Delving into the Concept of Social Capital in the Smart City Research

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Abstract : Unprecedented growth of megacities and urban areas all around the world have resulted in numerous risks, concerns, and problems across various aspects of urban life, including environmental, social, and economic domains like climate change, spatial and social inequalities. In this situation, ever-increasing progress of technology has created a hope for urban authorities that the negative effects of various socio-economic and environmental crises can potentially be mitigated with the use of information and communication technologies. The concept of 'smart city' represents an emerging solution to urban challenges arising from increased urbanization using ICTs. However, smart cities are often perceived primarily as technological initiatives and are implemented without considering the social and cultural contexts of cities and the needs of their residents. The implementation of smart city projects and initiatives has the potential to (un)intentionally exacerbate pre-existing social, spatial, and cultural segregation. Investigating the impact of smart city on social capital of people who are users of smart city systems and with governance as policymakers is worth exploring. The importance of inhabitants to the existence and development of smart cities cannot be overlooked. This concept has gained different perspectives in the smart city studies. Reviewing the literature about social capital and smart city show that social capital play three different roles in smart city development. Some research indicates that social capital is a component of a smart city and has embedded in its dimensions, definitions, or strategies, while other ones see it as a social outcome of smart city development and point out that the move to smart cities improves social capital; however, in most cases, it remains an unproven hypothesis. Other studies show that social capital can enhance the functions of smart cities, and the consideration of social capital in planning smart cities should be promoted. Despite the existing theoretical and practical knowledge, there is a significant research gap reviewing the knowledge domain of smart city studies through the lens of social capital. To shed light on this issue, this study aims to explore the domain of existing research in the field of smart city through the lens of social capital. This research will use the 'Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses' (PRISMA) method to review relevant literature, focusing on the key concepts of 'Smart City' and 'Social Capital'. The studies will be selected Web of Science Core Collection, using a selection process that involves identifying literature sources, screening and filtering studies based on titles, abstracts, and full-text reading.