



## **The study of the Relationship between Social Capital and Entrepreneurship Behavior of Faculty Members of Qazvin University of Medical Sciences in 2017**

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### **ARTICLE INFO**

#### **Article History:**

Received: 29 Jul 2018

Revised: 6 Oct 2018

Accepted: 11 Dec 2018

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Social capital has an important role in empowering entrepreneurship activities and performance improvement in human resources. This study aimed to examine the relationship between social capital and entrepreneurship behavior of academic members of Qazvin University of Medical Sciences in 2018.

**Methods:** The present study is a descriptive cross-sectional method conducted among all faculty members working in Qazvin University of Medical Sciences in 2018. In order to collect study data, two standard questionnaires including social capital scale (Nahapiet & Goshal 1998) and entrepreneurial behavior (Leon Daes Zampetakis and Vasiliss Mustakis 2007) were used. Data were analyzed using descriptive and analytical statistical methods in SPSS 20.

**Results:** The results of the study showed that social capital and entrepreneurial behavior had a desirable condition. Furthermore, these two variables were statistically correlated ( $P$ -value  $< 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** Promoting the level of social capital in academic environments has significant benefits and a positive impact on entrepreneurial behaviors of academic members of the university. Therefore, managers should strengthen this key element in their organizations to upgrade their professional job performance.

**Key words:** Social Capital, Entrepreneurial Behavior, Faculty Member of the University

### **Citation**

**This paper should be cited as:** Rafiei S, Mohebibar R, Ahadi Nejad B, Nisari N. **The study of the Relationship between Social Capital and Entrepreneurship Behavior of Faculty Members of Qazvin University of Medical Sciences in 2017.** Evidence Based Health Policy, Management & Economics. 2018; 2(4): 275-80.



## Introduction

Given the widespread environmental changes in current societies, human capital is important for the success of organizations (1). Human resources not only help the survival and development of organizations but also, if they have the expertise, experience, and entrepreneurial skills, can have a positive impact on the country's economic, social and industrial conditions (2). In order to adapt to the uncertain environment and success in today's competitive world, managers should continuously improve their and other employees' performance through creativity and entrepreneurship (3).

Social capital is a key factor which helps human capital in achieving goals and promoting productivity. According to Francis's definition (4), social capital is considered as a set of links and relationships between network members, which leads to the creation of trust and interaction to facilitate the organizational goal achievements. Studies have shown that social capital plays an important role in the development of entrepreneurial and the creative activities among organizational members, which are considered to be important indicators in entrepreneurship (7-5). In this regard, the result of a study by Nanchen (8) confirmed a positive and meaningful relationship between the two variables of social capital and organizational entrepreneurship and has suggested that social capital is an effective factor on the entrepreneurial performance of the organization's members. These results showed that managers can develop entrepreneurial behavior in their employees by enhancing the social capital in organizations, and benefit from its beneficial outcomes.

Social capital and entrepreneurship are very important issues especially in universities and higher education institutes. Inefficiencies in educational organizations have caused numerous problems and irreparable social, economic and cultural damages in the country (9). Therefore, it is necessary to focus on factors influencing entrepreneurial behaviors in the academic staff members in order to make the educational

environment as efficient as possible. This is especially most important in fields such as medical sciences where graduates deal with a wide range of people. Therefore, considering the importance of entrepreneurship in universities and the role of social capital in this regard, the present study was conducted to investigate the status of social capital and entrepreneurship behavior as well as the relationship between these two variables in faculty members of Qazvin University of Medical Sciences in 2017.

## Materials and Methods

This descriptive cross-sectional study was performed by census method and conducted on 210 faculty members working in Qazvin University of Medical Sciences in 2017. Data gathering tools included two standard questionnaires which included the social capital questionnaire by Goshal et al. (1998) with 25 questions and the entrepreneurship behavior questionnaire by Leon Dais Zamtakhis and Vasiliss Moustaqis (2007) with 12 questions. Also questions were evaluated in the five-point Likert scale (from 1 = very low to 5 = very high). In order to view the status of the variables, scores less than 1.6 were considered undesirable, scores between 1.6 and 3.3 were considered moderate, and scores above 3.3 were considered desirable.

The validity and the reliability of the social capital questionnaire were confirmed in a study by Azadi et al. (11). The questionnaire's validity and reliability were also approved in the study by Hemmatiet al. (12) in 2016 with the aim to investigate the relationship between social capital and job performance of Bu Ali Sina University staff (12). The validity and the reliability of the entrepreneurial behavior questionnaire was approved in a study by Asadni et al. (13), in 2016 with the aim to assess the organizational entrepreneurship behavior of Public Library Agency staff. In addition, a letter of consent was obtained from faculty members before completing the questionnaires.



After collecting data for statistical analysis in accordance with the research objectives, the data were entered into SPSS<sub>20</sub> software. The status of variables was evaluated by the descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and then the relationship between them was investigated through the Pearson correlation coefficient. It is necessary to mention that this study tried to comply with Helsinki declaration principles. Hence, the principles of confidentiality of information, obtaining informed consent for interviewing and having the right to withdraw from the research at each stage were ethical considerations that were followed.

## Results

As Table 1 shows, among the 210 participants in the present study, the highest rate of participation was observed in females (54.3 %), in the age range of 54 – 45 (38.1 %) and married participants (80.9 %). Regarding the educational qualifications, the highest number of participants (36.7 %) had expertise in one of the clinical fields and in terms of academic rank most participants were assistant professors (61.4 %). Also, most of the faculty members (49 %) had over 10 years of work experience and were employed at the medical school.

Regarding the statistical analysis of the two components of social capital and the entrepreneurial behavior of the faculty members, the findings are presented in Table 2. According to the results, social capital with the average and standard deviation of  $3.23 \pm 0.68$  was in a

Moderate level.

Amongst the various social capital dimensions, the highest mean was assigned to the communication dimension with the mean and standard deviation of  $3.35 \pm 0.72$ , and the lowest mean was related to the structural dimension ( $3.06 \pm 0.80$ ). The average of the entrepreneurial behavior in the faculty members with the mean and standard deviation of  $3.75 \pm 0.51$  was also in a desirable condition. Amongst the different dimensions of this variable, the highest average was related to the energetic work environment creation with a mean of 3.98 and a the standard deviation of 0.69, and the lowest mean was related to the supportive environment with a score of 3.23 and a standard deviation of 1.09.

The statistical relation between the social capital variables and entrepreneurial behavior of faculty members was investigated, and the results are shown in Table 3. The results showed a significant relationship between these two variables ( $P\text{-value} < 0.05$ ).

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of the faculty members participating in the study

Variable		Frequency	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	96	45.7
	Female	114	54.3
Age	20-34	44	21
	35-44	76	36.2
	45-54	80	38.1
	Over 55	10	4.8
Marital status	Single	39	18.7
	Married	169	80.9



	Other	1	0.5
Education	Masters	31	14.8
	Ph.D.	65	31
	Specialist	77	36.7
	Sub-specialist	37	17.6
Academic rank	Educational Staff	11	5.2
	Lecturer	30	14.3
	Assistant Professor	129	61.4
	Associate Professor	36	17.1
	full Professor	4	1.9
Work experience	1-3	44	21
	3-5	23	11
	5-10	40	19
	over10 years	103	49
Faculty	Medicine	93	44.5
	Dentistry	50	23.9
	Health	25	12
	Nursing	31	14.8
	Paramedical	10	4.8
Total		210	100

**Table 2.** Social Capital and Entrepreneurial Behavior in Faculty Members

variables		Descriptive statistics	
		Average	Standard deviation
Social capital	Structural	3.06	0.8
	Cognitive	3.31	0.7
	Communicational	3.35	0.7
	Social capital	3.23	0.6
Entrepreneurial behavior in the organization	Reduce the bureaucratic barriers	3.68	0.9
	Change in employees behavior	3.88	0.4
	Strategic insights	3.76	0.6
	Create an energetic work environment	3.98	0.6
	Support environment	3.23	1.09
	Entrepreneurial behavior in the organization	3.75	0.5
	Entrepreneurial behavior	4.42	0.6

**Table 3.** Relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial behavior of faculty members

Entrepreneurial behavior	Correlation coefficient	Significance
Social capital	0.43	0.00

## Discussion

This study investigated the social capital status and the entrepreneurial behavior status of the faculty members of Qazvin University of Medical Sciences and determined the relationship between these two variables. According to the participants, social capital in the university was in a relatively desirable condition; they also assessed the

entrepreneurial behavior in a desirable condition. The findings of Ganbari and Navidi (14) and Abili and Zare Khalili (15) are consistent with the results of the present study regarding the status of social capital and entrepreneurial behavior. This issue strengthens universities regarding their focus on the organizational goals, organizational values, strong organizational culture, work experiences



sharing, honesty, teamwork, criticism, and the preference of the organizational interests to individual interests, which ultimately facilitates communication and constructive scientific interaction among faculty members.

The results showed a significant statistical relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial behavior in the faculty members of Qazvin University of Medical Sciences. The study findings are consistent with the results of Karimi et al. (16), Gholipour et al. (17), Moharramzadeh et al. (18) and Redrigo (19). Accordingly, social capital in the workplace contributes to the exchange of knowledge and experience and forms a collaborative competition among individuals, which is the main focus of entrepreneurship (20). Hsocial capital in an organization, flourishes new ideas in individuals and enhance their creativity through the effective information exchange and knowledge transfer. This creativity will ultimately lead to innovations and entrepreneurship in the organization and will bring many benefits (21). Many researches have found that extensive relations among faculty members can increase the education quality and promote occupational activities; they also observed the impact of social capital on the education system in the society (22). In other words, employees working in a high social capital environment have better job relationships and behave more effectively in their interaction with their colleagues. As a result of these effective interactions, not only will employees feel more committed to their jobs; but also they will be more successful in performing their tasks (23).

One of the strength points in the present study was the participation of all the faculty members in all the faculties affiliated to Qazvin University of Medical Sciences. Therefore, the researcher was able to use the comprehensive information to investigate the status of the social capital and the

entrepreneurial behavior of the faculty members and to present the findings in a well-documented report.

Investigating the entrepreneurial behavior of the faculty members based on the indicators defined in the standard questionnaire framework through the self-assessment is one of the present study's limitations. Therefore, it is recommended to use operational indicators to assess the organizational entrepreneurship behavior in future studies.

### Conclusion

Since universities are responsible to provide higher education and training for other institutions and organizations' specialist staff members, it is important to pay attention to the role of the faculty members and to strengthen their entrepreneurial abilities. Therefore, according to the results, by enhancing the sense of mutual trust, empathy, and solidarity among the members; organizations can expect the entrepreneurial activities development, which ultimately bring beneficial results and more practical ways to create and develop entrepreneurship in the faculty members.

### Acknowledgments

Researchers appreciate all the faculty members of Qazvin University of Medical Sciences for their participation in the research and completing the relevant questionnaires. The ethical code of this research was IR.QUMS.REC.1396.17.

### Conflicts of interest

There was no conflict of interest in this study.

### Authors' contributions

Rafiei S designed the research, Neysari N conducted research and performed statistical analysis. Rafiei S and Mohebbifar R wrote the paper and Ahadinejad B had primary responsibility for final content.

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