Reviewer’s report

Title: Implementation Capital: Merging Frameworks of Implementation Outcomes and Social Capital to Support the Use of Evidence-Based Practices

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Reviewer: Meredith Kirk

Reviewer's report:

The objective of this paper is to merge two frameworks - implementation outcomes and social capital - to provide clear distinctions of how bridging and bonding social capital work to impact implementation outcomes.

First, I would like to commend the authors for an extremely well-written paper. Social capital is not a content area of mine, and I found the paper clear, with a logical flow, and easily understandable…despite my level of expertise in social capital.

Overall, my comments on this manuscript are minor:

* Background, p2: on page 2, the authors introduce the relevance of social capital to implementation. As framed, social capital is a determinant of implementation, as it can act as a barrier/facilitator to implementation. I think it would strengthen the need for this combined framework if the authors could provide a bit more detail to the conflation of bridging and bonding social capital and why the distinction matters. I think there is a thread - that social capital is not monolithic; it operates to impact outcomes through different mechanisms of action (norm/trust vs circulation of resources), thus, distinguishing between the two is important as differing mechanisms of action (may) necessitate different implementation strategies to close the link between barrier and outcome --- just a little more text to that end would help reinforce why this framework is needed.

* Background, p2: is there any literature you could cite that shows the impact of social capital on outcomes in general - i.e., that when social capital is lacking, outcomes are poorer. If so, I would recommend adding this to the background to support the need of this framework. I say this because many of the constructs in the CFIR are multi-dimensional and thus one could argue why is this framework on social capital + implementation outcomes needed over one addressing implementation climate or individual attitudes/beliefs, etc. if there is literature showing the impact of social capital on outcomes, that could help make the case that this is a high-priority combined framework.
Background, p3: on page 3, the authors present a summary of Proctor's implementation outcomes framework, where the outcomes have been grouped into perceptions, use, and setting-level. Although I have in-depth knowledge of Proctor's framework, I found this grouping of the outcomes and explanation of each outcome very clear and helpful. I have had several conversations with colleagues about which of Proctor's outcomes matter when and how, and this grouping starts to shed light on that. I find this grouping a helpful mental heuristic as it provides some structure to Proctor's outcomes.

A merged framework, p6: in lines 44-53 the authors talk about how bridging is important for feasibility and fidelity as it can offer 'fresh perspectives' on issues that may be occurring in implementation. To your point of situations in which bridging is helpful (linking to an EBP developer or other experts on implementation), are there situations in which bridging would not be helpful (people you're connected to 'outside' your immediate network have no relevant info on the intervention)? It may be a relatively obvious point, but is bridging only useful if the people you're bridging to have relevant info? If so, might be worth stating.

Conclusion: there is one additional point I think may be worth touching on in the conclusion:

- Thinking in an applied sense, are there methods or tools for "diagnosing" social capital (e.g., social network analysis)? It may be helpful to readers (especially those less familiar with social capital) to have additional resources they could go to for diagnosing social capital.

Figure 1: I have a few minor comments on figure 1.

- The top-part of the figure that shows characteristics of bonding/bridging capital - I would recommend the middle column (column in italics) have parallel structure. Instead of listing the author name/year (Granovetter, Burt, Putnam), I would suggest a descriptive label like the preceding rows and a super/subscript for the citation. Also, the last line (Putnam/bridging/bonding) seems redundant with the title of the column. If bridging and bonding are terms attributable to Putnam, just cite that in the column header.

- I think the bottom part of figure 1 could be tweaked (or an add'l figure or table could be added) to show more of the relationships. So for example, grouping acceptability/appropriateness/adoPTION as "individual perceptions" and talking about why bonding social capital matters for each (that tightly knit groups will be subject to the thoughts of others, because in a tightly knit group, you value the opinions of your peers. Can work for you if peers are supportive, against if peers are not supportive). Some sort of expanded/add'l table or figure like this could be a really useful 1 page takeaway resource for readers.

It was truly my pleasure to read this manuscript.
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Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An exceptional article

**Quality of written English**
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