



Social Capital and Transformative Diaconia for Just Peacebuilding: A Case Study of "Yayasan Bimbingan dan Kesejahteraan Sosial" (YBKS)

Agus Supratikno, Iwan Firman Widiyanto

Satya Wacana Christian University (UKSW), Indonesia

agus.supratikno@uksw.edu

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47814/ijssrr.v9i8.3567>

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the praxis of “Yayasan Bimbingan dan Kesejahteraan Sosial” (the Social Guidance and Welfare Foundation) in managing and mobilizing social capital within the context of transformative diaconia to achieve just peacebuilding. The study employs a qualitative case study method with an interdisciplinary approach, alongside a theoretical review of social capital. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and a literature review. The research finds that YBKS makes comprehensive use of social capital, encompassing network ties—specifically bonding, bridging, and linking—as well as its cognitive and relational dimensions. The study concludes that the comprehensive use of social capital can foster sustainable social service provision by the organization.

Keywords: *Social Capital; Transformative Diaconia; Just Peacebuilding*

Introduction

In his book, *Jesus & Wong Cilik: Transformative Diaconia, Theology with the Marginalized People of Asia*, Widyatmadja explains the shifting dynamics of the church's ministry of love, known as diaconia. A long-standing form of this ministry in church history is charitable in nature—hence termed “charitable diaconia”—and consists of providing aid, such as feeding and clothing the poor, visiting the sick, and performing various other good deeds. Charitable diaconia is commonly practiced by churches because it offers several immediate advantages: its benefits are tangible and visible, it carries no risk, it casts the giver in a positive light, it focuses on personal relationships, it can be used to attract followers, and it fosters dependency while upholding the status quo (Widyatmadja, 2015, pp. 29-30; Nordstokke, 2014). The book also highlights the shift in mindset regarding church diaconia initiated by Toyohiko Kagawa. As noted by Widyatmadja (2015, p. 31), Toyohiko Kagawa argued that forms of church diaconia based solely on charity were inadequate and required changes to social structures. Due to these views, Kagawa was once accused by the Japanese government of being a communist; however, the government later acknowledged his contributions and recognized him as a pioneer of modern social work in Japan.

The dynamics of diaconia subsequently shifted toward “developmental diaconia,” a concept initiated during the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Uppsala, Sweden, in 1967. Following that event, the WCC established a commission on the Church's Participation in Development. As a subsequent measure, the Seventh General Assembly of the Council of Churches in Indonesia, held in Pematang Siantar in 1977, established a development center named “Dharma Cipta”. This church movement, based on the concept of development, was influenced by the development ideology that emerged during the Cold War in response to the ideological competition between communism and capitalism. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was subsequently established to support this development ideology (Widyatmadja, 2015, p. 33).

The IMF then introduced these development methods and philosophies to Second- and Third-World nations. Furthermore, efforts to address poverty and public suffering were pursued through increasing Gross National Product (GNP), intensive agriculture based on the Green Revolution, family planning, the development of tourism and industry, and the promotion of foreign investment and free markets (Widyatmadja, 2015, p. 34).

This form of developmental diaconia subsequently became known as reformatory diaconia (Hoksbergen, 1999). If charitable diaconia is likened to providing fish to people experiencing poverty, then developmental or reformatory diaconia assists the poor by providing the tools to catch fish. Reformatory diaconia services take the form of providing technological aid, skills training, and capital grants or loans to community groups. Within the developmental diaconia paradigm, poverty is viewed as the result of laziness, a lack of capital and skills, and infertile agricultural land (Hoksbergen, 1999; Widyatmadja, 2015, p. 34). However, it became apparent that the development ideology—which gave rise to developmental or reformatory diaconia—was unable to overcome poverty. In fact, the gap between the rich and the poor widened, not only locally but also globally, because the approach failed to address the root cause: unjust social structures. Consequently, the development ideology was called into question: for whom, exactly, were the progress and profits generated by this economic system intended?

It was in this context that transformative or liberative diaconia emerged. It drew inspiration from the methods used by URM movement—specifically, the process of raising community awareness, which aligns with Paulo Freire's concept of conscientization. Transformative diaconia, as described in this study, focuses on empowering the congregation to break free from poverty—a manifestation of the theological-ethical principle of solidarity. This differs from diaconia, which is merely liberative in nature and lacks efforts toward sustainable empowerment. The key elements of transformative diaconia are community organizing and empowerment aimed at concrete action to liberate people from the unjust structures that have held them captive. Transformative diaconia was influenced by the URM movements in Asia and globally, which focused on community organizing and empowerment. This movement emerged in the late 1960s and was adopted by the World Council of Churches (WCC) (Widyatmadja, 2015; Lewankoru, 2024). Transformative diaconia goes beyond addressing urgent needs; it fosters long-term solutions to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and social exclusion, grounded in three key pillars: (1) empowering communities for a sustainable transition; (2) building resilience by strengthening social and health services and community empowerment; and (3) ensuring inclusion through the provision of opportunities and security guarantees for all (Eurodiaconia, 2025).

In Indonesia, the practice of community organizing using the URM method was evident in two organizations: “Pelayanan Masyarakat Kota dan Industri” (PMKI/Urban and Industrial Community Service) and the Indonesia Committee on Community Organization (ICCO). Both organizations operated under the leadership of Reverend W.J. Rumambi. Initially, members of the Council of Churches in Indonesia (DGI), except H.J. Pooroe—rejected the URM movement because its methods were perceived as potentially conflict-inducing and leaning toward leftist or communist ideologies (Steenbrink & Aritonang, 2008). Widyatmadja was an alumnus of the community organizing training conducted by PMKI and ICCO in Jakarta between 1972 and 1973. He subsequently applied his understanding of URM within the framework of “transformative diaconia,” aiming to help the church better understand the URM movement (Widyatmadja, 2015).

Later, Josef collaborated with the church to establish an institution to launch the transformative diaconia movement, named “Yayasan Bimbingan Kesejahteraan Sosial” (Social Welfare Guidance Foundation), on April 15, 1974. He began by organizing both church and local communities—specifically in the village of Ngepung, Sangkrah, Surakarta—by establishing the Siwi Rahayu early childhood education center in 1975. This early childhood education initiative served as an initial example of how community organizing and full community participation could be realized. The organizer played the role of bridging community needs with available resources to address existing problems (Widyatmadja, 2015).

The movement's methodology is known as community organizing. The organizer serves as a motivator and inspiration, accompanying the community as it strives for collective well-being. This method emphasizes that the community itself assumes the leadership role. Thus, in the Siwi Rahayu education initiative, community awareness and participation held a central position from the program's inception throughout its ongoing operations. Beukes & Beukes (2023) call it as inclusion diaconia, it is about a society that does not leave people out. It is about a world where people with abilities are clearly and truly part of the bigger picture. These people take part in society. Are linked to the main goals and aims. The move towards being inclusive has two parts. One part is about the person and the other is about the group of people, around them. To help people take control of their own lives it is important to think about how the group works. This means looking

at ways people can help each other and make each other stronger. It also means looking at how different groups and people can offer kinds of help so that individuals can live on their own and make their own choices.

Amidst the pressures of the New Order regime under the authoritarian rule of Suharto, the services of "Yayasan Bimbingan Kesejahteraan Sosial" (hereinafter YBKS) continued to expand. In that climate, social relations—particularly with the ethnic Chinese community—were highly volatile. In November 1980, anti-Chinese riots erupted in the city of Surakarta, triggered by a fight between a Javanese youth and a Chinese youth. The unrest spread to several other areas; widespread violence ensued, with numerous homes and shops burned and looted. It was against this backdrop that YBKS—led by Josef, who was ethnic Chinese, a Christian, and a pastor (representing a "double minority")—provided comprehensive support to victims by mobilizing church congregations and other communities (Widyatmadja, 2015).

Method

This study employs a qualitative case study method. A case study is a qualitative research strategy that aims to explore in depth a bounded system—such as a program, event, activity, process, or group of individuals—within a specific time and place, through in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Data will be collected through field observations, interviews, document analysis, and literature review. The research utilizes social capital theory to examine YBKS's praxis of transformational diaconia in the context of "just-peacebuilding." Consequently, the study's theoretical framework will elucidate key concepts such as social capital, just-peacebuilding, and transformative diaconia.

Discussion and Findings

Social Capital

The concept of social capital is part of the broader concept of "modalities"—in their various forms—which is discussed in depth in Julia Hauberer's book, "Social Capital Theory: Towards a Methodological Foundation" Modality is defined as an accumulation of labor that generates profit and is capable of reproduction. Modalities are categorized into three primary forms: economic, cultural, and social capital (Häuberer, 2010)

Economic capital is defined as capital that can be directly converted into money and is institutionalized as property rights. Cultural capital manifests in three distinct forms: first, the "embodied state" (an inherent or internalized condition), which is internalized within the individual as skills and knowledge; and second, the "objectified state" (an objectified condition), such as books, monuments, or paintings. Third is the institutionalized state (an institutionalized condition), such as academic degrees or qualifications. Finally, social capital is understood as actual or potential resources linked to the possession of a durable, institutionalized network of relationships based on mutual acquaintance and recognition (Häuberer, 2010)

Meanwhile, Robert D. Putnam categorizes social capital into "bonding social capital"—which exclusively binds together people who are similar or alike—and "bridging social capital"—which inclusively bridges different societal groups. According to Putnam, religion can embody both of these forms. The African-American church serves as a unique case study of an institution that simultaneously displays both aspects. On one hand, the church functions as "bonding social capital" by connecting individuals of the same race and faith. On the other hand, it acts as "bridging social capital" by successfully connecting and uniting people from diverse socioeconomic classes (Hauberer, 2010; Claridge, 2018; Smidt, 2003)

Woolcock (1998) refers to bonding as integration—relationships within a community—and bridging as linkage—networks connecting community members with actors, organizations, and resources outside the community. Both integration and linkage must operate concurrently for effective community development. Meanwhile, Claridge (2018) identifies another element of Putnam's network social capital concept—omitted by both Hauberer and Woolcock—known as linking, which describes vertical relationships with parties possessing greater power, resources, or authority. He classifies bonding, bridging, and linking as components of the network ties within the social capital structure.

Häuberer (2010) outlines the significant role of social capital in religious movements as follows: First, it provides the networks that serve as the movement's primary foundation. Second, social capital fosters trust, honor, reputation, and solidarity, thereby strengthening bonds among members. Within religious organizations, trust enables members to follow

leadership, participate in ministry, share resources, and resolve conflicts. Third, social capital provides access to various economic, cultural, and symbolic resources held by individuals within the network. Fourth, regarding social capital, bonding strengthens the identity of a faith community, whereas "bridging" facilitates interfaith dialogue, humanitarian cooperation, and peacebuilding. Fifth, religious movements possessing high social capital tend to be more successful in social service, advocacy, disaster response, and peacebuilding. Sixth, social capital enables the mobilization of resources embedded within social networks.

In a similar vein, Smidt (2003) explains the role of social capital as follows: First, it facilitates cooperation and collective action. In this context, social capital—manifested through friendships, social norms, and mutual trust—acts as a moral resource that transforms self-interested individuals into community members united by shared goals. Second, it fosters civic skills and leadership. Involvement in religious movements trains members in interaction, leading meetings, public speaking, and organizing activities. This serves as a crucial avenue, particularly for marginalized and disadvantaged groups, to acquire political and social skills. Third, it provides a social safety net and community services. Behaviors rooted in social capital encourage volunteering and charitable giving. This helps establish a safety net for vulnerable populations through social initiatives such as food assistance, caregiving, and social support. Fourth, it bridges and strengthens relationships among members (bonding and bridging social capital). Social capital within religious movements encompasses norms of reciprocity and trust. This serves to both strengthen internal group solidarity (bonding) and build connections with external groups or the wider community (bridging).

According to Claridge (2018), the social capital framework encompasses three dimensions—network ties, cognitive social capital, and relational social capital—drawing on the work of Nahapiet and Ghoshal. The explanation regarding network ties aligns with the views of Hauberer and Smidt, as previously outlined. Claridge further explains cognitive social capital as the dimension concerning how group members collectively understand social reality. This dimension is not physically visible, as it resides in the realm of thought, meaning, interpretation, beliefs, and values shared by group members. He cites the definition provided by Nahapiet and Ghoshal as follows: "Cognitive social capital is a dimension of social capital that relates resources providing shared representations, interpretations, and systems of meaning among parties. The cognitive dimension is also manifested through shared language, symbols, and narratives. Language is understood not merely as a tool for communication but also as a means of shaping group identity and coordinating actions. Therefore, cognitive social capital encompasses shared language, narratives, goals, vision, culture, and values. He concludes that this dimension serves as a shared guide for how individuals act within society. "Cognitive social capital is shared values or paradigms that allow a common understanding of appropriate ways of acting." The relationship between structural social capital and cognitive and relational capital is as follows: "The structural dimension is an antecedent to both cognitive and relational dimensions since social relationships and structures are essential for social exchange." (Claridge, 2018)

Consequently, cognitive social capital shapes a shared orientation regarding actions deemed appropriate within a community. He further explains another dimension of social capital: relational social capital. While cognitive social capital concerns shared ways of thinking, relational social capital focuses on the quality of relationships among group members. Claridge defines it as follows: "Relational social capital is a dimension of social capital that relates to the characteristics and qualities of personal relationships such as trust, obligations, respect, and even friendship." (Claridge, 2018)

It can thus be concluded that relational social capital encompasses the quality of interpersonal relationships, including trust, trustworthiness, obligations, expectations, identity, identification, norms, and sanctions. Unlike structural social capital, which merely considers the existence or absence of relationships, relational social capital assesses the quality of those relationships. This implies that long-standing relationships foster greater trust, commitment, shared identity, and moral obligation.

The existence of social networks enables continuous interaction among people. It is from these interactions that shared values—a cognitive element—and mutual trust—a relational element—develop. Conversely, cognitive and relational social capital also reinforce the structure of social networks. Thus, the relationship among the three is characterized by two-way causality. Social network structures give rise to shared values (cognitive) and trust (relational), while these shared values and trust foster the formation of increasingly extensive and robust social networks. "It is likely that cognitive and relational dimensions reinforce and encourage the development of structural social capital by providing the inclination to interact and form new relationships, roles, rules, and procedures."

Based on Claridge's understanding, the three dimensions of social capital and their relationships can be illustrated in the following table:

Table 1: Social Capital

	Network	Cognitive	Relational
Main Focus	Social network structures shape regular interactions, thereby fostering cognitive and relational development—specifically bonding (horizontal), bridging (intergroup), and linking (vertical) dynamics—based on space, roles, and rules.	Developing the cognitive element fosters a shared understanding that strengthens the structure of social networks.	Enhancing the nature and quality of relational ties to strengthen social network structures.
Elements	Social network structures shape regular interactions, thereby fostering cognitive and relational development—specifically bonding (horizontal), bridging (intergroup), and linking (vertical) dynamics—based on space, roles, and rules.	Language, symbols, narratives, visions, values, attitudes, and shared beliefs.	Trust, trustworthiness, norms and sanctions, obligations and expectations, identity and identification.

Furthermore, the concept serving as the theoretical framework for this paper is "just peace"—understood as the effort to build a social order that is fair, dynamic, transformative, and sustainable. The concept of just peace emphasizes respect for human rights, reconciliation, and the prevention of the recurrence of conflict. Peacebuilding entails not merely halting violence—or achieving "negative peace"—but also establishing "positive peace" by transforming relationships, social structures, and institutions through the simultaneous engagement of grassroots communities and local, national, and transnational actors (Appleby, 2000; Stahn, 2020; Lederach, 1995; Galtung & Fischer, 2013).

In the context of peacebuilding, Lederach highlights the role of community culture in fostering peace. He argues that conflict is linked to meanings derived from culturally rooted knowledge. Therefore, conflict management aimed at achieving peace must be grounded in an understanding of and respect for the community's cultural knowledge (Lederach, 1995). Stahn (2020) emphasizes the importance of prevention in peacebuilding efforts to ensure a sustainable peace, noting that "it turns just peace into sustainable peace".

This perspective demonstrates that just peace encompasses a broader normative dimension than traditional concepts of peace. While peace has often been understood simply as the absence of war (negative peace), just peace positions justice as a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable peace. Thus, the success of peace is measured not only by the cessation of armed conflict but also by society's ability to build social relationships that are just, inclusive, and capable of preventing the emergence of new violence (Stahn, 2020; Ercoşkun, 2021).

Conceptually, Stahn's ideas are closely linked to Johan Galtung's theory of positive peace, which distinguishes between negative peace—defined as the absence of direct violence—and positive peace, a condition in which social structures are capable of eliminating structural violence through social justice, economic equity, respect for human rights, and political participation. From this perspective, "just peace" can be understood as a further development of the positive peace concept, as it incorporates a normative dimension comprising principles of post-conflict justice (Stahn, 2020; Ercoşkun, 2021). Positive peace means not merely the absence of war (negative peace), but rather an active state characterized by the realization of social justice and equality, as well as the elimination of structural and cultural violence (Galtung, 1996).

In addition to Galtung's influence, the concept of "just peace" is closely linked to the peacebuilding theory developed by John Paul Lederach (1995). Lederach views peacebuilding as a long-term process of fostering healthy relationships through reconciliation, conflict transformation, and community empowerment. Unlike Stahn, who positions justice as a

normative goal, it places greater emphasis on the social mechanisms that enable communities to rebuild relationships following conflict. Consequently, peacebuilding can be understood as an instrument for achieving just peace.

Further contributions come from Oliver P. Richmond through the concepts of "post-liberal peace" and "everyday peace." Richmond critiques the liberal peace approach for being overly focused on state-building—prioritizing institutions while neglecting the needs of local communities. According to Richmond, sustainable peace must be grounded in the everyday experiences of the people and involve the participation of local actors. This perspective aligns with Stahn's argument that just peace must be realized through an inclusive, community-oriented process, rather than solely through legal or political approaches (Stahn, 2020)

Thus, just peace is a multidimensional concept that integrates international law, transitional justice, peacebuilding, and human rights protection. It addresses not only how to end a war but also how to create the social, political, and economic conditions necessary to sustain peace in the long term.

Based on the discourses above, the concept of just peace can be summarized as follows:

Table 2: Summary of the Justpeace Concept

	Justpeace
Definition	A state of peace based on justice, established by empowering communities to prevent new forms of violence—whether direct, structural, or cultural—through the creation of social relationships that are just, inclusive, transformative, and sustainable.
Action	Community empowerment, a focus on community needs, respect for human rights and community cultures, the establishment of social justice and equitable economic distribution, political participation, reconciliation, conflict prevention, and the transformation of relationships, conflicts, social structures, and institutions.
Actor	Grassroots communities, as well as local, national, and transnational actors, acting simultaneously.

Another key concept in this paper is transformative diaconia. The World Council of Churches (WCC) defines diaconia as a ministry committed to serving human needs, breaking down barriers between people, advancing the human family in justice and peace, and upholding the integrity of creation so that all may experience fullness of life. Diaconia ministry is grounded in faith and human rights (World Council of Churches, 2022). More specifically, the concept of transformative diaconia—developed by Josef Purnama Widyaatmadja—is a form of liberating diaconia aimed at transforming the social, economic, political, and cultural structures that oppress the people (Widyatmadja, 2009). Transformative diaconia involves efforts to empower the weak, the poor, and the marginalized, fostering new insights and awareness regarding their circumstances; this enables them to stand on their own feet and fight for their rights against unjust social and cultural structures, ultimately leading to a more prosperous and humane life (Widyaatmadja, 2015).

This theoretical framework demonstrates that social capital serves as a strategic tool for realizing "justpeace"—or "just peacebuilding," a term emphasizing the active effort to build justpeace. Justpeacebuilding aims for cultural, structural, and institutional transformation; similarly, transformative diaconia seeks to challenge unjust social and cultural structures to foster a prosperous and humane existence. Both approaches rely on social capital as a tool or strategy to empower grassroots communities, the poor, and the marginalized, as well as local, national, and transnational actors. Thus, both transformative diaconia and justpeacebuilding are concepts of social accompaniment that require social capital as a tool or strategic component to achieve their objectives. The table below illustrates this relationship more clearly:

Table 3: The Relationship between Transformative Diaconia, Just Peacebuilding, and Social Capital.

	Target	Social Capital as a Strategic Tool	Expected outcome
Transformative Diaconia	The weak, the poor, and the marginalized.	Network: Bonding (strengthening internal ties), bridging (connecting between groups), linking (connecting across levels). Cognitive: Language, symbols, narratives, visions, shared values, attitudes, and beliefs. Relational: Trust, norms and sanctions, obligations and expectations, identity and identification.	Transforming oppressive social, economic, and cultural structures into a prosperous and humane life.
Just Peacebuilding	Grassroots communities and local and national actors, simultaneously.	Network: Bonding (strengthening internal ties), bridging (connecting between groups), linking (connecting across levels). Cognitive: Language, symbols, narratives, visions, shared values, attitudes, and beliefs. Relational: Trust, norms and sanctions, obligations and expectations, identity and identification.	A peaceful situation characterized by non-violence, justice, inclusivity, transformation, and sustainability.

Therefore, the central question of this study is: how is social capital formed, managed, and mobilized within YBKS's practice of transformative diaconia to realize "Just Peacebuilding"?

Transformative Diaconia and Just Peacebuilding

The preceding discussion demonstrates that the goals and objectives of both transformative diaconia and justpeacebuilding share common ground. Transformative diaconia aims to transform oppressive social, economic, and cultural structures into a life of well-being and human dignity; similarly, the goal of peacebuilding is to create a peaceful situation characterized by the absence of violence, as well as by justice, inclusivity, and transformation.

Both approaches also share a commitment to grassroots engagement. In transformative diaconia, the grassroots constituency consists of the vulnerable, the poor, and the marginalized. Meanwhile, the concept of peacebuilding simultaneously involves local, national, and transnational actors. In carrying out its transformative diaconia ministry, YBKS likewise maximizes the involvement of local, national, and transnational actors. Consequently, the transformative diaconia movement—along with its various programs—can be said to be implementing or realizing the concept of justpeacebuilding.

The distinction is that justpeacebuilding is a general—and arguably secular—concept. In contrast, YBKS's practice of transformative diaconia is grounded in the Christian faith, meaning Christian values animate it. Nevertheless, in its actual ministry, YBKS's transformative diaconia targets the grassroots community regardless of religious background. The following section analyzes how social capital is formed, managed, and mobilized within YBKS's practice of transformative diaconia to realize justpeacebuilding.

Typology and Mapping of YBKS's Social Capital

The inception of YBKS involved "bonding networks"—networks based on shared identity or commonalities. YBKS was founded by three churches in Surakarta: the Indonesian Christian Church (GKI) Nusukan, GKI Sangkrah, and GKI Coyudan. The figure who initiated the founding of YBKS was Josef Purnama Widyatmadja, who at the time was a pastor-in-training at GKI Nusukan (Widyatmadja, 2025). At its inception, YBKS possessed no assets; however, members of the congregation were moved to offer support according to their means, such as by providing tables and chairs or donating funds to cover the organization's operational costs. Over time, support for YBKS's ministry expanded. In 1975, during its 41st assembly, the GKI Yogyakarta Classis formally recognized and endorsed YBKS. Subsequently, in 1980, the 18th Synod of GKI Central Java also declared its support for YBKS (Widyatmadja, 2009).

The establishment of YBKS was the realization of the vision and experience of Josef, who had previously undergone training in the URM—a mission program of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA)—which provided skills in community organizing and empowerment for social change (Widyatmadja, 2025)

This demonstrates that the inception of YBKS was supported by a community sharing a common Christian faith; the actors and agencies involved from the outset were individuals and institutions grounded in that shared faith. Personally, Josef—one of the founders of YBKS—was a pastor-candidate supported by a community of three GKI churches in Surakarta; this support base later expanded to include the GKI Synod (Classis of Yogyakarta and Central Java). In carrying out its activities, YBKS also mobilized church congregants. Furthermore, YBKS came into existence because Josef, as its founder and primary conceptualizer, had been inspired and equipped through URM training provided by regional (CCA) and global (WCC) church fellowships.

YBKS also engages in "network bridging," establishing relationships with diverse community groups—both conceptually and in the practical implementation of transformative diaconia. Theologically, Josef defines the URM transformative diaconia movement as an inter-denominational and inter-faith movement that brings together various groups called to realize a new humanity, a new earth, and a new heaven, founded on justice, peace, humanity, and the integrity of creation. YBKS does not have a vision of religious proselytization; rather, theologically, the YBKS movement is viewed as a movement of the Spirit responding to conditions incompatible with the coming of the Kingdom of God—a Kingdom to be realized on earth through the empowerment of the people (Widyatmadja, 2025). It is upon this theological foundation that YBKS can build networks with groups or individuals of different faiths or backgrounds.

There is an interesting example illustrating how YBKS utilizes the social capital of network bridging. For instance, YBKS's various services target the downtrodden and marginalized—the common people—regardless of religious, ethnic, or social background. These services are inclusive and open, fostering a very close relationship between the community and the organization.

Josef shared an interesting story. One of the training participants was a Muslim who candidly admitted feeling embarrassed; he had received exceptional service from YBKS—a Christian organization—which had even accommodated his need to perform prayers. The participant revealed that he had previously held radical views, often opposing Christian congregations attempting to build churches. However, firsthand experience of the kindness shown by a Christian organization like YBKS shifted his mindset. He told Josef that he was willing to assist should the organization ever wish to build a church. Josef replied that his mission was not to establish churches, but rather to serve the poor and marginalized (Interview with Josef, June 20, 2026).

The use of "bridging" social capital is also evident in YBKS's expansion of services into remote villages. The organization provides a wide range of services, including education, training, healthcare, economic empowerment and support, non-litigation advocacy, and more. A notable case involved advocating for the people of Boyolali who were displaced by the Kedung Ombo reservoir construction project and did not receive fair compensation from the authoritarian New Order government (Interview with Josef, June 20, 2026).

Numerous international donor agencies support YBKS's work. Josef views the evolution of YBKS—a faith-based NGO backed by international donors—as having progressed through three stages. The first is project support, where an NGO carries out specific, temporary projects with limited timeframes. The second is program support, which occurs when an NGO earns a donor's trust to implement a longer-duration program with broader impact; a single program may encompass multiple projects. The third is institutional support, in which a donor places high trust in the organization by funding its full range of activities. YBKS has reached this highest level: institutional support (Interview with Josef, June 20, 2026).



YBKS's services also leverage "linking" social capital to connect the organization with powerful parties. For instance, in 1975, YBKS established an early childhood education program named Siwi Rahayu. At that time, early childhood education was not as common a sight as it is today; the program was founded in response to residents' needs and proposals. Subsequently, to ensure the official recognition of Siwi Rahayu graduates so they could proceed to primary school, YBKS coordinated with the Village Social Institution. This institution ultimately issued graduation certificates to the children completing the Siwi Rahayu program. Thus, the Siwi Rahayu early childhood education program gained formal legitimacy from the village government, thereby facilitating the students' transition to the next level of education—primary school (Widyatmadja, 2025).

YBKS also established collaborative relationships with the government as part of its service work. At one point, Josef's work with YBKS received official recognition from the Indonesian government, specifically the Social Affairs Agency. Interestingly, although Josef frequently criticized the policies of the authoritarian New Order regime, he was still able to build cooperative ties with government agencies (Interview with Josef, June 20, 2026).

Josef utilized the cognitive dimension of social capital. This dimension plays a role in shaping group identity and facilitating the coordination of actions. It fosters a shared understanding and ultimately strengthens social networks. Josef frequently employed narratives and shared beliefs—using storytelling methods—to teach Christian values that encouraged solidarity with the common people and motivated them to take action to change their own destinies. Storytelling served as a tool to empower people to mobilize for a cause (Widyatmadja, 2025, p. 89).

Josef also interpreted scriptural texts and connected them to the contemporary context, striving to link faith with justice. He used biblical narratives to provide inspiration and legitimacy for the struggle on behalf of the poor and marginalized, framing these actions as the will of God.

"In the Bible, Jesus can also be viewed as an organizer and an agent of change—opening the eyes of the blind so they could see, and empowering the paralyzed to rise and walk. Jesus was not merely an instrument of change, but an active agent of change" (Widyatmadja, 2025).

Every day before starting work, staff and employees gathered at the YBKS office for a time of shared reflection. They studied Christian values from the Bible regarding God's concern for the poor. This activity served to cultivate shared beliefs and shape a Christian identity centered on their duty and role in serving the community—particularly the weak, the poor, and the marginalized.

Josef also employs folktales, proverbs, and maxims to impart values and attitudes—both to YBKS staff and to the beneficiary communities—regarding community empowerment services aimed at achieving well-being and challenging unjust social, political, and economic structures.

The relational dimension focuses on enhancing the nature and quality of relationships. YBKS has demonstrated its ability to build public trust in its service work. The organization has reached the level of "institutional support," thereby garnering increasing confidence from the public and donor agencies alike. It took YBKS ten years from its inception to attain this level of institutional support. Consequently, as its service responsibilities have expanded, YBKS has continuously conducted internal and external evaluations and audits—supported by donor agencies—to sustainably maintain the trust of the public and donors (Interview with Josef, June 20, 2026).

The public trust enjoyed by YBKS stems from the integration of Christian values into daily life. As the founder of YBKS—who is also a pastor and a social theologian—Josef frequently teaches that worship takes place not only at the "altar" but also in the "yard" (latar). Worship at the "altar" refers to the acts of worship performed inside the church. Josef posits that church worship serves as a dress rehearsal—or practice—for the true act of worship: worship in the "yard"—life outside the church—where we interact directly with the community. It is life's various challenges that test faith. The public trust enjoyed by YBKS stems from the integration of Christian values into daily life. As the founder of YBKS—who is also a pastor and social theologian—Josef often teaches that worship takes place not only at the "altar" but also in the "arena". The "altar" refers to the area where worship is conducted within the church. Josef describes church worship as a dress rehearsal—or practice—for the true act of worship: worship in the "arena" (outside the church), where we live in direct contact with society. It is there that faith is tested by life's various challenges (Interview with Josef, June 20, 2026).

As director, Josef even received support from donor agencies to attend high-cost management training. Through such training, YBKS gained increasing trust to manage substantial funds. The organization became increasingly skilled in self-

evaluation and reporting to donor agencies, thereby enhancing its accountability. YBKS regularly conducts internal and external audits with the support of donor agencies (Interview with Josef, June 20, 2026).

Josef explained that as a civil society organization begins to receive greater support from donor agencies, it is required to establish increasingly professional accountability systems. This entails clearly defined authority, adherence to institutional regulations, responsible project management, and the ability to ensure that program benefits actually reach the target groups. Based on his experience, Josef considers YBKS to have successfully developed public accountability practices, making it a model faith-based organization in Indonesia (Interview, Josef, June 20, 2026).

In the context of YBKS, accountability extends beyond merely fulfilling reporting obligations to donors. It is also demonstrated through the organization's ability to maintain public trust, manage resources responsibly, and ensure that every program genuinely delivers benefits to the community. Thus, YBKS's governance demonstrates that faith-based organizations derive legitimacy not solely from their religious identity but also from accountability practices oriented toward the public interest and the common Good.

The discussion highlights the relational dimension of YBKS—specifically regarding trust, trustworthiness, norms, obligations, identity, and identification—as being particularly strong. It is this relational dimension that subsequently strengthens the organization's network ties.

Conclusion

This study first demonstrates that the social praxis and objectives of transformative diaconia align with the concept of "just peacebuilding." They share the same target demographic—grassroots communities—and their activities simultaneously empower local, national, and transnational actors. Second, YBKS effectively leverages social capital to achieve its program goals. The organization successfully establishes various types of network ties—bonding, bridging, and linking. Social capital is utilized optimally across both cognitive and relational dimensions, thereby reinforcing YBKS's network ties—whether bonding, bridging, or linking—and strengthening the network as a whole. This study offers insight into the role of faith-based social institutions, which are well-equipped to leverage social capital to expand their services. The social capital framework has proven to be a viable model for other institutions seeking to develop their services sustainably.

Bibliography

- ADDIN Mendeley Bibliography CSL_BIBLIOGRAPHY Appleby, R. S. (2000). *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Beukes, J. W., & Beukes, L. E. (2023). Proposing a Social Justice Approach to Diaconia for a South African Context. *Religion*, 14(668). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14050668>
- Claridge, T. (2018). Dimensions of Social Capital - structural , cognitive , and relational. *Social Capital Research*, January, 1–4.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Sage Publication, Inc.
- Ercoskun, B. (2021). On Galtung ' s Approach to Peace Studies. *Lectio Socialis*, 5(1), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.47478/lectio.792847>
- Eurodiaconia. (2025). *Combating Poverty in The EU: Eurodiaconia's vision for the Anti-Poverty Strategy* (Issue October).
- Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*. Sage Publication Ltd.
- Galtung, J., & Fischer, D. (2013). *Conflict Transformation by Peaceful Means (The Transcend Method)*. United Nations Disaster Management Training Programme. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-32481-9_5
- Häuberer, J. (2010). *Social capital theory towards a methodological foundation*. Charles University.
- Hoksbergen, R. (1999). *Give them a fish, teach them to fish, or organize a fishing club? ngos, civil society and economic development*.
- Lederach, J. P. (1995). *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures*. Syracuse University Press.
- Lewankoru, M. L. (2024). Teologi-Etika Solidaritas dalam Diaconia Transformatif Gereja Protestan Maluku. *ARUMBAE: JURNAL ILMIAH TEOLOGI DAN STUDI AGAMA*, 6(2), 320–334. <https://doi.org/10.37429/arumbae.v3i1.600.2>

- Nordstokke, K. (2014). Diaconia according to the Gospel of John. *Diaconia*, 5(October 2012), 65–76.
- Smidt, C. (2003). *Religion as Social Capital: Producing the Common Good*. Baylor University Press.
- Stahn, C. (2020). *Jus Post Bellum* (Issue 1984). <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198823285.003.0001>
- Steenbrink, K., & Aritonang, J. S. (2008). *THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES Th* (Issue November). Brill.
- Widyatmadja, J. (2009). *Diaconia Sebagai Misi Gereja, Praksis Dan Refleksi Diaconia Transformatif*. Kanisius.
- Widyatmadja, J. (2015). *Yesus Dan Wong Cilik: Praksis Diaconia Transformatif Dan Teologi Rakyat Di Indonesia*. BPK Gunung Mulia.
- Widyatmadja, J. (2025). *Yesus dan Subversi: Praksis Teologi URM*. Bpk gunung mulia.
- Woolcock, M. (1998). Social capital and economic development : Toward a theoretical synthesis and policy framework. *Theory And Society*, 27, 151–208.
- World Council of Churches. (2022). *Christ ' s Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity*. World Council of Churches.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (CC BY 4.0).