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Higher Education
for Regional Social Cohesion

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Social Capital and Student Well-being in Higher Education. A Theoretical Framework

The concept of student well-being

The full and not only the cognitive, physical, emotional, moral and social development of children is a fundamental goal of compulsory education and also, of education in general. Serving as the outcome of this initiative, we educate and nurture youths that are to be well-informed, disciplined and responsible members of society. However, if this duty is present at compulsory, primary and secondary education, it is essential for higher education to declare and undertake the task of developing responsible, learned, committed adults with sound morals besides training highly qualified workforce. Shaping values, value-systems, and attitudes is crucial in addition to developing skills, abilities, knowledge, although the former one is more difficult to measure and assess. The model of student well-being offers a fine theoretical and implementation framework to measure the above mentioned “soft” outcome of higher education. According to Masters (2004), student well-being consists of five dimensions: the spiritual, emotional, physical, social and mental component. He presented *“these five aspects as separate dimensions, they are in reality closely related. The development of student wellbeing depends on growth in all these areas, as well as on their increasing integration into a balanced whole”* (Masters, 2004, p. 2). Consequently, these dimensions build up a balanced, complete system and individuals, who develop healthily, show continuous growth in each dimension. The author further adds that

“these five areas are overlapping and inter-related, but together provide a useful framework for thinking about students’ growth and development as healthy, well-rounded individuals. Although it is sometimes useful to identify a level below which students can be considered sick/unwell, the dimensions of wellbeing addressed at this conference are probably best thought of as continua along which ongoing growth and development are possible” (Masters, 2004, p. 5).

Masters’ (2004) concept of well-being points towards completeness and although he researched students in compulsory education, learning did not

serve as a separate dimension, it forms the part of other major dimensions of well-being. We assume that in higher education, components related to studying and to the overall learning process, thus we aim to include this separate component in the concept of academic well-being. Based on the Masters' (2004) model, we also aim to incorporate the relation to peers, teachers and parents that is present in all dimensions. In primary and secondary education, teachers' direct, personal relation to parents and thus the possibility to influence and control it is present, although this factor is not or is indirectly present in higher education from the point of view of lecturers. Consequently, the relation to peers and lecturers are major determining elements in the (academic) well-being of students in higher education, and fortunately, lecturers have tools to develop both of these relations. This is supported by Masters' (2004) research results, namely, that student engagement, high student motivation are positively linked to high student achievement and fine learning outcomes. We assume that these statements can be adapted to the world of higher education as well.

In Masters' (2004) model, student well-being serves as an educational task and goal, while student well-being is rather a social outcome of education in Forster's (2004) model, where one goal of education is students' moral, ethical, social and emotional development, which are important elements of high social and emotional well-being. Social and emotional well-being was measured from two viewpoints simultaneously. On the one hand, it was considered as the behavioural social outcome of education (actions chosen in concrete situations). On the other hand, motivations behind actions, the acceptance of attitudes and values were also measured (reasoning, explanation of actions)¹. In one of the research projects of Australian Catholic University (ACU), the major goal was to improve students' well-being through school work. Researchers identified factors that are universally present in the different concepts of well-being: "*positive affect (an emotional component), resilience (a coping component), satisfaction with relationships and other dimensions of one's life (a cognitive component), effective functioning and the maximizing of one's potential (a performance component)*" (ACU, 2008, p. 5). Based on these common elements, they developed their own definition of well-being: "*a sustainable state of positive mood and attitude, resilience, and satisfaction with self relationships and experiences at school*" (*ibid.*). Similarly to Forster's (2004) model, student well-being is considered as an educational outcome here as well, as the consequences of student well-being are embodied as effective learning, social and emotional and proper school behaviour. Student well-being

¹ Forster (2004) measured behaviour and understanding of values with questionnaires, and also conducted focus group discussions with students and teachers to investigate actions. However, he never examined true actions, only hypothetical ones, thus we assume that researching the understanding of norms, values and attitudes is satisfactory, as these serve as a phase for ethical decision making (Lowry, 2003).

includes seven and not five (Masters, 2004) in the ACU model: “*physical and emotional safety, pro-social values, a supportive and caring school community, social and emotional learning, a strengths-based approach, a sense of meaning and purpose and a healthy lifestyle*” (ACU, 2008, p. 6). High student well-being is associated with higher academic achievement (increasing motivation, engagement, participation, and attendance, decreasing problem behaviour), mental health, norm-conscious, responsible, lawful, pro-social lifestyle, whose natural consequence is increasing activity at the labour market, social inclusion (and cohesion) and social capital.

The ACU (2008a) model is more complex as compared to that of Masters (2004) as it emphasizes the internal world at schools, values education, and the learning process. Although both models targeted students in compulsory education, the ACU (2008a) concept can be adapted to higher education as well, as in higher education, young adults aim to organize and control their own learning processes autonomously, several events may evolve that cause difficulties and thus threaten with student attrition. In higher education, there are numerous courses without compulsory attendance, there are several, less-controlled ways of learning, and the role of engagement and involvement is more significant here. Nevertheless, higher education serves as the last level of institutionalised education, the final possibility to foster responsible, pro-social adults, individuals.

Based on the ACU research results with teachers, educators, researchers and experts, the previous, literature review-focused definition of student well-being was finalised as follows:

“Student wellbeing is strongly linked to learning. A student’s level of wellbeing at school is indicated by their satisfaction with life at school, their engagement with learning and their social-emotional behaviour.[...] Optimal student wellbeing is a sustainable state characterized by predominantly positive feelings and attitude, positive relationships at school, resilience, self-optimisation and a high level of satisfaction with learning experiences” (ACU, 2008b, p. 30).

In the final definition we can see that students may experience less positive situations and feelings, are able to assess their own skills, capabilities, possibilities and are willing to reach their maximum. Besides, the determining role of learning and learning experiences are also emphasized, which supports our idea on the adaptability of the model and definition to higher education².

² It is obvious, that well-being is a central element in the learning process and learning contributes to increasing well-being, thus a mutually reinforcing relation exists between the two. *CEOM* (2006) developed a model whole-school approach with three core elements: curriculum, teaching and learning; school organization, ethos and environment; and community links and partnerships (parents, civil society). This model, originally developed for compulsory education institutions, may be easily applied to higher education, as the teaching-learning process is controlled, higher education institutions are organizations, what is more, each faculty or institute may serve as sub-organizations, while community links point towards peers, classmates, lecturers and other administrative personnel.

Fraillon's (2004) model is different from that of Masters' (2004) or ACU (2008a, 2008b). Although his model focuses on students in compulsory education similarly to the above mentioned models, Fraillon formed such concrete dimensions for measurement whose sub-components may be applied in higher education as well. In Fraillon's theory, student well-being is realized in the context of school communities. We assume that this statement may be easily adapted to higher education as well, where we work with learning communities. As *Fraillon* did not intend to develop a separate theory but aimed to measure student well-being, his definition is quite simple: "*student well-being is: the degree to which a student is functioning effectively in the school community*" (Fraillon, 2004, p. 24). The short and concise definition would allow a detailed specification of measurement dimensions, although Fraillon intended to work with two dimensions: intrapersonal and interpersonal.

"The intrapersonal dimension of student well-being includes those aspects of well-being primarily manifest in a student's internalised sense of self and capacity to function in their school community. [...] The nine aspects of the intrapersonal dimension of student well-being in the school community are: autonomy, emotional regulation, resilience, self-efficacy, self esteem, spirituality, curiosity, engagement, and mastery orientation" (Fraillon, 2004, p. 30). "The interpersonal dimension of student well-being includes those aspects of well-being that are only evident through a person's interactions with, or responses to others [...] The four aspects of the interpersonal dimension of student well-being in the school community are communicative efficacy, empathy, acceptance, and connectedness" (Fraillon, 2004, p. 35).

Fraillon (2004) does not consider student well-being an implicit educational outcome, similarly to Sirgy, Grzeskowiak and Ratz (2007), who define their "quality of college life" by the perceived satisfaction with academic and social aspects of their lives. As such, both concepts are comprehensive enough, although they somehow remain at a single level, with all the dimensions and measures being equal in a system of indicators. We propose a hierarchical approach, with satisfaction with life as a whole of college students as a globalizing evaluation of student well-being, and satisfaction with college life as an intermediary variable.

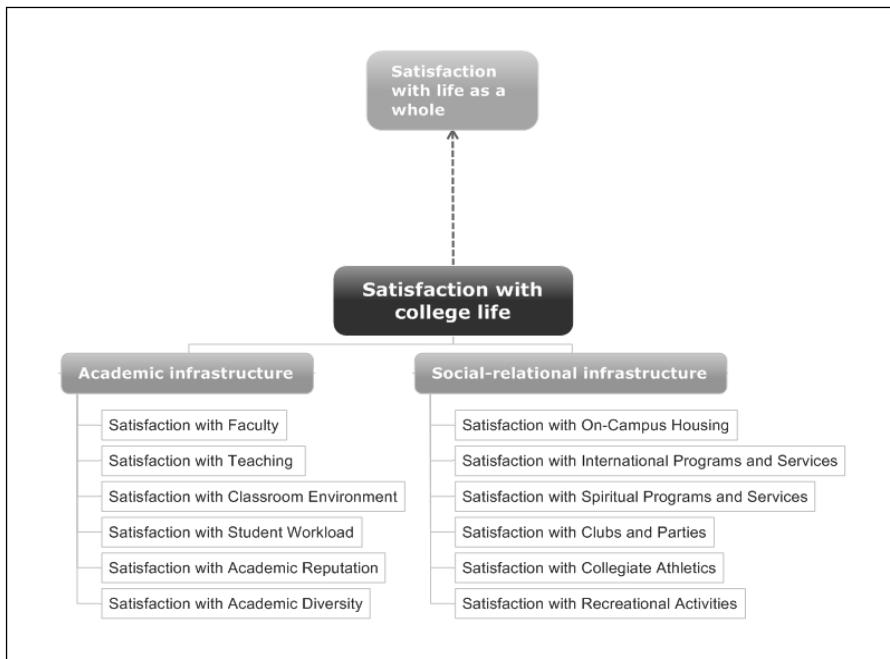


Figure 1. A model of satisfaction with college life and student satisfaction with life as a whole, based on Sirgy, Grzeskowiak and Rahtz (2007)

Social capital as a promotive factor in student well being

As a following question of our research we try to find the answer to what are the most important promotive factors, which contributes to students' well-being. We present some promotive factors, which contribute to student well-being, with special emphasis on the social capital components (social-supporting systems of individuals, social coherence etc.). Research projects are mainly directed on discovering factors of effective prevention, healthcare and health improvement but due to the complex phenomenon of health, the factors identified affect the full quality of life. Consequently, positive changes may not only detected at the individual level but at the level of communities and society (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Based on the term of protective factor which is used in psychological research, we apply the term of promotive factors in higher educational research. Instead of the critical approach of the social sciences, which primarily focuses on the risk factors, we need to investigate and identify positive, promotive factors that contribute to the well-being of students and student-communities.

The effects of social capital on well-being dimensions have been investigated rather recently (Gundelach & Kreiner, 2004; Helliwell, 2003),

most researchers in the field converging in the view that social trust has strong positive effects on individual and social welfare.

Among the components of social capital, interpersonal trust (measured by questions like “do you think you can trust most people?”) seems to be the best correlated with happiness (Bjørnskov, 2006). Helliwell (2003), analysing data from the first three waves of World Value Surveys for 49 countries, found that interpersonal trust has an independent effect on subjective well-being. In a subsequent work, co-authored by Putnam, he analysed also the European Value Survey data from 1999–2000, confirming this trend. Bjørnskov (2003), analysing data on 32 countries of the world, found that happiness levels are influenced by levels of interpersonal trust, as well as those of social capital in general. The relationship is stronger in richer countries. “*This result opens for new policy options – concludes the author. While efforts directed at generating income may not contribute directly to happiness in affluent societies, investments in social capital does*” (Bjørnskov, 2003, p. 14).

Kopp and Martos (2011) also emphasize the role of social capital in terms of social well-being. The main point of their view is the trust and cooperation between individuals and communities as the elements of social capital are the main pillars of human well-being and happiness. Social capital is seen as a characteristic of a community, which the different communities have different rates with.

Other indicators of social capital (relationships with family, friends and neighbours, at work, civic engagement and trust) have been also found having positive influence on satisfaction of individuals with people's evaluation of their lives as a whole (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004). Moreover, Bartolini, Bilancini and Pugno (2007) demonstrate that the decline in U.S. of what they call *intrinsic relational social capital* (marriage and relationships) is longitudinally associated with the decline in happiness for the period 1975–2004. A smaller association was also found between decline of happiness and decline in trust in individuals and group membership (weak relational ties).

Starting with the idea of a lack of knowledge on the relationship between social capital and well-being, the authors of a report of the ACT for Youth Center of Excellence conclude that it is becoming increasingly clear that when youth feel connected to school, attached to adults and peers, engaged in positive school-based activities, and safe at school, they are far more likely to prosper than when any of these is missing (ACT for Youth Center of Excellence, 2003).

Most of the literature of social capital and well-being in students refer to general well-being of individual and the communities without being specific and very few try to define and systematize the idea of well-being. Likewise the term *social capital* is represented by their components and various indicators in analyses (trust, stable relationships, membership in voluntary groups).

Social capital effects on students' health

Interpersonal trust (a component of social capital) affects smoking behaviours (Minoru, 2011). The effects on health also depend on the context (Borges, Campos, Vargas, Ferreira & Kawachi, 2010). For example, social capital can increase the diffusion of harmful health behaviours, for example smoking among adolescents may spread by social networks (Valente, Gallaher & Moutappa, 2004, as cited in Borges et al., 2010). In favourable health environments, social capital can also increase the diffusion of health-preserving practices, such as abstaining from smoking. Social and emotional support is another variable that intervenes here: the more a young person has stronger relationships, the more can benefit of social support. On the other hand, having a large network of close relationship can be a burden for the person that should offer them social support (Sapag, Aracena, Villarroel, Poblete, Berrocal, Hoyos & Kawachi, 2008). Besides the effects of youth networks, there are important effects of family and community on youth well-being are documented. For example, Duke, Skay, Pettingell and Borowsky (2009), in a longitudinal study in United States, found that higher family and community connections during adolescence promote healthy youth development. Also, social capital in communities has been found to be correlated with their collective efficacy, and by this they can act on prevention of health-damaging deviant behaviours such as drug abuse among minors (Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997, as cited in Borges et al., 2010). Hungarian researchers examined positive factors that beneficially influence youths' health behaviour, function as protective mechanisms against addiction and deviance, which are known to decrease individuals' quality of life and subjective well-being. Research projects on the relation of social competencies and drug use have proven that those with better communicative skills and higher social self-confidence are less likely to take drugs or drug-like substances (Pikó, 2010). Sound family background and close friendships are essential for coping with everyday problems. Well-functioning, social supporting systems of individuals (close family or friendship ties) have proven to present significant promotive effect. The presence or absence, quality and quantity of relationships determine individuals' physical and mental well-being, thus they function as firm protective factors. People with stable relationships are less responsive to depression, psychosomatic illnesses and health-destructing substances (Kovács & Pikó, 2010). Numerous research projects have proven the positive effect of membership in religious community on well-being (Astin, Astin & Lindholm, 2011; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Kopp, Skrabski & Székely, 2004; Kovács & Pikó, 2010; Petersen & Roy, 1985; Pikó, 2007; Pusztai, 2011b). The literature tries to interpret the mechanism of the impact that high level of involvement in the religious groups has on well-being in several ways. The question arises whether the association

is direct or indirect, that is religiosity leads to a kind of attitude which promotes well-being. The question is whether this attitude is a central, organic element of religiosity, or just a side effect of religious community membership (Iannaccone, 1998).

Several authors have proven that sport contributes to well-being in different ways. Taking part in a sport activity as a member of a sport community (for example a voluntary sport organization) involves social capital which is conducive to generalized trust and political commitment (Seippel, 2006). Fox (1999) emphasized mainly the positive effect of sports on mental well-being. Doing sports contributes to the treatment and prevention of mental illnesses and disorders; it increases the level of physical and mental well-being among both the mentally ill and the general population. Besides, it also decreases everyday stress and anxiety, increases self-confidence and has several social benefits, such as the improvement of social relationships (as an element of social capital). Harrison and Narayan (2003) found that students doing some kind of sports have more healthy body images, are less likely to suffer from emotional disorders and to physically or sexually hurt their mates. They proved that those doing sports regularly commit suicide less frequently. McAley et al. (2000), Morgan and Bath (1998) examined how sports and regular exercising affects physical and mental well-being among the elderly, being a high-risk group in terms of health. While the former authors emphasized the positive effect of sports on social well-being (social relations, feeling integrated into a community), the latter ones highlighted its beneficial effect on psychological well-being (decreases symptoms of depression). Numerous studies have proven that youths' health behaviour and lifestyle are related to their health status in adulthood, thus regular exercising as a form of health behaviour affects their health status and well-being in adulthood. Among sporting youths, we can find fewer smokers and more persons on a healthy diet. However, decreasing physical activity is associated with drug use and unsafe sexual behaviour. Sporting youths are more self-confident, have less psychosomatic symptoms and can be better motivated in healthcare programmes (Keresztes, 2007; Mikulán, Keresztes & Pikó, 2010). Sporting youths establish friendships more easily, are more satisfied with their bodies, are more future-oriented and disciplined, and are less likely to suffer from depression. Those doing regular physical activities have a better feeling of well-being, higher emotional stability and intellectual performance. A survey on a representative sample of 1000 high school Romanian adolescents indicate that, controlling for age, physical activity is moderately associated with life satisfaction and happiness. The relationship is mediated by self-esteem for boys and leisure satisfaction for both sexes (Bălătescu, 2003).

Social capital effects on academic delinquency

Lack of parental support (family social capital) and interpersonal trust are associated with delinquency in different countries (Dornbusch, Erickson, Laird & Wong, 2001; Salmi & Kivivuori, 2006; Wright & Fitzpatrick, 2006). Their influence is generally found independent. School social capital may intervene positively, however, in the relationship between low family social capital and youth delinquency, by substituting poor parental attachment and lack of parental involvement in children's schooling (Hoffmann & Dufur, 2008).

The most important factors that have been identified as serving correlates of cheating include student characteristics, attitudes toward cheating, personality variables, and situational factors that have an impact on the prevalence of cheating and the number of students that decide to engage in cheating. Among these factors, we can detect numerous points that are determined by the learning process or teachers and higher educational institutions themselves, for example, academic aptitude, pressure to achieve good grades, academic success, the quality of study conditions or the range of extracurricular activities (Whitley, 1998).

Whitley (1998) did not emphasize the impact of peers, however, McCabe and Trevino (1997) identified peers as the utmost significant factor among the contextual variables that influence cheating. Peers were examined with the help of numerous dimensions, for example, fraternity/sorority membership was positively correlated with cheating behaviour. Besides, based on Bandura's social learning theory, peer behaviour was also found as an influencing factor of cheating. This means that if students see their peers successful cheating attempts, they might engage in similar ways to a higher extent. In addition, "peer disapproval was the most important determinant of changes in cheating behaviour between high school and college", which is also supported by the negative correlation of peer reporting and cheating (McCabe & Trevino, 1997, p. 384).

According to McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield (1999), honour codes can serve as a transmitting context for communicating expectations, definitions on the behavoir of faculty members and students. In their interpretation, honour codes are embedded in the culture of academic integrity "via tradition, communication, training, penalties, via peer, faculty and community expectations, trust and support" (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 1999, p. 217). In this way, peer pressure, the lack of peer support result in cheaters looked down and untolerated and unaccepted. However, they also admit that "strong subcultures exist that encourage cheating" (McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield, 1999, p. 221).

In a more recent study (2001), the same authors identified another important contextual dimension as well, namely, peer reporting. Although

“peer reporting is generally discouraged within groups, because groups tend to create norms that support in-group loyalty” (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001, pp. 30–31). The authors found lower levels of cheating where student reporting was more frequent, although this relationship decreases if we add honor code environments to the examination. “In short, the higher rates of reporting on code campuses may have little impact on the lower levels of cheating generally found in code environments. The same factors that lead to the lower levels of cheating in the first place—especially the high level of trust placed in students—may also explain the higher reporting levels” (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001, p. 43). This means that academic integrity may be interpreted as a source of social capital in higher education institution, which decreases the level academic misbehaviour.

Social capital effects on academic achievement

It is no doubt that the links between student achievement in higher education and diversity factors (such as social status, ethnicity, gender or disability) are well documented as risk factors, but the possible promotive effects of societal context and integration into social networks in campus-societies on minimising impacts of social status differences are less documented. In order to summarize this dimension of campus-effect, we elaborated the concept of institutional social capital (Pusztai, 2011a). The theoretical background of our research is based firstly on the Colemanian social capital hypothesis, according to which social capital from relational resources can compensate for the reproductive impact of social status on school career. On the other hand, educational researchers have highlighted that schools may have some institutional characteristics in compulsory education (stable relationships in school community, mutual trust of actors and expanded faculty role models) that can serve as resources of social capital. Recent changes in higher education and increasing diversity in student population turned scientific interest towards students and communities in institutional contexts. Astin (1993), Tinto (1993), Pascarella and Terenzini (1991; 2005) advocated the statement that students’ institutional integration and institutional social context attributes have strong effect on student achievement (for example, their attendance and persistence) in higher education as well. Finally, the thesis of institutional habitus further modifies the picture. This feature of an individual campus seems to affect the career paths of non-traditional students more definitely than others. Our question is whether integration into higher education institutional and external communities and associations such as professional and research groups during university years can contribute to the improvement of higher education outcomes in our multiethnic and multiconfessional region as well, where the rate of graduated population is lower than the EU average and the majority of students’ parents had no experience with higher education (Pusztai, 2011a).

Having analysed the large amount of literature on the subject, one is led to the unambiguous conclusion that institutions of higher education do not contribute to the development of their students' equal academic gain through structural or infrastructural factors but by providing them with an interactional force field (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Moreover, within the interactional force field, there has been a shift of emphasis towards informal and intragenerational forces. Simultaneously, there has been an increase in the proportion of non-traditional students, who do not only lack any inherited higher educational experience, but are also attracted outside of the academic milieu by their social status and microenvironments (e.g. students with lower educated parents and from villages, students who have a job).

Among the theories that lend themselves as interpretational frameworks, the most influential research findings available on the subject are Austin's theory of student involvement, Tinto's theory of student integration, Bourdieu's theory of reproduction and its improved version, the theory of institutional habitus (Tierney, 2000), as well as Coleman's concept of social capital (1990). The most popular of these, Tinto's integrational paradigm worked well especially as an explanation of lower-status students' integration into higher education, based on the observations made when the first wave of non-traditional students streamed into higher education in the 1980s. According to the theory both individual success and the efficiency of the institution crucially depend on the stability of the institution's societal community, the condition of which is a significant shift between ties outside and inside the institution. This model, drawing from the theory of rites of passage, puts a strong emphasis on that dividing line and its successful crossing, since the function of rites of passage is exactly to indicate clearly one's successful separation from one's earlier community and, simultaneously, its values and norms (Tinto, 1993). The theory stresses incorporation into the new system of relationships in campus through phases of transition and acceptance and identification with its values and norms. In Tinto's model the divide between relationship networks and communities within and outside a HE institution is very clear-cut and membership is mutually exclusive because lack of commitment and embeddedness reduce students' persistence and chances of obtaining a degree. The theory relies on a concept of socialisation with a more traditional, passive and static student image and a somewhat simplified picture of organisational society. The revisions of the theory lead one to the conclusion that it does not apply equally to all student groups; e.g. it works better with residential students than commuting ones and it works differently with the two sexes and in mixed ethnic and religious contexts (Hurtado, 2007).

Since then, during recent waves of expansion, higher education has also been attracting such students that do not only differ from traditional students in their hard indicators of social status, but also in other respects. They are the

ones who have already entered institutions with strongly heterogeneous faculty and student societies. Perhaps now it is time to seek a more precise explanation for the achievement of various student groups in higher education by using a more sensitive, multidimensional approach to social status, taking into consideration subcultural lifestyles and value and identity categories that influence personal relationship networks and thereby detecting subtler social categories. Within the interpretational framework, we are interested in paying special attention to the dimension of relationships as, beyond their help in more sensitive status assessment, we assume that network resources as well as traditional forms of capital prove to be very useful in academic advancement. Accordingly, we have reviewed theories and research that count on the power of relationships among students.

Tinto analysed students' integration into the society of the institution as an explanation of success (Tinto, 1993). In his comprehensive model he reflected on students' connectedness to formal and informal social systems and concluded that integration into them influences achievement in such a way that it cuts the ties that attract students out of the world of higher education and, through frequent interactions, they conform to forces attracting inside. They get integrated to such an extent as they are able to share fellow students' norms and values and meet long-term formal and informal requirements of the community of the institution or a closer student community. While integration strengthens or remains strong, students' commitment to both their personal goals and the institution increases, which has a beneficial effect on achievement. The lack of integration, on the other hand, leads to getting distanced, marginalised and attired. For a long time, the theory of academic and social integration counted as the only dominant explanation of the issue, and although several of its details were debated, it was generally considered applicable. We also think that there are limitations to the applicability of the theory because one cannot assume the existence of a tangible common culture in the institutions, and neither is the student community such an entity that incorporates newcomers smoothly (Pusztai, 2011a). When compared, the theory of student integration and Astin's (1993) theory of student involvement have a number of contact points. Astin developed his influential theory of student involvement, which attributes students' advancement to their involvement in the HE institution's academic and social life. A distinctive feature of the theory is that involvement and identification with the student role refer to students' actual activities rather than their motivation. As the author put it, it is not what students think or how they feel that is important but what they do. Whereas Astin does not give a coherent explanation as to what determines the differences in the extent of student input, differences in the success of student integration, as formulated by Tinto, gives some guidance. Bean (2005), Astin (1993) and Tinto (2003) all come to the same conclusion that the state of commitment necessary for success is a result of integration.

The other influential theoretical model that has contributed to the research of the connection between relationships in higher education and success is Bourdieu (1999) and his followers' interpretation, which claims the individual's relationships and achievement are related to the interplay between student habitus and institutional habitus, and impact students' self-perceptions about fitting in a campus context. This theory fails to give a satisfactory explanation for the success differences within non-traditional student groups. Habitus is closely linked to hard indicators of social status, thus it cannot be helpful in the interpretation of achievement differences within a class or class fraction. Whether they speak of the individualisation of young people or disciplinary socialisation, the authors do not go beyond the paradigm of the structural determinism of students.

The majority of literature focuses attention on insufficient student resources when it comes to finding explanations for success or the lack of it. Less attention is paid to an important dimension of student socialisation, namely how and in cooperation with whom dispositions and goals are shaped and reinterpreted. What our model, based on international theories and research findings, considers relevant is students' personal relationship networks, which have a powerful influence on students living on heterogeneous campuses.

Also according to Coleman's theory students' achievement is supported by pupils (and parents) being integrated with the school community. Belonging to common outside networks with shared values foster, ensure and increase a permanent exchange of supporting norms and informations to reach higher academic achievement (Coleman, 1990). An empirical analysis proved that his theory is suitable for the examination of higher education students' resources as it gives high priority to individual decisions and considers class of origin important but not crucial to one's career, which makes it possible for us to explain the achievement differences among non-traditional students (Pusztai, 2011a). In Coleman's theory (1990), differences are accounted for by the existence, composition and strength of personal relationship networks. It does not presuppose a unified or domineering and enforcing organisational community and norm system, but takes the relationship network approach, which is more sensitive to the diversity of subcultures. Therefore, it is better applicable in the heterogeneous culture of higher education institutions. It is also sensitive to the fact that in a microenvironment formed by personal networks, students' resources do not flow into one direction but they are exchanged. Not only does this dynamic and mutual exchange of resources keep networks alive but it also explains how they are shaped by entering members. Meanwhile, it is not only individual resources that receive emphasis but also the structural characteristics and the content of student relationship networks, which modify the achievement one would expect on the basis of individual resources. Completing the analysis of former student survey conducted in interregional border region it was revealed, that values and norms shared in

these micro-communities really influences student achievement (Pusztai, 2011a).

This list of factors that contribute to well-being is not fully exhaustive. On the other hand, it should be adapted for the college students' experiences. Finally we wish to theoretically investigate whether the institutional social capital how can have an effect on student well-being. Based on these factors that are supposed to contribute to student well-being, we constructed a model in which student overall well-being is measured as their satisfaction with their life as a whole (Figure 2).

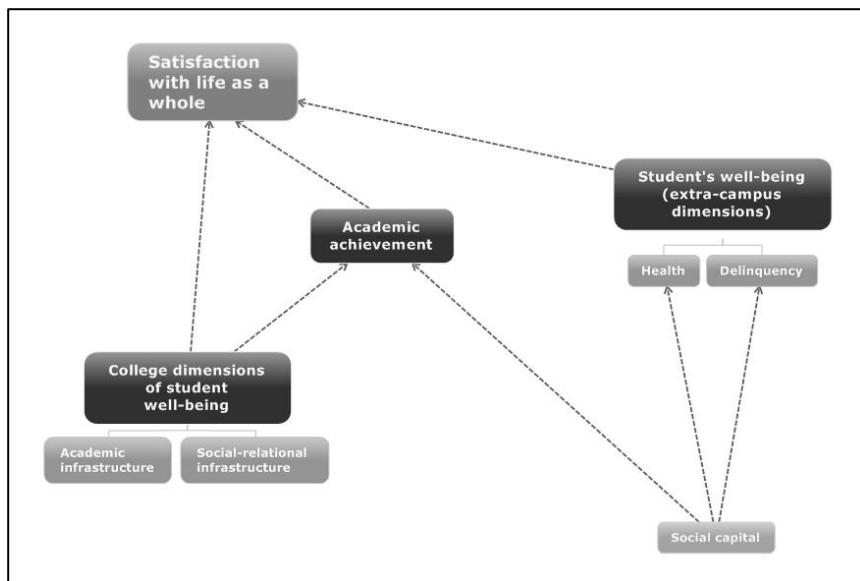


Figure 2: A causal model for the relationship between social capital, student well-being and satisfaction with life as a whole

Source: personal elaboration

In this model, the satisfaction with life as a whole is influenced by the college dimensions on student well-being (academic infrastructure and social-relational infrastructure) both directly and indirectly (through academic achievement). The extra-campus dimension of student well-being (academic achievement, health and delinquency) also influences life satisfaction of the students. Social capital influences student's subjective academic achievement and student well-being extra-campus dimension.

Conclusions

In this paper we set out from two main premises: we are convinced, that the main task of HE institutions is to contribute to the students growth, as well as we consider student growth as a holistic, multidimensional phenomenon, which also embrace student well being. Since the term well-being has several various interpretation with regard to students and youth in special literature, we review former theoretical and empirical results to conceptualize and model the suitable concept of student well-being. Despite the large interest in the social capital of youth, this particular relationship was not investigated thoroughly in connection with well being. Whilst we summarized and critically analyzed theories on impact of student integration in campus society and students' relationships, we argued that social capital, based on students' networks inside and outside of their campus is a very important element that predicts student's well-being. According to our general causal model students' achievement, health and moral awareness can built a strong link between students' social capital and student well-being. In near future we plan to work on empirical testing of proposed model.

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