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Research Article

A Study of the Impact of Social Capital on Entrepreneurial Capacity Building Among Management Students in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of social capital on entrepreneurial capacity building among postgraduate management students, with a particular focus on the mediating role of linking social capital. As entrepreneurship continues to be a critical driver of economic growth and innovation, understanding the underlying social dynamics that shape entrepreneurial abilities is essential. Social capital, encompassing dimensions such as participation, trust, social networks, and social support, plays a pivotal role in enhancing individuals' access to resources, information, and opportunities. This study was conducted among 120 postgraduate management students from selected institutions, using a structured questionnaire and a stratified random sampling technique. The research utilized descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis to evaluate the relationships between different components of social capital and entrepreneurial capacity. The findings reveal a significant and positive relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial capacity building. More importantly, the study identifies linking social capital, defined as connections with institutions and individuals in positions of power, as a significant mediating factor that enhances the impact of general social capital on entrepreneurial outcomes. The results suggest that when students engage with diverse networks and institutional actors, their entrepreneurial abilities are further amplified. These findings highlight the need for academic institutions and policymakers to foster environments that promote strong social networks, trust-based relationships, and institutional linkages to encourage entrepreneurial mind-set development. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on social capital and entrepreneurship by offering empirical evidence of the mediating role of linking capital in the Indian higher education context. It underscores the importance of a multi-dimensional approach to social capital for developing entrepreneurial competencies and provides insights for curriculum design, policy formation, and institutional strategies aimed at nurturing future entrepreneurs. The study also opens avenues for further research on social capital dynamics across different demographic and cultural contexts.

Keywords: Impact, Social Capital, Entrepreneurial Capacity Building, Management Studies, Higher education

INTRODUCTION:

Social capital refers to the networks, relationships, norms, and trust that exist among individuals and groups, which facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. In the context of entrepreneurship, social capital is an essential intangible asset that enables individuals to access critical resources such as knowledge, funding, mentorship, and moral support. These resources are especially crucial for nascent entrepreneurs—like students in higher education—who are still developing their business ideas and competencies. Social capital can be both bonding (strong ties like family and close friends) and bridging (weak ties like acquaintances or professional contacts), both of which contribute differently to entrepreneurial success. While bonding capital provides emotional support and initial resources, bridging capital helps expand access to diverse information, market opportunities, and external stakeholders.

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Entrepreneurial capacity building refers to the development of the skills, attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors required to identify opportunities, innovate, take risks, and successfully manage new ventures. For management students in higher education, this process is vital, as it prepares them to either start their own ventures or bring entrepreneurial thinking into corporate or organizational roles. Entrepreneurial capacity building involves both formal learning—through coursework, training, and structured programs—and informal learning—through interactions, peer networks, and experiential activities such as internships or student-led ventures. Social capital plays a foundational role in this learning process by offering access to role models, feedback mechanisms, collaborative environments, and encouragement. In essence, social capital provides the social infrastructure necessary for entrepreneurial ideas to be nurtured, tested, and realized.

One of the most critical ways in which social capital influences entrepreneurial capacity building is by enhancing students' confidence and motivation. Through exposure to successful entrepreneurs, mentorship from faculty or alumni, and participation in networking events, students gain both inspiration and a realistic understanding of the entrepreneurial journey. Trust-based relationships also encourage knowledge sharing and collaborative problem-solving, which are key to developing creativity and innovation. Additionally, social capital reduces perceived risks by offering a safety net—individuals with strong social ties feel more secure in experimenting and learning from failure. Thus, social capital does not merely supplement technical or managerial training; it actively shapes the entrepreneurial mind-set and reduces psychological and practical barriers to entrepreneurship.

In higher education, particularly in management programs, institutions that actively foster social capital—through incubation centres, alumni engagement, start-up clubs, and cross-disciplinary collaboration—create an environment where students are more likely to develop entrepreneurial competencies. However, the effectiveness of social capital also depends on its quality and accessibility. Unequal access to networks can create disparities in entrepreneurial outcomes, making it essential for universities to build inclusive and diverse ecosystems. Encouraging peer learning, mentorship for first-generation students, and partnerships with external stakeholders can broaden the reach and impact of social capital. In conclusion, social capital is not just a support mechanism but a core component of entrepreneurial capacity building. It amplifies learning, fosters innovation, and builds the relational infrastructure needed for long-term entrepreneurial success among management students.

Impact:

1. Enhanced Access to Resources and Opportunities: One of the most significant impacts of social capital on entrepreneurial capacity building is the access it provides to valuable resources such as information, funding, mentorship, and collaboration opportunities. Management students who are embedded in strong social networks—both within and outside their academic institutions—can tap into these networks to gather insights about market trends, business models, and potential investors. For example, student entrepreneurs connected with faculty, alumni, industry experts, and incubators are more likely to get early exposure to venture capitalists, accelerators, and start-up competitions. This early access is crucial for refining business ideas and making them viable. In essence, social capital acts as a bridge between theory and practice by providing a real-world learning platform where students can apply their knowledge and grow their entrepreneurial capacities.

2. Development of Entrepreneurial Mind-set and Confidence: Social capital plays a vital role in shaping the entrepreneurial mind-set by fostering self-efficacy, confidence, and resilience. When management students interact with entrepreneurial role models or mentors, they begin to see entrepreneurship as a tangible and achievable career path. This psychological empowerment is especially important for students from non-business or risk-averse backgrounds. The trust, encouragement, and feedback offered through supportive networks can motivate students to take initiative, pursue innovative ideas, and persist despite challenges. As a result, social capital helps students build the risk-taking and problem-solving abilities necessary for entrepreneurship. Moreover, peer groups and collaborative environments within management institutions encourage idea exchange, team formation, and collective learning—key elements for capacity building.

3. Facilitation of Experiential Learning and Skill Acquisition: Another key impact of social capital is its ability to promote experiential learning. Entrepreneurial education is not just about textbooks and theories—it heavily relies on practical exposure, real-time feedback, and interactive learning. Through social capital, students can

gain internships with start-ups, participate in live projects, collaborate in student-led ventures, and engage in community entrepreneurship. These experiences allow students to apply classroom knowledge in real-world scenarios, thereby deepening their learning and skill acquisition. Interactions with experienced entrepreneurs also help students learn how to deal with uncertainty, navigate regulatory hurdles, pitch ideas, and manage teams. Thus, social capital serves as a catalyst for transforming passive learners into active doers, making entrepreneurial learning more impactful and long-lasting.

4. Promotion of Inclusive and Collaborative Entrepreneurial Ecosystems: Social capital also contributes to building inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems within higher education institutions. By promoting networking across different social, academic, and economic groups, social capital reduces barriers that often exclude first-generation students, women, or minority groups from entrepreneurial activities. Institutions that encourage diverse mentorship programs, cross-cultural teams, and collaborative innovation hubs enable a wider pool of students to participate in and benefit from entrepreneurial initiatives. Moreover, shared values, trust, and mutual respect fostered through social capital enhance teamwork, reduce conflict, and improve decision-making—all critical aspects of entrepreneurial success. Ultimately, the impact of social capital extends beyond individual development to creating a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable culture of entrepreneurship in higher education.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

1. **Putnam, R. D. (2000),** in the research paper titled "Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community". Putnam emphasizes that social capital—defined by networks, norms of reciprocity, and trust—is vital for societal well-being and individual success. Though not focused solely on students, the implications for higher education are profound. For management students, the weakening of traditional social networks can hinder their access to entrepreneurial opportunities and mentorship. Putnam suggests that building institutional platforms that enhance civic engagement and collaborative learning among students can restore the flow of social capital, which is essential for cultivating entrepreneurial thinking and capacity. Universities can thus serve as a fertile ground for rebuilding community ties and encouraging entrepreneurial initiatives through clubs, alumni networks, and peer collaborations.
2. **Lin, N. (2001),** in the research paper titled "Social Capital: A Theory of Social Structure and Action". Lin conceptualizes social capital as resources embedded in social networks that individuals can mobilize for goal achievement. In the context of management education, this theory underlines the importance of students' social interactions within academic institutions. Students with access to diverse networks—professors, industry mentors, and peers—can better obtain critical information, emotional support, and professional opportunities that enhance entrepreneurial skillsets. Lin's findings imply that higher education institutions must facilitate relationship-building among students and industry professionals to foster entrepreneurship, as these networks directly influence students' confidence, risk tolerance, and opportunity recognition.
3. **Nahapiet, J., & Ghoshal, S. (1998),** in the research paper titled "Social Capital, Intellectual Capital, and the Organizational Advantage". The authors argue that social capital is a precursor to the development of intellectual capital, both of which are crucial for innovation and entrepreneurship. The paper identifies three dimensions of social capital—structural (who you know), relational (how you relate), and cognitive (shared meaning)—all of which can be intentionally cultivated in management education to improve entrepreneurial outcomes. For students, educational institutions that encourage group projects, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and mentorship create the cognitive and relational trust needed to take entrepreneurial risks. This environment promotes knowledge sharing and the exchange of entrepreneurial ideas, ultimately enhancing their entrepreneurial capacity.
4. **Fukuyama, F. (1995),** in the research paper titled "Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity". Fukuyama highlights the central role of trust as a component of social capital in promoting economic development and entrepreneurship. He posits that cultures and institutions that promote interpersonal trust tend to be more innovative and economically dynamic. When applied to management students in higher education, this trust-building environment reduces the perceived risk of entrepreneurial ventures and fosters cooperative behavior. Institutions that emphasize teamwork, ethical conduct, and open communication are more

likely to produce students with stronger entrepreneurial inclinations and collaborative abilities, thereby contributing positively to entrepreneurial capacity building.

5. **Bourdieu, P. (1986),** in the research paper titled "The Forms of Capital". Bourdieu presents social capital as one of the key forms of capital (alongside economic and cultural), derived from the benefits of membership in networks and group affiliations. His analysis implies that management students' entrepreneurial development is significantly influenced by their ability to leverage institutional and interpersonal relationships. Elite institutions or well-connected faculty can give students access to entrepreneurial ecosystems, funding sources, and advisory networks. Therefore, universities play a critical role in shaping the entrepreneurial capacity of students by curating inclusive, high-trust, and well-connected social environments.
6. **Liao, J., Welsch, H., & Stoica, M. (2005),** in the research paper titled "Organizational Absorptive Capacity and Responsiveness: An Empirical Investigation of Growth-Oriented SMEs". Although focused on SMEs, this study reveals that social capital influences the absorptive capacity of an organization—its ability to recognize, assimilate, and apply external knowledge. Translating this to higher education, management students with broader social networks are better positioned to integrate entrepreneurial knowledge and apply it to real-world problems. Institutions must therefore encourage knowledge-sharing practices, such as incubator programs, startup weekends, and industry linkages, which help students internalize entrepreneurial competencies and apply them in innovative ways.
7. **Davidsson, P., & Honig, B. (2003),** in the research paper titled "The Role of Social and Human Capital Among Nascent Entrepreneurs". This empirical study identifies social and human capital as foundational to entrepreneurial activity. Among nascent entrepreneurs, those with richer social networks were more likely to launch successful ventures. Applied to management students, the research suggests that classroom instruction alone is insufficient for entrepreneurship development. Students benefit most when universities provide experiential learning opportunities, such as networking events, mentorship programs, and entrepreneurship clubs. These platforms help students build social ties that contribute to entrepreneurial confidence and resource mobilization.
8. **Coleman, J. S. (1988),** in the research paper titled "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital". Coleman asserts that social capital—particularly in the form of trust relationships, obligations, and shared norms—plays a vital role in the formation of human capital. For management students, entrepreneurial capacity is not only a function of knowledge but also of the quality of their relationships with mentors, peers, and the entrepreneurial community. Institutions that foster social cohesion, mentorship, and collaborative learning environments enhance the formation of both social and human capital, leading to greater entrepreneurial intent and capability among students.
9. **Adomako, S., Danso, A., & Ofori, D. (2016),** in the research paper titled "The Moderating Influence of Social Capital on the Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Orientation and Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Ghana". Though the study is set in the SME context, its findings are applicable to entrepreneurial education. The authors find that social capital strengthens the positive effects of entrepreneurial orientation on business performance. In a similar vein, for management students, those with high entrepreneurial orientation and access to supportive networks (faculty, alumni, industry leaders) are more likely to translate entrepreneurial ideas into viable actions. The implication for educational institutions is to invest in creating social bridges through alumni engagement, entrepreneurship cells, and collaborative platforms that can support students in their entrepreneurial journey.
10. **Mair, J., & Martí, I. (2006),** in the research paper titled "Social Entrepreneurship Research: A Source of Explanation, Prediction, and Delight". The authors explore how social capital underpins social entrepreneurship by facilitating collective action, resource mobilization, and legitimacy. In higher education, this perspective broadens the understanding of entrepreneurship beyond profit-making to include social value creation. For management students, participation in socially-driven projects or community entrepreneurship initiatives builds empathy, leadership, and innovation—skills integral to entrepreneurial success. Higher education institutions

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that integrate social entrepreneurship modules and fieldwork into their curricula help students build purpose-driven entrepreneurial capacity, supported by strong community ties and networks.

Research Gap:

Despite extensive research highlighting the importance of social capital in fostering entrepreneurial activities, a significant research gap exists in understanding how social capital specifically impacts entrepreneurial capacity building among management students in higher education. Most studies focus on entrepreneurs in general or on small and medium enterprises (SMEs), neglecting the unique context of student populations who are still in the formative stages of their entrepreneurial journey. Furthermore, existing literature often emphasizes economic or structural dimensions of social capital, while underexploring the cognitive and relational dimensions—such as trust, shared norms, and mentorship—that are critical in academic settings. There is also limited empirical evidence on how educational institutions can strategically leverage social capital to enhance entrepreneurial outcomes among students, especially in developing economies. This gap calls for focused investigation into how social networks, peer learning, and institutional support systems contribute to building entrepreneurial competencies in higher education environments.

Research Methodology: The research employed a quantitative methodology using a structured questionnaire administered to a sample of 120 postgraduate management students selected through stratified random sampling. The study aimed to assess the relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial capacity building. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze demographic data, while Pearson correlation analysis tested the study's hypotheses. The findings revealed significant positive correlations between entrepreneurial capacity and various dimensions of social capital, including participation, network, trust, social support, and linking capital. These statistical methods validated the study's objectives, demonstrating that social capital significantly influences entrepreneurial development in higher education contexts.

To test the hypotheses in the study, the Pearson Correlation test was used to examine the relationships between social capital and entrepreneurial capacity building among postgraduate management students. Specifically, it assessed the overall relationship as well as the impact of individual dimensions of social capital—Participation, Network, Trust, Social Support, and the role of Linking Capital. The Pearson Correlation analysis determined the strength and direction of these associations, and the significance of the results was evaluated using p-values, with a threshold of 0.05. All tests confirmed statistically significant positive relationships, leading to the rejection of the null hypotheses.

Data Analysis:

The following table indicates the demographic factor of the study:

Sr.no	Demographic Factor	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Gender	Male	74	61.7
		Female	46	38.3
2	Current Year	1st Year	47	39.2
		2nd Year	73	60.8
3	Name of the Program	MBA	36	30.0
		MMS	28	23.3
		PDGM'	43	35.8
		Other Postgraduates	13	10.8
4	Annual Income	Up to 5 Lakhs	6	5.0
		6-10 Lakhs	18	15.0
		11-15 Lakhs	27	22.5
		15-20 Lakhs	38	31.7
		More than 20 Lakhs	31	25.8

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The demographic profile of the respondents reveals a relatively balanced gender distribution, with 74 males and 46 females participating in the study. In terms of academic standing, a majority of students are in their 2nd year (73), compared to 47 in the 1st year. The participants are enrolled in various management programs, including MBA (36), MMS (28), PGDM (43), and other postgraduate courses (13), indicating a diverse educational background. Regarding annual family income, the majority of respondents fall within the mid to high-income brackets, with 38 reporting an income of ₹15–20 lakhs and 31 reporting more than ₹20 lakhs. A smaller number of students belong to lower-income categories, with only 6 from families earning up to ₹5 lakhs annually. This demographic composition reflects a diverse yet predominantly higher-income and advanced-year student population engaged in professional management education.

Objective-1: To assess the relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial capacity building among postgraduate management students in higher education.

Null Hypothesis H_{01}: There is no relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial capacity building among postgraduate management students in higher education.

Alternate Hypothesis H_{11}: There is a relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial capacity building among postgraduate management students in higher education.

To test the above null hypothesis, Pearson Correlation test is applied and results are as follows:

Correlations

		Entrepreneurial Capacity Building	Social Capital
Entrepreneurial Capacity Building	Pearson Correlation	1	.492**
	P-value		.000
	N	120	120
Social Capital	Pearson Correlation	.492**	1
	P-value	.000	
	N	120	120

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation: The above results indicate that calculated p-value is 0.000. It is less than 0.05. Therefore, Pearson Correlation test is rejected. Hence Null hypothesis is rejected and Alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusion: There is a relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial capacity building among postgraduate management students in higher education.

Findings: The correlation analysis shows a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between Entrepreneurial Capacity Building and overall Social Capital, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.492 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that higher levels of social capital—comprising networks, trust, participation, and social support—are closely associated with enhanced entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, and readiness among management students. The sample size of 120 further supports the robustness of this finding, emphasizing that social capital is a critical factor in developing students' entrepreneurial capacities in higher education settings.

Objective-2: To assess the impact of key dimensions of social capital (Participation, Network, Trust and Social Support) on entrepreneurial capacity building.

Null Hypothesis H_{02}: There is no impact of key dimensions of social capital (Participation, Network, Trust and Social Support) on entrepreneurial capacity building.

Alternate Hypothesis H_{12}: There is an impact of key dimensions of social capital (Participation, Network, Trust and Social Support) on entrepreneurial capacity building.

To test the above null hypothesis, Pearson Correlation test is applied and results are as follows:

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Correlations						
		Entrepreneurial Capacity Building	Participation	Network	Trust	Social Support
Entrepreneurial Capacity Building	Pearson Correlation	1	.208*	.344**	.359**	.375**
	P-value		.023	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Participation	Pearson Correlation	.208*	1	.192*	.088	.059
	P-value	.023		.036	.338	.521
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Network	Pearson Correlation	.344**	.192*	1	.366**	.284**
	P-value	.000	.036		.000	.002
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Trust	Pearson Correlation	.359**	.088	.366**	1	.303**
	P-value	.000	.338	.000		.001
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Social Support	Pearson Correlation	.375**	.059	.284**	.303**	1
	P-value	.000	.521	.002	.001	
	N	120	120	120	120	120
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Interpretation: The above results indicate that calculated p-value is 0.000. It is less than 0.05. Therefore, Pearson Correlation test is rejected. Hence Null hypothesis is rejected and Alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusion: There is an impact of key dimensions of social capital (Participation, Network, Trust and Social Support) on entrepreneurial capacity building.

Findings: The correlation analysis demonstrates statistically significant positive relationships between Entrepreneurial Capacity Building and four key dimensions of social capital: Participation, Network, Trust, and Social Support. The strongest correlation is observed with Social Support ($r = 0.375$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that emotional and practical assistance from peers, mentors, and faculty plays a major role in enhancing students' entrepreneurial capabilities. This is followed closely by Trust ($r = 0.359$, $p = 0.000$) and Network ($r = 0.344$, $p = 0.000$), suggesting that having dependable relationships and access to broad, diverse connections significantly contributes to students' entrepreneurial learning and confidence. Participation in entrepreneurial activities also shows a positive but relatively weaker correlation ($r = 0.208$, $p = 0.023$), indicating that while involvement in events and programs helps, it may not be as influential as other relational factors. With a sample size of **120**, the results highlight that all these components of social capital are important and positively associated with building entrepreneurial capacity among management students.

Objective-3: To evaluate the role of linking capital in enhancing the entrepreneurial capacity building of post graduate management students.

Null Hypothesis H_{03}: There is no role of linking capital in enhancing the entrepreneurial capacity building of post graduate management students.

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Alternate Hypothesis H_{13}: There is a role of linking capital in enhancing the entrepreneurial capacity building of post graduate management students.

To test the above null hypothesis, Pearson Correlation test is applied and results are as follows:

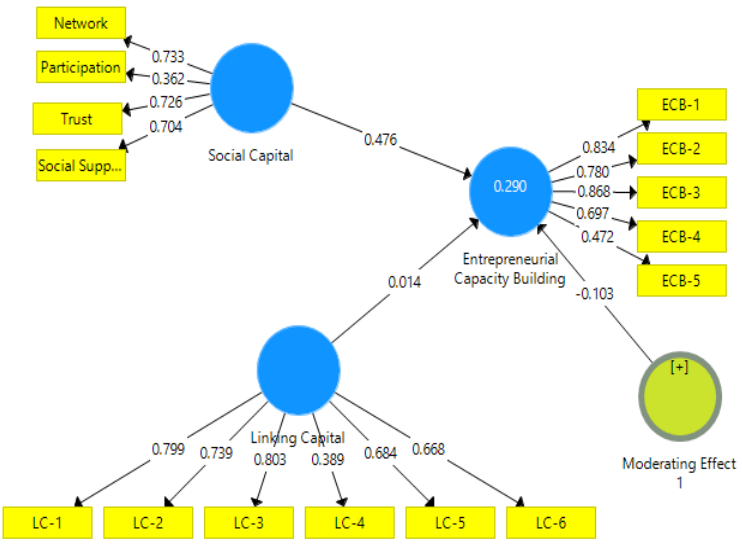
Correlations			
		Entrepreneurial Capacity Building	Linking Capital
Entrepreneurial Capacity Building	Pearson Correlation	1	.330**
	P-value		.000
	N	120	120
Linking Capital	Pearson Correlation	.330**	1
	P-value	.000	
	N	120	120
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Interpretation: The above results indicate that calculated p-value is 0.000. It is less than 0.05. Therefore, Pearson Correlation test is rejected. Hence Null hypothesis is rejected and Alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusion: There is a role of linking capital in enhancing the entrepreneurial capacity building of post graduate management students.

Findings: The correlation analysis reveals a moderate positive relationship between Entrepreneurial Capacity Building and Linking Capital, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.330. This correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (p = 0.000), indicating a strong level of confidence in the result. This implies that as linking capital increases—referring to the students' ability to connect with influential external networks such as industry professionals, mentors, and institutions—there is a corresponding increase in their entrepreneurial capacity, including skills, confidence, and readiness to start or manage ventures. The sample size for this analysis is 120, which strengthens the reliability of the findings. Overall, the result suggests that fostering external linkages and networks can play a vital role in enhancing entrepreneurial development among management students.

Objective-4: To analyse whether linking capital act as a mediator in the relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial capacity building.



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Path Coefficients:

	Entrepreneurial Capacity Building
Linking Capital	0.014
Moderating Effect 1	-0.103
Social Capital_	0.476

The path coefficient table displays the strength and direction of the relationships between the variables in the structural model. The coefficient from Social Capital to Entrepreneurial Capacity Building is 0.476, indicating a strong and positive impact, meaning social capital significantly contributes to enhancing entrepreneurial skills among students. In contrast, Linking Capital shows a minimal direct influence on entrepreneurial capacity building with a coefficient of 0.014, suggesting its standalone impact is weak. Interestingly, the Moderating Effect (interaction between Social Capital and Linking Capital) has a negative coefficient of -0.103, implying that the presence of linking capital may slightly weaken the influence of social capital on entrepreneurial capacity building. This indicates the complex interplay between network types and entrepreneurial outcomes.

Outer Loadings:

	Entrepreneurial Capacity Building	Linking Capital	Moderating Effect 1	Social Capital_
ECB-1	**0.834**			
ECB-2	**0.780**			
ECB-3	**0.868**			
ECB-4	**0.697**			
ECB-5	**0.472**			
LC-1		**0.799**		
LC-2		**0.739**		
LC-3		**0.803**		
LC-4		**0.389**		
LC-5		**0.684**		
LC-6		**0.668**		
Network				**0.733**
Participation				**0.362**
Social Capital_ * Linking Capital			**1.216**	
Social Support				**0.704**
Trust				**0.726**

Outer loadings show how well each observed item (question or indicator) represents its latent variable (construct). For Entrepreneurial Capacity Building, the highest loading is from ECB-3 (0.868), suggesting this item is the strongest indicator, followed by ECB-1 and ECB-2. ECB-5 has the lowest loading (0.472), which may be considered for revision or removal. For Linking Capital, LC-3 and LC-1 show strong representation with loadings above 0.80, while LC-4 has the weakest loading (0.389), indicating it contributes less to the construct. For Social Capital, components like Network (0.733), Social Support (0.704), and Trust (0.726) load strongly, while Participation is

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relatively weak at 0.362. The interaction term Social Capital * Linking Capital has a very high loading (1.216), likely due to its computed nature for moderation analysis.

Outer Weights:

	Entrepreneurial Capacity Building	Linking Capital	Moderating Effect 1	Social Capital_
ECB-1	0.258			
ECB-2	0.337			
ECB-3	0.349			
ECB-4	0.215			
ECB-5	0.147			
LC-1		0.280		
LC-2		0.253		
LC-3		0.244		
LC-4		0.189		
LC-5		0.209		
LC-6		0.264		
Network				0.411
Participation				0.219
Social Capital_ * Linking Capital			1.000	
Social Support				0.447
Trust				0.420

Outer weights reflect the relative contribution of each indicator to its latent construct in a formative model. For Entrepreneurial Capacity Building, ECB-3 (0.349), ECB-2 (0.337), and ECB-1 (0.258) contribute most significantly, indicating their higher importance in shaping the construct, while ECB-5 contributes the least (0.147). For Linking Capital, LC-1 (0.280), LC-6 (0.264), and LC-2 (0.253) have higher contributions, showing these elements are central in defining linking capital. For Social Capital, Social Support (0.447) and Trust (0.420) emerge as the most influential indicators, followed by Network (0.411), while Participation (0.219) contributes the least. The interaction effect (Social Capital * Linking Capital) is normalized to 1.000, as is typical in moderation modelling, serving as a reference for interpreting moderation strength.

DISCUSSION:

The discussion covers the research study, its objectives, methodologies and the significance. The research findings significantly provide the compelling evidence that the social capital significantly influenced entrepreneurial capacity building amongst management students. The four dimensions of Social Capital Participation, Trust, Network and Social Support are related and impacts the entrepreneurial capacity building. The findings highlight that the amongst all the social capital dimensions, social support emerged to be most influential variable in the entrepreneurial capacity building for management students aspiring to become an Entrepreneur. This clearly indicates that the emotional and practical assistance from the peers, mentors and faculty members plays a pivotal role in enhancing the entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and preparedness. The management institutions should foster the environment of supportive mentorship and peer to peer collaboration which will facilitate the entrepreneurial capacity amongst the management students.

Social Capital variables like Trust and Networking also have indicated the positive correlation with entrepreneurial capacity building. The findings reinforce existing literature suggesting and dependable relationships and access to

the diverse social and industry connections that are the critical enablers of the entrepreneurial learning and confidence. Although Participation is also positively correlated but have the weakest influence. This indicates that the students though participate in the events however are not impactful in changing or creating the entrepreneurial mind-set. Institutions or the incubation centres should mainly focus on the activities that provides opportunities to network, meet and exchange ideas especially with the faculty, mentors and other peer members of the institutions.

With reference to the overall impact of social capital on entrepreneurial capacity building, the findings underscore the central role of social capital in nurturing entrepreneurial capacity among management students. This finding validates the theoretical proposition that the social capital acts as a critical resource in educational landscape as well. Social Capital not just support and influence young management students in accessing the information but also provide motivation and confidence to pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

Remarkably, linking social capital represents an important element in terms of external linkages and its support in entrepreneurial capacity building. However, the findings demonstrated a minimal direct effect on the capacity building of the students. This suggests that the external linkages are valuable, their isolated impact may be limited unless they integrated with a broader social capital and entrepreneurial capacity. Even more noteworthy is the negative moderating effect of linking capital on the social capital and entrepreneurial capacity building. This counterintuitive finding indicates a complex interplay where external connections might slightly dilute the influence of internal social capital, potentially due to overreliance on external resource or misalignment of with students' current capacity to leverage such relationships.

Overall, the findings suggest that the educational institutions aiming to build the entrepreneurial capacity amongst the management students should prioritize strengthening internal social capital – especially the ecosystem of supportive peer and mentor relationships- while adopting a more integrated approach of external networking. The complex role of linking social capital also highlights the need for structured interventions that support students effectively in leveraging the external linkages without undermining the internal social capital.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that social capital significantly influences entrepreneurial capacity building among postgraduate management students, as evidenced by a strong positive correlation. Key dimensions of social capital, Participation, Network, Trust, and Social Support, each show significant positive associations, with Social Support having the strongest impact. Linking capital also demonstrates a moderate positive relationship with entrepreneurial capacity building, highlighting the value of external professional connections. However, its role as a mediator is minimal and may slightly weaken the direct effect of social capital on entrepreneurial outcomes. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of fostering both internal and external social networks to effectively enhance students' entrepreneurial competencies.

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