and networking social relations have a minimum effect on the quality of life. Still, when these relations function with maximum participation, raised trust levels, and well-functioned local community-based committees, it significantly affects the quality of life.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**
1. For inclusiveness and sustainability of the projects, the governments and non-governmental organizations must adopt the social capital approach, it will yield better results for improved quality of life of the community dwellers.
2. The social capital can play a role in reducing poverty by focusing on the economic and political dimensions.
3. Bonding level social relations may can help in consensus building of the community.
4. Involvement of NGO's those with a plan of capacity building, to focus on networking social ties of the people.
5. Participation of youth in educational institutions in different activities for team building and teamwork.
6. The youth need to be organized most; with the increased use of technology and modernization, social alienation is becoming a problem. So, further research is required on the patterns and tendencies of youth regarding networking social ties.
7. Elders need to accommodate the participation of youth so that they can be prepared for future roles.
8. Governments should bound union councilors to organize the communities in the form of committees by considering all the age groups and gender for participation.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
The present study is limited to the rural residents of Punjab province and only assessed the social aspect of sustainable development, i.e., improvement in the community's quality of life. The economic dimension of the development is not addressed in the study.

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