Review of: "Corralling a Chimera: A Critical Review of the Term Social Infrastructure"

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Review of Corralling a Chimera: A critical review of the term Social Infrastructure

Dear editor of Qeios and dear authors,

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to read your draft article and for your question for constructive suggestions. I am interested in your endeavour since we also just started a research project focusing on the role of social infrastructures in times of crises (in our case the corona pandemic). And we also raised the question of how to understand the term "social infrastructure".... But I did not know the term has such a long history as your article reveals.

About your article. The article is structured distinguishing five categories, of which four specific policy areas (education, healthcare, housing, transportation) and a more general category ("networking spaces" which refers to the work of Eric Klinenberg). However, I find this distinction between these five categories not very clear. The first four are of a different order than the latter. Moreover, it seems to me that the first four categories overlap greatly. The first category is about education but refers to "..all the so-called non productive sectors of the national economy: housing, education, healthcare..", etc. (p.3). Whereas the second category is about healthcare but this text also refers to social infrastructure as "housing, agricultural projects, education, and health". Since these four categories overlap so heavily, I wonder why you should distinguish them.

But the fifth category ("networking spaces") is a more abstract term, not referring to specific fields of social policy. Would it not be wiser to structure your article around such abstract phrases? You could then filter you understanding of social infrastructure from *very broad understandings* (for instance "supporting social networks and also the physical places … where sociality is maintained") to *less broad understandings* (the various fields of social policies mentioned in your article). For me, a crucial distinction is between *social networks* (social contacts, support networks, social capital, etc.) on the one hand and *physical places* where these networks take place. This in my view is also what Klinenberg means with "networking places: these are literally the places where networks (contacts, support, etc.) are constituted and maintained.

I do hope you will find my suggestion useful and constructive. If you are interested in our research project, please contact me.