

Investigating the Causal Relationship between Social Capital with Organizational Entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurship with Emphasis on the Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment of Urmia University Faculty Members

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the causal relationship between social capital with organizational entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship with emphasis on the mediating role of psychological empowerment of faculty members of Urmia University. The statistical population of the study consists of all faculty members of Urmia University in the academic year 2014-2015, which is 582 people. Using stratified random sampling method, 200 individuals are selected as the sample of the study using Krejcie and Morgan table. The research method is descriptive-correlational based on structural equation modeling. The researcher made social capital questionnaire, Abbas Arab Social Entrepreneurship Questionnaire (1390), Margaret Hill Organizational Entrepreneurship Questionnaire (2003), and Spritzer & Mishra Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire (1995) are used for data collection. Data are analyzed using LISREL 8.8 and Spss22 statistical software. In descriptive statistics section, data are analyzed using indices such as mean and standard deviation and Pearson correlation coefficient to show the data status. In the inferential statistics section of the study, structural equation modeling is used to investigate the relationships between variables. The results of data analysis show that social capital has a positive and significant direct effect on social entrepreneurship, organizational entrepreneurship and psychological empowerment. The results also show the indirect effect of social capital on social entrepreneurship and organizational entrepreneurship of faculty members of Urmia University with the mediating role of psychological empowerment.

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Introduction

The involvement and professional support of the staff of the organization in the form of committees and specialized groups is the most important factor for the success of the organization. Many experts believe that social capital plays a more important role than human capital and physical capital in societies. In the absence of social capital, other capitals lose their effectiveness and cultural and economic development becomes difficult (Samadi Mir-Kalaei et al., 2016: 391). Social capital is a value that is defined in the social relationships of individuals or groups (Gedajlovic et al., 2013: 456). Social capital enhances the sense of participation and trust by creating visible and invisible links among members of the organization and provides the basis for positive employee attitudes. Social capital is a form of investing in the relationships between individuals and groups in order to gain the necessary results from relationships based on trust and cooperation and to bring about the potential for growth and development of the organization (Keshavarzi et al., 2011: 329). Many organizations, regardless of the size and the trade volume, recognize the importance of social capital as a sustainable source of competition and excellence and the basis for their innovation and adaptability, so that organizations can recognize the importance and effective role of social capital in the organization and rethink about short- and long-term organizational decisions and resource allocation. They can view it as other potential organizational capital and believe that providing the right environment for the growth and development of this capital will gain competitive advantage and more market share (Farzaneh and Taheri Otaghsara, 2015: 111).

Increasing social capital in the academic environment promotes communication, mutual respect, greater group cohesion, strengthening paternal responsibility, and assistance. The management and improvement of social capital has become of paramount importance given the rapid changes in the environment of organizations. Some of the advantages of social capital in organizations are better knowledge

sharing due to trust relationships, reduced transaction costs due to high level of trust and spirit of cooperation, high correlation in practice for organizational stability and mutual understanding, and reduced rate of displacement (Rabiei and Sadeghzadeh, 2011: 198). By providing supportive contexts, social capital enables employees to meet their needs and goals by striving to achieve community goals and to reveal their potential and feel responsible towards the community (Taleghani et al., 2011: 57). Research has shown that organizations with strong social capital will be able to quickly access a diverse set of information in order to create innovative performance (Manteghi et al., 2016: 190). Social capital plays a very important role in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs must successfully design a specific model of social capital according to its dimensions (Khosravani et al., 2016: 392). Turning to social capital is one of the most important factors of an organization moving towards entrepreneurship.

With the complexity and dynamics of the corporate environment, they need to have more entrepreneurship to identify opportunities and achieve superior sustainable performance (Hayton, 2005: 21). Entrepreneurship is the engine of economic transformation, culture, and community development, and its growth can lead to the transformation of the national economy (Hosseini et al., 2014: 152). To cope with the challenges, changes and developments of the internal and external environment, entrepreneurship is the first requirement for survival and sustainability. Organizational entrepreneurship means that organizations can develop lucrative innovations by encouraging employees to think like independent entrepreneurs and giving them more freedom and flexibility to pursue their programs without drowning them in the bureaucratic swamp (Farzaneh and Taheri Otaghsara, 2015: 115). Organizational entrepreneurship requires a number of factors such as management support, incentives, organizational structure, resources and risk taking to develop an entrepreneurial environment (Kassa & Satya Raju, 2014: 151). Entrepreneurship relies on a wide range of skills and personalities and includes multidimensional

thinking skills and the ability to identify new opportunities and ideas in practice (Daryanto & Muslim, 2016: 1072). Beyond organizational frameworks and structures at a holistic view, experts see entrepreneurship as a social matter and study it in social contexts. It is believed that entrepreneurship is a socio-economic process, which relies on social context in two ways. First, entrepreneurs are individuals who are the product of their social environment and second, entrepreneurship is a social process, and therefore, lack of social connections affect the nature of business (Alistair, R. Anderson, 2003: 17). Entrepreneurship is a process that is located in a network of social relationships, which can either block or facilitate the entrepreneur's relationship with the resources and opportunities (Rabiei and Sadeghzadeh, 2011: 191). Social entrepreneurship is a context-dependent phenomenon. Therefore, one must first understand the processes, mechanisms, and elements specific to social entrepreneurship in order to develop it in any particular cultural, economic, and social context (Yadegar et al., 2011: 8).

Social entrepreneurship is presented as an innovative approach to meet social needs with an emphasis on solving social problems and removing traditional boundaries between the private, public and non-governmental sectors (Marjani & Sadri, 2014: 280). Social entrepreneurship redefines the status quo by providing innovative solutions to the social problems that have created incompatible conditions. The purpose of social entrepreneurship activities is to create social cohesion and poverty alleviation. The need for social entrepreneurship to reduce the impact of the crisis on vulnerable groups is urgent. Given that many social and environmental issues are time-sensitive, the failure to recognize the importance of social entrepreneurship and the lack of adequate support will have negative consequences for society (Arab et al., 2013: 79). Social entrepreneurship is more associated with the creation of social values. Entrepreneurship has had a positive and direct impact on many different countries' activities; on the one hand, it has led to economic development and job

creation, and on the other, it can improve the social and cultural status of society (Marjani and Sadri, 2014: 277). Entrepreneurship requires social and cultural contexts. Organizations need risky, creative, responsible and innovative employees to survive. In this regard, empowered and capable employees are ready to accept such a situation. Empowering by nurturing motivated and capable employees will enable managers to act quickly and appropriately against the dynamics of the competitive environment, thus providing their organization with competitive advantage (Taleghani et al., 2011: 39).

In today's world, human resource empowerment is an important element that can be used to move toward organizational dynamics and transform the environment and atmosphere of the organization to enhance human resource performance (Keshavarzi et al., 2011: 330). Spreitzer (1996) believes that empowerment is a process through which individuals are empowered enough to be able to participate and directly supervise and to influence events and institutions that have a direct impact on their lives (Avram and Priescu, 2012: 949). Empowerment is not an individual affair, but an interaction, and individuals can interact to enhance their knowledge and skills.

Although many definitions of empowerment have been provided, the common chapter of them all is to delegate more authority and responsibility to employees (Taleghani et al., 2011: 41). In organizational studies, empowerment is examined in the framework of two approaches of organizational or structural empowerment and psychological empowerment (Khalife Soltani et al., 2017: 122). The psychological empowerment approach has received more attention due to its importance and nature. Psychological empowerment is defined as a set of psychological states, focusing on how employees think about their work and how much they believe in their role and influence in the organization and are eager for success (Vacharakiat, 2008: 4). Employee empowerment has an undeniable impact on boosting employee morale. Psychological empowerment creates a competitive advantage

for the organization and its management compared to other competitors and is a motivational resource for employees that leads them to entrepreneurship by providing more learning opportunities. In recent decades, fierce competition between organizations and changes in industrial areas have forced organizations and companies to use structures such as social capital, innovation and entrepreneurship and empowerment in order to enhance their competitive power. This is especially true for universities that play an undeniable role and require new methods and techniques to be competitive.

While educating professionals, social justice, and the creation, preservation and education of social values are always among the main goals of higher education and governments intervene and finance them in order to achieve social

justice, it is worthwhile for educational organizations to invest in this important issue and its consequences to create a favorable entrepreneurial environment (Arab et al., 2013: 65). Based on the literature reviews, no research has been conducted on the variables of social capital and organizational and social entrepreneurship with the mediating role of psychological empowerment. The studies in this area have investigated the relationship between variables. Thus, in the present study, the main question of the research is whether empowering faculty members from a psychological perspective can cause and effect organizational entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship with respect to social capital. And if there is a positive impact, what are the mechanisms for empowering faculty from a psychological perspective? In general, the conceptual model of the research is set out as follows.

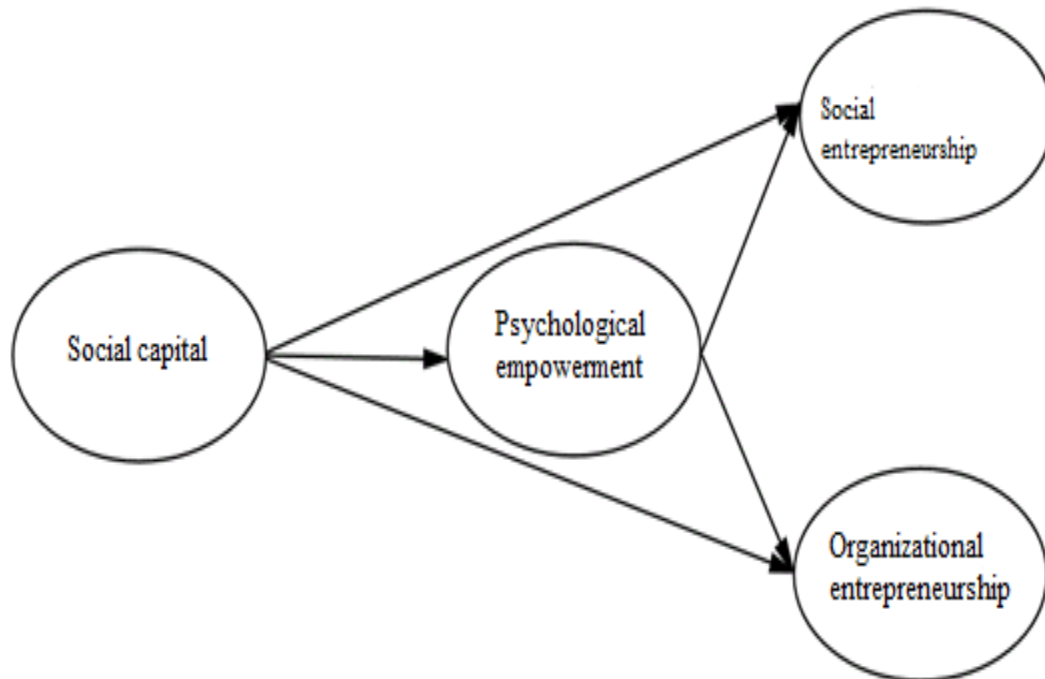


Figure 1: conceptual model of research

Research methodology

The present study is an applied research in terms of its objective and a descriptive-correlational research based on structural equation modeling in terms of its methodology. The statistical population of this study included all faculty members of Urmia University in the academic

year 2014-2015. Using the Krejcie and Morgan table, 200 faculty members of Urmia University were selected by stratified random sampling. The choice of research instrument depends on the nature of the subject, the purpose of the research, the subjects, the resources and the facilities. Questionnaire is the main tool for data

collection in this study. Four standard questionnaires were used to collect data:

Social Capital Questionnaire: A researcher-made questionnaire consisting of 60 items based on a 5-point Likert scale was used to measure social capital at university. The tool consists of seven components of social participation, social integrity, social value, social trust, social interactions, social cohesion, and social responsibility and commitment. The reliability of this questionnaire was calculated based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient, turning out to be $\alpha = 0.94$. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to determine the construct validity of the social capital scale. The fit indices (GFI = 0.87), (AGFI = 0.89), (CFI = 0.92), (RMSEA = 0/79) indicate the appropriate fit of the data with the measurement model.

Organizational Entrepreneurship Questionnaire: The Margaret Hill Questionnaire (2003), consisting of 48 5-point Likert scale items, was used to measure organizational entrepreneurship. The questionnaire included items of organizational verbs, individual attitudes, flexibility, reward status, entrepreneurial leadership, and entrepreneurial culture. In this study, the reliability of this questionnaire was calculated based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient, turning out to be $\alpha = 0.76$. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to determine the construct validity of the organizational entrepreneurship scale. The fit indices (GFI = 0.86), (AGFI = 0.89), (CFI = 0.94), (RMSEA = 0.071) indicate the appropriate fit of the data with the measurement model.

Social Entrepreneurship Questionnaire: To measure social entrepreneurship, a 43-item questionnaire developed by Abbas Arab (2011) based on a five-point Likert scale was used. The questionnaire included items of agents for change in the social sector, identifying and pursuing new opportunities to create and maintain social values, choosing a mission to create and maintain social values, participating in a continuous process of innovation, adapting and learning, bold activity without regard to the

limitations of available resources, creating a sense of responsibility towards effective institutions in creating results, and the creation of quasi-market mechanisms to increase accountability. In this study, reliability of this questionnaire was calculated based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient, turning out to be $\alpha = 0.90$. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to determine the construct validity of the social entrepreneurship scale. The obtained fit indices (GFI = 0.89), (AGFI = 0.84), (CFI = 0.92), (RMSEA = 0/69) indicate the appropriate fit of the data with the measurement model.

Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire: Spreitzer & Mishra (1995) Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire was used to measure psychological empowerment. The questionnaire was composed of 15 items based on a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire consisted of 5 subscales of sense of competence, sense of autonomy, sense of effectiveness, sense of being meaningful, and sense of confidence. In this study, the reliability of this questionnaire was calculated based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient, turning out to be $\alpha = 0.88$. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to determine the construct validity of the psychological empowerment scale. The fit indices (GFI = 0.93), (AGFI = 0.88), (CFI = 0.97), (RMSEA = 0/66) indicate the appropriate fit of the data with the measurement model.

Findings

Research findings were analyzed in terms of descriptive and inferential statistics in order to respond to research hypotheses. A survey of demographic indicators in the sample indicated that out of 200 respondents, 138 (69%) were male and 62 (31%) were female. Data on the age of the respondents indicated that the majority of faculty members were in the age range of 31-40 (40%). From the scientific point of view, the majority of the respondents had an associate degree (51.5%). Most respondents had a background of 11-15 (34%) years of education. Central and dispersion indices (mean and standard deviation) were used to evaluate and describe the data obtained from the sample under study to obtain the necessary information

on how dispersed were scores. Mean and standard deviation indices of variables in Table 1 show the appropriate dispersion of the research data. The prerequisite to the use of parametric tests such as Pearson correlation is normal distribution of variables. Therefore, the skewness and kurtosis were used to investigate this. Klein (2011) suggests that the absolute skewness and kurtosis of the variables should

not be greater than 3 and 10, respectively. According to Table 1, the absolute magnitude of the skewness and kurtosis of all the variables is less than that reported by Klein (2011). So the distribution of data is normal. Table 1 presents the descriptive indicators of the variables along with the absolute magnitude of skewness and kurtosis.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics indicators of research variables

Variables	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Social capital	185.62	27.321	0.207	0.557
Psychological empowerment	53.38	8.199	-0.553	1.468
Social entrepreneurship	165.72	17.285	-1.526	1.907
Organizational entrepreneurship	176.60	22.796	-0.023	-0.131

Since correlation matrix is the basis of causal models' analysis, especially structural equation modeling, correlation matrix of research variables with correlation coefficients and their

significance levels are examined before examining the theoretical model test. Table 2 presents the correlation matrix of the research variables.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix of Latent Variables

Variables	Social capital	Psychological empowerment	Social entrepreneurship	Organizational entrepreneurship
Social capital	1			
Psychological empowerment	0.48**	1		
Social entrepreneurship	0.25*	0.55**	1	
Organizational entrepreneurship	0.23*	0.44**	0.76**	1

** Significant at 1% error level, * significant at 5% error level

According to Table 2, the relationship between social capital and psychological empowerment (0.48) is positive and significant at the 0.01 level. The relationship between social capital and social entrepreneurship (0.25) and organizational entrepreneurship (0.23) is positive and significant at the 0.01 level. The relationship between psychological empowerment and social entrepreneurship (0.55) and organizational entrepreneurship (0.44) is positive and significant at the level of 0.01. Also, the relationship between social

entrepreneurship and organizational entrepreneurship (0.76) is positive and significant at the level of 0.01. In the present study, structural equation modeling was used to evaluate the impact of social capital as an independent variable (external latent) on the variables of psychological empowerment, social entrepreneurship and organizational entrepreneurship as dependent variables (internal latent). In Figure 2, the test model of the research is presented in standard form.

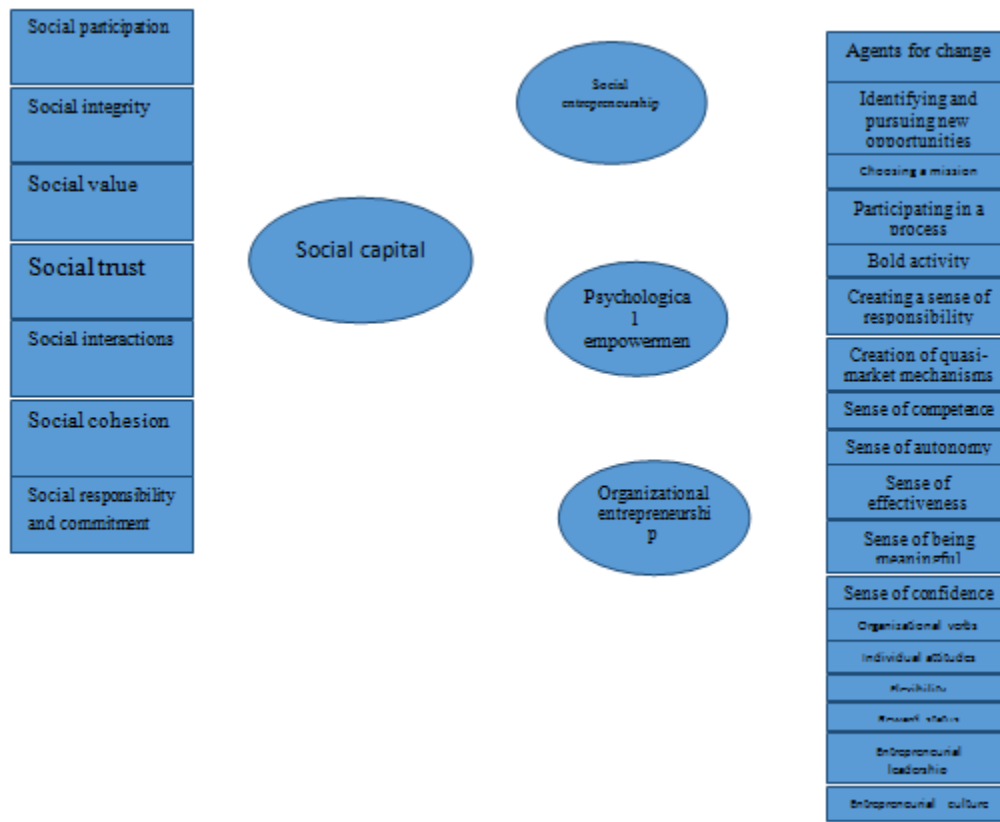


Figure 2: The test model of research in standard form

The structural equation model between social capital and psychological empowerment (Equation 1) states that the share of social capital in explaining psychological empowerment changes is $\beta = 0.43$, which means 18% of the total variation or variance in psychological empowerment is explained by social capital. ($R^2 = 0.18$). Accordingly, psychological empowerment increases by 0.43 standard deviation with the increase of social capital by one standard deviation unit. Therefore, it is concluded that psychological empowerment based on social capital is significantly predictable in the positive direction. The structural equation model between psychological empowerment, social capital, and social entrepreneurship (Equation 2) states that 36% of the total variance of social entrepreneurship is explained by psychological empowerment and social capital ($R^2 = 0.36$), where the share of psychological empowerment is $\beta = 0.48$ and social capital share is $\beta =$

0.21. Here, psychological empowerment has a greater role in explaining social entrepreneurship changes. Also, considering the contribution of psychological empowerment and social capital in explaining social entrepreneurship changes, with increasing psychological empowerment and social capital by one standard deviation, social entrepreneurship increases by 0.48 and 0.21, respectively. It is concluded that social entrepreneurship based on psychological empowerment and social capital is significantly predictable in the positive direction.

The structural equation model between psychological empowerment, social capital, and organizational entrepreneurship (Equation 3) states that 24% of the total variance of organizational entrepreneurship is explained by psychological empowerment and social capital ($R^2 = 0.24$), where the share of psychological empowerment is $\beta = 0.37$ and social capital share is $\beta = 0.20$. Here, psychological

empowerment has a greater role in explaining organizational entrepreneurship changes. Also, considering the contribution of psychological empowerment and social capital in explaining organizational entrepreneurship changes, with increasing psychological empowerment and social capital by one standard deviation, organizational entrepreneurship increases by

0.48 and 0.21, respectively. It is concluded that organizational entrepreneurship based on psychological empowerment and social capital is significantly predictable in the positive direction. The results of testing the research hypotheses along with the direct and indirect effects of the variables are reported in Table 3.

Table 3: Direct and indirect effects of variables in the structural model

Effect	Direct effect	T-statistics	Indirect effect	Total effect	Result
Social capital -> psychological empowerment	0.43	4.77	-	0.43	Confirmed
Social capital -> social entrepreneurship	0.21	2.38	0.43*0.48=0.21	0.42	Confirmed
Social capital -> organizational entrepreneurship	0.20	2.05	0.43*0.37=0.16	0.36	Confirmed
psychological empowerment -> social entrepreneurship	0.48	4.19	-	0.48	Confirmed
psychological empowerment -> organizational entrepreneurship	0.37	3.07	-	0.37	Confirmed

To check the fit of the model, the fit indices were used. These indices are Chi-square over degrees of freedom (X^2/df) values less than 3, goodness of fit index (GFI) values greater than 0.90, adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) values greater than 0.80, comparative fit index (CFI) values greater than 0.90, incremental fit index (IFI) values greater than 0.90, and rootmean square error of approximation (RMSEA) values less than 0.08 that indicate appropriate model fit. As can be seen, the goodness of fit indices obtained by LISREL

software are in the approximate range of acceptability, which means that the observed data in the statistical sample are largely consistent with the structural model of the study. In other words, the goodness of fit indices of the model indicate that the model is well-suited to the research model, and it can be said that the proposed model is a good model and has the ability to explain the structural relationship between the latent variables present in the model. Table 4 summarizes the fit indices of the research model.

Table 4: Fit indices of the structural research model

Indices	Acceptable range	Estimated values
X^2/df	Less than 3	2.15
RMSEA	Less than 0.08	0.076
CFI	0.8 to 1	0.90
IFI	0.8 to 1	0.93
GFI	0.8 to 1	0.89
AGFI	0.8 to 1	0.85

Discussion and conclusion

Considering the key and critical role played by university faculty members as the country's scientific poles, the effort to expand the

components of social capital and empower them to enable them to innovate and be entrepreneurial in various fields of science and technology is necessary. Therefore, the present

study examined the impact of social capital on organizational and social entrepreneurship with the mediating role of psychological empowerment. According to the results of path analysis, the direct effect of social capital on psychological empowerment of faculty members of Urmia University was positive and significant. Empowerment is a process that results from social exchanges within the organization, and the social networks that exist in the organization help to empower or weaken faculty members. Empowering faculty members requires early and appropriate support in the campus environment. When people at the university can enhance each other's knowledge and skills, the overall pattern of communication within the organization is clear, have access to resources and information, and have shared perspectives, members' internal motivation for learning, development, and progress is certainly enhance, and not only can they perform their tasks well, but they can also think differently and feel empowered, influenced, meaningful, and selected. This finding is in line with the results of research by Keshavarzi et al. (2011), Manteghi et al. (2015), and Bayram Zadehan et al. (2015).

The results also indicated that social capital can influence organizational entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship of faculty members. Faculty members are regarded as one of the most important, expensive and valuable assets of a university and can make one university different and superior to another. Given the abundant resources available to faculty members, they can appropriately use them to achieve positive social impacts, including entrepreneurship. Social capital removes many of the organizational barriers and constraints by encouraging partnerships and provides the ground for innovation and entrepreneurship among faculty members. This finding is in line with the results of the researches of Babolhavaeji and Zamani Rad (2013), Farzaneh and Taheri Otagsara (2015), Samadi Miarkalaie et al (2016), Montazeri et al (2016), Khosravani et al (2016), Chen et al (2007), Doh & Zolnik (2011), Gedajlovic et al. (2013), Jawaher &

Nigama (2011), Rashidi et al. (2013), Madhushi and Jafari Samimi (2015).

Another finding was that there is a direct linear relationship between the psychological empowerment of faculty members with the variables of organizational entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. In explaining this finding, it can be said that by empowering faculty members to take a decentralized approach to the university, unnecessary, insulating and impermeable layers of the bureaucracy, the most important factor in suppressing creativity and innovation, are being broken, resulting in better staff performance. This finding is in line with the results of Forouhar et al. (2011), Kermani et al. (2015), Khalife Soltani et al. (2017), Safari et al. (2010), and Asghari et al. (2012).

The results of structural equation modeling also indicated that the mediating role of faculty members' psychological empowerment on the impact of social capital on organizational entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship variables is confirmed. One of the limitations of the study was the use of self-report tools or questionnaires. Also, the present research was a descriptive-correlational study, where correlational schemes lack the power to explain causal relationships. Considering the results of this research, the following actions should be taken into consideration to develop and strengthen social capital and to achieve a favorable outlook for the university and to implement the entrepreneurial ideas of faculty members:

- One of the most important processes in organizations for creating social capital is educational processes. Therefore, holding workshops can play an important role in developing and strengthening social capital, psychological empowerment and entrepreneurship of faculty members.
- Establishing professional groups and associations in the organization with the voluntary participation of faculty members will increase social capital.

- High-level officials of the university can enhance faculty members' commitment to society by assigning them social responsibility as well as facilitating the formation of social and civic institutions with their presidencies.
- Top officials and authorities should provide the necessary material and spiritual support to entrepreneurial faculty members.

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