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Valuation of Social Capital in Public Transportation and Sustainable Mobility in Venezuela. A Systematic Review of the Literature

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1. INTRODUCTION

Urban public transport is a primary service for every country and its cities; as a link between the circulation of goods and people, in its role of social integration that favors the balanced development of societies and facilitates the well-being of its inhabitants. This medium does not produce tangible consumer goods, but it makes it possible for them to be produced by moving millions of workers daily; it does not educate, but takes thousands of students to study centers; it does not provide fun or recreation, but it supports and makes possible the development of these activities (Molinero & Sánchez, 1998).

This has generated enough concern to carry out this research, which has as a general objective to identify the valuation of social capital in public transport and sustainable mobility in Venezuela, during the years 2008 to 2020, through a concise systematic review. Finding, within the importance of the term social capital, regarding the norms, institutions and organizations that promote trust, mutual aid and cooperation in the countries. Similarly, in general transportation is a key factor in determining costs for the different products and services that are marketed in an increasingly demanding and changing market, since it affects the increase in their final prices, generated by: the transfer of inputs, raw materials, and others.

Therefore, it is a reality that public transport has become an ideal strategic industry for a globalized and ecological economy, as well as for cities that demand greater facilities for the sustainable and safe mobility of people, this means tends to pollute less than the private vehicle, as fewer cars are used. Finally, explore the current situation between the criteria of social capital, public transport and sustainable mobility in Venezuela, as well as establish research areas where current systematic reviews are needed in said study.

2. METHODOLOGY

This research was developed using the methodology of systematic review of the literature according to Petticrew & Roberts (2006): "it is an explicit method to summarize the information and a means to contribute to the answers and structured questions, about what works and what does not, and many other types of



questions" (p. 2). Which was carried out through an open search of works published in different free access scientific databases.

Subsequently, exhaustive searches were carried out in the Academic Search Ultimate of Ebscohost, considering the peer-reviewed publications between 2008 and 2020, finding 67 studies, finally there were 5 articles that fully meet the inclusion criteria, delimiting them according to the following descriptors in English: "Social Capital", AND "Transport" AND "Public", indicating "full-text title", and that they were "refereed publications" in "English", with titles that bear one or more keywords, described above.

Then, the exclusion was carried out, which consisted of eliminating duplicate articles, abstracts, web pages or others, finding 38 articles, which were not "full text", leaving 22 ineligible or did not meet the inclusion criteria and 6 were in other languages, according to the procedure for the selection of reference or search. In addition, a gray literature search was conducted to obtain information on the situation of public transport in Venezuela, its valuation with social capital and sustainable mobility, of some refereed articles and additional relevant official sources, from: World Bank (WB), Latinobarómetro Corporation, Human Rights Action Education Program (PROVEA), books on the subject, among others.

3. RESULTS

In the results of the present study, few direct evaluations could be identified between social capital, public transport and sustainable mobility according to the systematic reviews found in the EBSCOhost database between the years 2008-2020, only 5 refereed publications complied with the inclusion criteria, described above. These publications corresponded to the countries of Northern Europe specifically in: Sweden, followed by Romania and Turkey since these countries generally have effective and integrated transport plans, some carried out secondary analyzes of individual and aggregated data through standardized questionnaires, oral surveys, and even applied previously informed consent.

Among the selected peer-reviewed publications, the one by Currie & Stanley (2008) stands out as they carried out a multidisciplinary research pointing out that although there are some indirect connections with transport in general, the social capital is substantial, but they exist anyway. They also indicate that social capital is complex and diffuse, particularly because they identified few quantitative primary investigations from a transportation perspective between travel behavior and social networks or interaction.

In the same way, other authors such as Canitez (2019) affirm that the role of the Urban Transport System (STU), the New Institutional Economy (NEI) and social networks have not been adequately covered in the literature, important to understand the role of associations of public transport operators, especially in developing cities and alleviate collective action problems.

In this context, Östh *et al.*, (2018) were able to examine the resilience (capacity of a system, in the presence of a shock) of spatial and social network systems in relation to their endogenous functioning, their provision of social capital and their accessibility, determining that they are critical and complex factors, since their evolution is co-determined by: proximity to the market, development of the labor and housing market, public services, among others.

Similarly, Rezeanu *et al.*, (2016) point out that the indicators to measure the concept of urbanism and its relationship with the political dimensions of social capital: surface area of the town, density of life, perceived need for problem solving They are associated with the road transport infrastructure within the locality, administrative status as an urban locality, distance from the respondent's house to the central city center, number of public service units, among others.

On the other hand, Mattisson *et al.*, (2015) examined the relationship between modes of transport, travel time, social participation, general trust with other people are not significantly associated with decreased measures of social capital except among travelers long-term, since less social participation prevails, and where more women than men actively travel on public transport for less than 60 minutes.

The literary review carried out to examine the situation of public transport in Venezuela and its assessment with social capital and sustainable mobility, is substantial and weak, since through some refereed



articles and the gray literature indicated, these findings determined that the System Public Urban Transport (STPU) that has been presented in Venezuela since the 1980s, based on the private vehicle, has serious consequences of negative externalities for cities according to the Venezuelan Program of Education Action in Human Rights (PROVEA, 2016).

On the other hand, in Venezuela according to Padrón (2020) I conclude that the STPU tends to be negative and inefficient, presents a drop in mobility and accessibility, which reduces social capital, due to the fact that it causes social inequality in transportation. Regarding the data directly related to the capital stock in Venezuela, it reflects a negative impact, according to the information from the Latin America Report (LATIN-BAROMETRO, 2018).

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The systematic review carried out in this research has allowed the identification of some causal studies, during the last decade and without publication bias, that is, all the articles were published, given the importance of their results, where the notion of social capital has attracted enormous interest research at the interface of economics and social sciences. Finding that social capital has been defined by several authors as the set of norms of interpersonal trust, values, attitudes, networks, satisfaction in life and support for change between people and institutions.

So, social capital implies social networks or bridges with other people, so traveling in public transport vehicles or waiting at stops or exchanges, encourages social interaction with people who do not know each other and this is probably a main objective of the services companies seeking to improve social capital. In this sense, Canitez (2019) indicates that social capital can alleviate the problems of collective action and fill the empty space left by the formal institutions of public transport in developing countries.

However, the direct valuation between social capital, public transport, and sustainable mobility was complex, substantial and weak, coinciding with Currie & Stanley, (2008). Although, public transport offers obvious economic and social benefits, as a means of increasing access to social networks for the underprivileged, it has been shown to promote sustainable development, as well as social well-being, productivity and social networks. Likewise, it is necessary to improve sustainable mobility options worldwide and Venezuela is no exception, which weakens social capital, especially in disadvantaged communities.

Public transport, by definition, means traveling with others, and fostering social interaction or co-presence during the trip, as this creates the opportunity to form the so-called bridge social capital. When planning public transport, it is important not to exclude certain groups, such as people with low socioeconomic status or people with disabilities. The concept of social capital is new in social mobility and in the field of accessibility. People travel to achieve important personal, economic and social achievements. On the other hand, virtual mobility is required in public transport to promote financial inclusion and increase social capital.

The Public Transport System in Venezuela is insufficient and negative, which reduces social capital and sustainable mobility, since it does not have urban planning according to the new times and permanent, lack of holistic integration between the different existing means of transport in the country, and with the different actors involved, in order to achieve a modern, safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable system for all.

Finally, the sources consulted show that the social capital of Venezuela is negative and precarious, therefore it represents a serious obstacle to the country's orientation towards sustainable mobility. Society is atomized and fractured in many aspects, coupled with the data analyzed from the LATINOBARÓMETRO Report (2018), such as the current bad economic situation in the country, low levels of interpersonal trust, satisfaction with life has decreased, and in terms of social class, the lower class predominates, among others.

On the other hand, there is a lack of quantity of quantitative primary research associated with the measurement of social capital, opening unsuspected possibilities of research in matters of: urban transport planning, public policies, public transport innovation, social and virtual mobility, among others.