WHAT DRIVES ORGANIZATIONS TO START A CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIP? A REVIEW ON TYPOLOGIES AND DIMENSIONS

Fatemeh Sharafi Farzad [1] 🆔 **Azlan Amran [1]** 🆔 **Yashar Salamzadeh [1]** 🆔
Ashkan Hafezalkotob [2] 🆔
[1] Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia
[2] Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran
E-mail: *yashar@usm.my*

Abstract
Due to the importance of cross-sector partnerships (CSPs) in today's world on the one hand and the diversity of the research done in this field, a need for comprehensive frameworks about this practical phenomenon is felt. The main purpose of this paper is to provide a comprehensive view about drivers of cross-sector partnership to help all actors from government, business, and nonprofit sectors to recognize the big picture of the initial stage of a successful CSP. Although this paper is not a pure literature review article, but a literature review is used as a tool to find all relevant factors which influence starting a CSP. This paper categorizes all these factors into five types of drivers and motives, including main drivers, secondary drivers, partner selection drivers, organizational factors, and contextual factors. Proposing the above-mentioned framework for CSPs drivers is the main novelty of the current paper, and due to its potential to be used both in academia and practices related to CSPs, this framework can be the starting point for many other research policy-making initiatives. On the other hand, CSP partners can also use it to make wiser decisions on building a partnership with other sectors.

Research paper

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Introduction

This paper does not review this literature; rather, it suggests a conceptual typology for Cross-sector partnership, which is not a new phenomenon but an evolving research area. This field of research lacks comprehensive typologies like what is developed in this article. Different types of partnerships that bridge diverse sectors (private, public, and nonprofit) are thriving worldwide and in different industries. A huge number of cross-sector partnerships are activated and/or are under consideration or development, and this is the reason we have faced a dramatic increase in the management and policy research fields on cross-sector partnerships (Gray & Stites, 2013; Branzei & Le Ber, 2014; Van Tulder et al., 2016).

There are many reasons and justifications for organizations from different sectors to enter cross-sector partnerships. Organizations cannot neglect cross-sector partnerships (CSPs) in their landscapes or not to have strategies to address social problems using this partnership approach (Koschmann et al., 2012). For sure, it is not easy for organizations to address complex sustainability challenges by themselves. They usually need joint efforts to merge all three dimensions of the triple bottom line and move to a more sustainable society in future (Seuring & Gold, 2013), to provide needed social goods like education, health or clean water (Warner & Sullivan, 2017), to solve social issues like inequality or poverty (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2010) or to fill their organizational voids (Fransen & Kolk, 2007). To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of these goals, many public-private- nonprofit partnerships are formed in recent years and their number is growing each day. These cross-

sector partnerships are assumed as organizational solutions to the above-mentioned social issues by using the competitive advantage of each sector involved in these partnerships (Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2011; Agudo-Valiente et al., 2019).

Centered on numerous theories such as Grounded Theory (Dorado et al., 2009; Dentoni et al., 2016; Sanders, 2016; Easter & Schultz, 2017; Feilhauer & Hahn, 2021), Contingency theory (Gutiérrez et al., 2016; Ordonez-Ponce & Clarke, 2020), Theory of change (Van Tulder & Keen, 2018; Dentoni et al., 2020), Transaction cost theory (Stadtler, 2013; Alonso & Andrews, 2019; Joniškienė et al., 2020) and Resource-based view theory (Hahn & Pinkse, 2014; Clarke & MacDonald, 2019) researchers have explored cross-sector partnership.

From several various perspectives, the cross-sector partnership has been studied. CSPs are analyzed from organizational dimension in some research. For instance, Ameli and Kayes (2011) focused on a case from four different perspectives, including organizational culture, strategy, shared vision, and knowledge management and tried to find how cross-sector partners can learn from each other and develop their partnership capabilities while creating value for society. The other group of researchers have investigated the relationship dimension of CSP. For example, partnership content and shared resources (Hahn & Pinkse, 2014; Ramamoorthi et al., 2014; Sukhonos et al., 2018; Susha et al., 2019), partnership governance mechanisms (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Rein & Stott, 2009; Cairns & Harris, 2011; Soublière &

Cloutier, 2015a,b; Alonso & Andrews, 2019; Joniškienė et al., 2020) and relationship structure (Goldsmith, 2011; Schuster & Holtbrügge 2014; Shier & Handy 2016;). Researchers have also considered factors that help cross-sector partnerships to accomplish their aims or factors contributing to the termination of partnerships. Therefore, success and failure factors of cross-sector partnership are discussed in another group of studies {e.g., Dempsey et al., 2016; Hartman & Dhanda, 2018}.

Finally, it needs to be shared that CSPs' processes have been examined in several studies. Almog-Bar and Schmid (2018) presented a mixed method approach to study CSP in human services. Another study investigated the activities and organizational characteristics on the one hand and the relationship among organizations from three sectors of government, business and nonprofit on the other hand, considering three stages of systematic view including inputs, processes and outcomes. Klitsie et al. (2018) studied the evolution process of actors of a cross-sector partnership. They showed the importance of framing in helping CSP actors not fall into CSP traps like conflicts and provide a platform to sustain the collaboration. They also showed that framing changes in a CSP while actors move from one stage of partnership to the other stage. In a research on the initial stages of the cross-sector partnerships' lifecycle in the social services, Schmid and Almog-Bar (2019) found that initial stages play an important role in the establishment and institutionalization of partnerships as time goes on. They shared that these initial stages are known by making CSP goals clear, mobilizing the support, breaking the

resistance, changing the mind-sets about the partnership and finally formalization of the procedures and processes.

Previously, due to the importance of the drivers and motives of CSPs, some studies have done in this field to conceptualize these factors. As some top examples in this regard, we can start with Huxham and Vangen (1996) who suggested three levels of motivation for CSPs, including Meta goals which are related to the partnership goal, goals of each actor of the partnership and goals of the individuals involved in partnership activities. Some other researchers believe that drivers of partnerships are either solving social issues (Pasquero, 1991) or the desire to contribute to global problem solving (Warner & Sullivan, 2004). Gray and Stites (2013) developed a four-dimensional model for inter-organizational collaborations, including competency oriented, legitimacy oriented, resource-oriented and society-oriented drivers. Van Tulder et al. (2016) developed a framework to analyze CSPs and their impacts using a system approach, and due to its novelties, we decided to expand the initial part of this model in proposing our typology. Figure 1 shows the core section of their model and its components on CSP analysis.
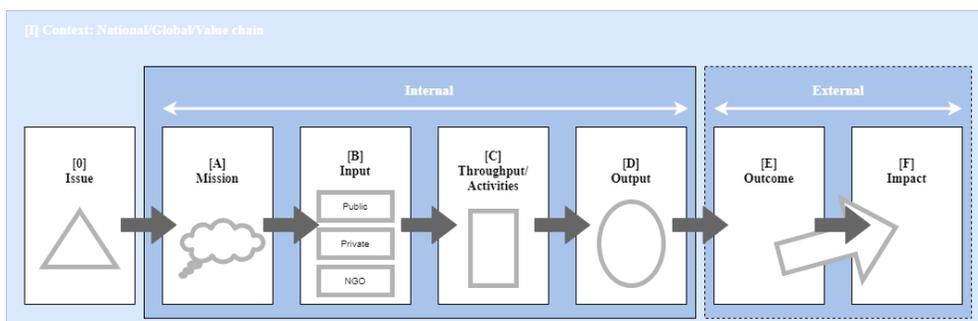

Figure 1. CSP model (source: Van Tulder and Mass (2012) and Van Tulder et al. (2016))

The current research tries to establish a new perspective to categorize motives, drivers and influencing factors of cross-sector partnership's antecedents and share a clear typology of these drivers and motives. CSPs usually try to fulfill goals related to society's betterment and do not limit themselves to some limited needs and issues while trying to benefit a wider community (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Radović Marković & Salamzadeh, 2012; Vestergaard et al., 2020). In our paper, we have expanded the initial part of Van Tudler et al. (2016) model by proposing the drivers that form the CSP antecedents. Our proposed model and its focus are shown in figure 2.
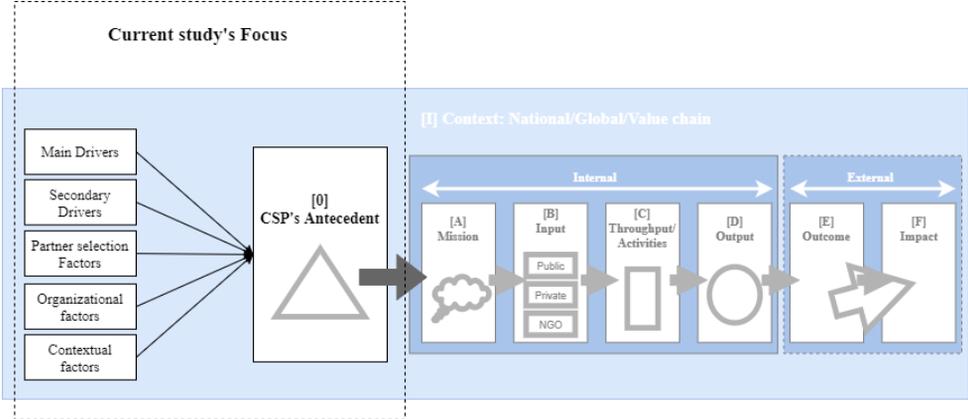

Figure 2. Improved model (Source: authors)

In our proposed typology, we have different types of CSP drivers as below. The first and main purpose of joining a cross-sector partnership is to benefit society and the environment. Besides, organizations that participate in a CSP will also benefit from the partnership at the same time. So, there are secondary drivers for organizations to become a partner and thereby benefit their own organizations. Besides these main drivers and secondary drivers,

other drivers encourage an organization to choose another organization as a partner. Finally, two other groups of factors influence CSPs at its beginning stage: organizational structure factors and contextual factors. Organizational structure factors are factors that are embedded in an organization and influence its willingness to join a partnership, while contextual factors are environmental factors that influence its willingness to collaboration from outside of the organization. It must be considered that actors from different sectors, even while working on the same problem, think in their own ways, are motivated differently and use different perspectives (Selsky & Parker, 2005), and it must be taken note while practicing CSPs. In the coming sections, we have explained each typology of the CSP drivers and motives in detail.

Main Drivers (Outcome expectation)

Drivers of CSPs are the factors that motivate actors to start a cross-sector partnership (Gray & Stites, 2013). As discussed earlier, the first type of drivers in our proposed model which are called main drivers of CSPs are meeting the goal of sustainability. Main drivers cover motivations related to addressing social, environmental, and socioeconomic issues and contributing to social innovation. Addressing wicked problems - large, sticky, complex and dynamic problems (Rittel and Webber, 1973; Dentoni et al., 2016) - involves coordination across various actors across sectors (Selsky and Parker 2005; Klitsie et al., 2018; Van Tulder & Keen, 2018) and Problems of sustainability are commonly known as wicked problems (Norton 2005; Raffaelle et al. 2010; Brundiers and Wiek 2010; Seager et al., 2012).

As a common trend in different contexts, CSPs are becoming among the first choices in solving sustainability problems (Gray & Stites, 2013; Clarke & MacDonald, 2019) like education, economic development, transportation, climate change and ecological diversity (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014; Clarke & Ordonez-Ponce, 2017; MacDonald et al., 2018; Ordonez-Ponce & Clarke, 2020). One of the greatest reasons for partnerships is the desire to solve complicated social and environmental challenges that are too wide or intractable for an organization or industry to handle alone (Waddock 1989; Clarke & Crane, 2018).

Many studies have examined CSPs in the area of sustainability (e.g., Dentoni et al., 2016; Agudo-Valiente et al., 2019; Dentoni et al., 2020; Ordonez-Ponce & Clarke, 2020; van Hille et al., 2020; Feilhauer & Hahn, 2021). Feilhauer and Hahn (2019) Explored how businesses should overcome the crucial task of rigorously and regularly assessing their rising number of sustainability cross-sector partnerships. A crucial insight from their research was that CSP drivers function in organizations to formalize the internal as well as the shared evaluation process.

Ordonez-Ponce and Clarke (2020) studied the role of structures, as a component of the strategy, in partnerships and if they can affect the strategic goal's achievement level in the context of community sustainability partnerships. They listed 31 drivers for organizations to become a partner in different resources, including sustainability resources, human resources, organizational resources, financial resources and physical resources. The study in the

sustainability resources part has five drivers: contributing to cross-sector social partnership's sustainability goals, contributing to environmental challenges, contributing to social challenges, contributing to economic challenges, and contributing to community sustainability (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2020). No one organization can address complicated societal problems, especially when those issues involve coordination across multiple organizations (Selsky & Parker, 2005; Koschmann et al., 2012).

On addressing social issues, there are several studies (e.g., Butcher & Dalton, 2014; Ramamoorthi et al., 2014; Johnston & Finegood, 2015; Meinhard et al., 2016; Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2018; Nelson, 2020). Selsky and Parker (2005) argued that in project-based CSPs with a goal to solve social issues, there are four areas of partnership, including government-nonprofit, business-nonprofit, business-government and trisector. They perused CSPs in each arena with consideration of three stages for CSPs, including formation, implementation, and outcomes. Resource dependence, social issues, and societal sector are three conceptual platforms for CSP studies that are differentiated on the basis of goal and interest orientations of CSPs.

Addressing environmental challenges such as climate change requires a tie between climate and sustainable development, which can be managed in a multi-sector partnership like CSPs. (Pinkse and Kolk, 2012; Van Tulder & Keen, 2018; Alonso & Andrews, 2019). Many researchers have studied CSPs in the context of environmental issues (e.g., Forsyth, 2007; Forsyth, 2010; Ritvala et al., 2014; Dempsey et al., 2016; Giovannini & Huybrechts, 2017;

Mirzadeh et al., 2017; Doshmanli et al., 2018; Alonso & Andrews, 2019; Kawamorita et al., 202o). Forsyth (2010) stated that it is not easy to imagine an alternative for CSPs as policymaking in the climate change field requires full participation of actors other than the state organizations. But if we expect a CSP to be successful, we need to follow some guidelines like the three below suggestions. First, considering CSP as a contractual way of delivering environmental services and products rather than a consultation process of actors from different sectors. Second, to assume CSPs as institutions that design and support spaces for policy objectives to happen. And finally, governments or funders need to facilitate spaces for negotiation between investors and citizens to decide on CSPs.

Addressing socioeconomic issues by using CSP has been explored in different studies (e.g., Rein & Stott, 2009; Goldsmith, 2011; van Tulder & Da Rosa, 2012; Reid & Rein, 2016). Giovannini and Huybrechts (2017) studied a CSP project in Latin America that aimed to improve recyclers' socioeconomic situation. They found that one of the best ways to foster recyclers' socioeconomic inclusion is to create partnerships among municipal governments, local businesses, NGOs, and civil society organizations devoted to supporting this goal.

Schuster and Holtbrügge (2014) investigated the benefits of CSPs in the base of pyramid markets. Their study showed that the civil society sector has an essential role in these markets to help businesses meet customer needs, especially when they respond to restrictive market conditions.

Koschmann et al. (2012) stated that CSPs must simultaneously manage both collective and individual interests and create original solutions to wicked social problems. While it is possible to inspire organizations to join CSPs to address social, environmental, and socioeconomic challenges, some organizations join these alliances to address these issues and tackle these problems in a new way. Therefore, another driver for CSPs is to lead to social innovations. CSPs are organizational faces that have gained importance as a platform for social innovation (Rey-García et al., 2019). Many previous studies have shown that CSPs are essential in the context of social innovation (e.g., Selsky & Parker, 2010; Le Ber & Branzei, 2010; Pittz et al., 2019). According to Le Ber and Branzei (2010) when partners have a high engagement level, continuous and frequent interaction, working on complex problems and are aware of the high strategic value of their partnership, CSPs are more resilient and fruitful compared to go-it-alone social innovation initiatives (Rondinelli & London, 2003). CSPs increases the success chance of organizations in creating social value using the social innovation approach. It is specifically important for nonprofits that usually facing economic limitations beside lack of political power when working alone or with other nonprofits (Googins & Rochlin, 2000; Rondinelli & London, 2003; Le Ber & Branzei, 2010; Shier & Handy, 2016).

As a sum, as we define partnership outcomes as a comprehensive benefit or change for individuals, communities, or society rooted in CSP, all CSPs aim to target these types of impacts (Van Tulder et al., 2016). Therefore, it can be concluded that achieving outcomes is among the main drivers of

starting a CSP. Figure 3, shows how the main drivers are categorized in our research.
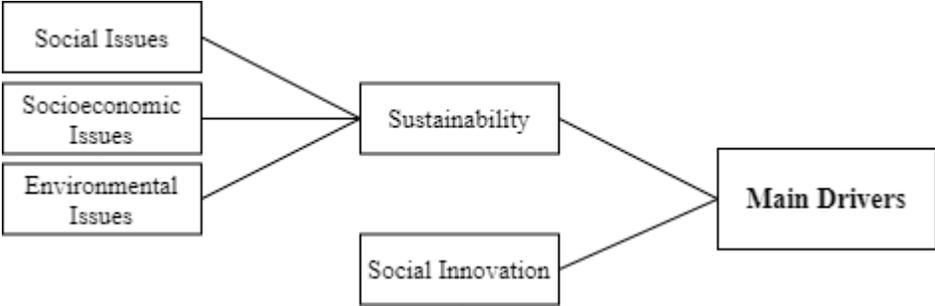

Figure 3. Main drivers (Source: authors)

Secondary Drivers (Output expectation)

As discussed before, outcomes of the CSPs construct main drivers and moving from outcomes to outputs, we have introduced the secondary drivers, which are related to output expectations. Outputs of a CSP are benefits of each actor and shows the final deliverables or results of the partnership after passing the stages of inputs and activities or processes (Van Tulder et al., 2016). Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2020) argued that one of the views for analyzing the role of organizations in partnerships is from resource viewpoint (Gray & Stites, 2013; Selsky & Parker, 2005). Researchers claim that the main goal of partners is to organize how they use their own resources beside the resources of their partners in order to survive or accomplish their collaborative goals (Penrose, 1959).

CSPs work based on diverse competencies and resources that partners share with each other to solve issues which are not easy to solve by individual organization or even the whole sector (Gray, 1989; Bryson et al., 2006;

McGuire, 2006). CSPs provide the opportunity for partners to combine their resources, skills, and knowledge to merge them and finally to achieve their goals. Resources is a general term for both financial and nonfinancial capitals such as social capital, and solving social and environmental issues needs access to the right type of capital at the right time (Balderston, 2012; Gray & Stites, 2013).

Therefore, the most important drivers in this category is willingness to gain resources, to improve resources, or to access to new resources. Resources can be considered in two groups, including tangible resources and intangible resources. Tangible resources include human resources, financial resources, technological resources, physical resources, and information. At the same time, Intangible resources include reputation, legitimacy, and trust.

Resources play an essential role in CSPs, and many studies have investigated the role of resources in CSPs (e.g., Dempsey et al., 2016; Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2018; Klitsie et al., 2018; Sukhonos et al., 2018; Schmid & Almog-Bar, 2019; Susha et al., 2019). Several studies mentioned resources as driver or motivation of CSPs (Gray & Stites, 2013; Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2020). Intangible resources also have been studied in many CSPs studies (e.g., Cairns & Harris, 2011; Hayes et al., 2011; Koschmann et al., 2012; O'Connor & Shumate, 2014; Vellema & Van Wijk, 2015; Herlin & Solitander, 2017; Hartman & Dhanda, 2018; Jones et al., 2018; Radović Marković et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2019; Fu & Li, 2019; Rohwer & Topić, 2019; Joniškienė et al., 2020). In the next lines, some examples of the role of intangible resources in CSPs and how they affect CSPs are presented.

Forming CSPs with diverse stakeholders can be a mechanism to understand the stakeholders better, engage them in the decision-making process and influence them in a positive direction. In particular, many organizations try to start partnerships with powerful stakeholders to benefit from learning from the stakeholders, their legitimacy and position to find some kind of support or reputation. This is why legitimacy is also proposed as a key driver for CSPs (Parmigiani & Rivera-Santos, 2011).

Of course, we need to differentiate legitimacy from reputation. Whereas reputation is a kind of judgment about some organisations' relative status, legitimacy is an evaluation of the level of accountability of an organization according to values and norms (Deephouse & Carter, 2005). Another difference between these two is that legitimacy comes from a specific range of resources, while reputation is linked to an organisation's past actions or experiences (Bitekine, 2010; Herlin, 2015).

Another intangible resource of CSPs is trust. Getha-Taylor (2012) expressed that trust is noted as a factor in effective partnership. It is also well-known as a fundamental factor for making partnership capacity (Bardach, 1998), a mechanism for partnership sustainability (Bryson et al., 2006), a factor which increases over time (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003), and as a source of dynamics and momentum for partnership activities (Linden, 2010).

There are two approaches to the relationship between trust and CSPs. First, the common culture approach assumes trust as a prerequisite for CSP, and second, the emergent culture approach defines trust as one of the outputs of a CSP (Herlin, 2015). The first viewpoint ends in studies that discuss on

the importance of trust in CSPs, mainly in the governance of a partnership (Johnston & Finegood, 2015; Soublière & Cloutier, 2015b; Salamzadeh et al., 2019, Salamzadeh & Dana, 2020; Tajpour et al., 2020) and the second viewpoint results in studies on trust formation or regaining trust by joining a CSP (Joniškienė et al., 2020; Van Tulder & Keen, 2018).

As we focus on the factors that are important in CSPs antecedents, we will neither discuss the process of building trust among partners during the partnership nor about trust as a CSP's governance mechanism. When trust is considered as an output, therefore it can be a driver for partnership. Sonday and Wilson-Prangley (2018) argued that in CSPs, trust is built not only by partnership relationships but also by delivering values that are valuable for other partners, and this delivered value can encourage other partners to invest more in the partnership. For example, NGOs which partner with business organizations, gain a status of trustworthiness from the other stakeholders' perspectives (Wymer & Samu 2009; Getha-Taylor 2012; Joniškienė et al., 2020).

Improving processes and practices is another group of secondary drivers that encourage organizations to start a CSP. Learning from other organizations, networking, and dealing with corporate social responsibility are in this category and are explained below. Pittz and Adler (2016) stated that CSPs have shown a high level of effectiveness in solving intractable social issues as they allow organizations to work on the problem from different directions and viewpoints (Waddell, 2005), and thus they create a novel opportunity for organizational learning (Dutta & Crossan, 2005). Furthermore, it is an accepted fact in the management field that inter-organizational learning is vital

for gaining competitive advantage and success, and one well-known ways of this learning is through partnership and collaboration (Hamel, 1991; Levinson and Asahi, 1996; Jansen et al., 2005).

The next factor in this category of factors is networking. Networking is an opportunity-seeking process that is developmental (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2017). Previous studies have discussed the important role of integration for CSPs, and they have considered different dimensions for it, including institutional, organizational and social networking, communication and knowledge integration (Ritvala et al., 2014). Several findings have confirmed networking opportunities as CSPs' advantages (Herlin, 2015; Ordonez Ponce, 2018; Clarke & MacDonald, 2019). In addition to developing new relationships, by participating in CSPs, organizations become able to obtain access to policymakers and decision-makers (Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2018; Schmid & Almog-Bar, 2019) and are also willing to improve relationships with other authorities (Ordonez-Ponce & Clarke, 2020; Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2020). Studies showed that the private sector's partnership with civil society in developing countries can provide different types of resources such as financial, networking, and representational resources for the civil society and therefore enhance their capacity to make changes (Ashman 2001; Hamann & Acutt 2003; Hede Skagerlind et al., 2015).

When actors from diverse sectors work on the same problem, they are likely to think differently about it, be driven by different agendas, and use different approaches (Selsky & Parker, 2005). While drivers are placed to-

gether in this study, it is clear that each sector's priority will vary. For instance, Hartman and Dhanda (2018) stated that usually multinational corporations have better operational and financial resources than nonprofit organizations, while nonprofits have better networking and reputational resources in the societies that multinational companies plan to work in. They also know much more about the social issues which need interference through partnership. In another study, Dentoni et al. (2016) argued that by joining a CSP, Businesses get access to knowledge, increase their CSR performance and enhance their reputation, while NGOs, as nonprofit organizations, find organizational, financial and technical resources. So, overall, Businesses join CSPs for their CSR goals, while nonprofits join CSPs mainly to improve their efficiency and accountability and finally government sector joins CSP to provide more services and benefits and at the same time to be more transparent and less intrusive (Selsky & Parker, 2005).

Willingness to have corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities can encourage organizations to get involved in CSPs. Many scholars have researched corporate social responsibility in the context of CSPs (e.g., Thomsen & Lauring, 2008; Seitanidi & Crane, 2009; Kourula & Laasonen, 2010; Selsky & Parker, 2010; Du & Vieira, 2012; Pless et al., 2012; Ritvala et al., 2014; Lyra et al., 2017; Kihl et al., 2014; Hartman & Dhanda, 2018). This growing body of knowledge about partnerships and CSR ranges from studies on CSPs' strategic goals moving to legal and ethical aspects (Seitanidi & Crane, 2009) and finally to societal impacts of these partnerships. According to Fu and Li (2019), previous studies on CSP confirm the strong relationship

between CSP and CSR activities, and CSPs can help organizations achieve their CSR goals. This is one reason organizations try to choose their partners carefully and in line with their goals and needs. For example, NGOs usually try to join partnerships with various partners to mobilize economic, cultural, political, and social capitals (Shumate & O'Connor, 2010a). At the same time, many businesses are becoming more interested in building a partnership with the third sector to gain their shared goals (Never, 2011). Rohwer and Topić (2019) stated that a rise in NGO-Business partnerships shows the importance of these partnerships for CSR activities and policies over the last twenty years. Even in some cases, this type of CSPs is called CSR partnerships. Figure 4 shows the hierarchical levels of factors defined as secondary factors.
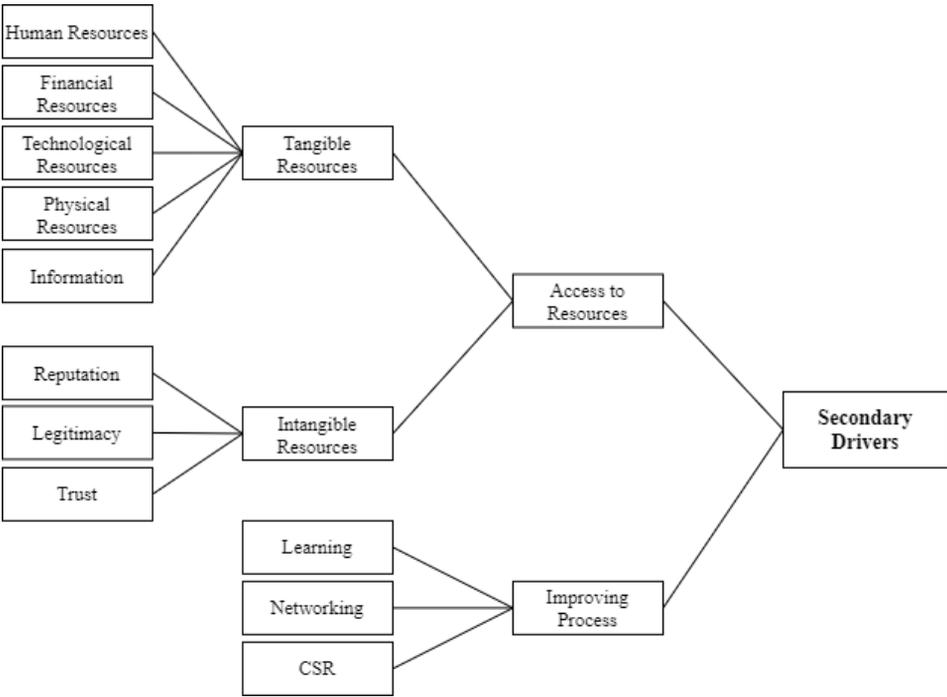

Figure 4. Secondary drivers (Source: authors)

Partner Selection Factors

While there are several studies in inter-organizational relationships on partner selection (e.g., Hitt et al., 2000; Li & Rowley, 2002; Dacin et al., 2008; Wu et al., 2009), but as CSP is an emerging area of study, there are a few studies about partner selection in CSPs (Feilhauer & Hahn, 2019; Chen et al., 2020; Intindola et al., 2020) thus further research is needed to identify influencing factors in this area. We will discuss these variables in this section, including those variables that have not been listed as an influencing factor in partner selection, but which seem to be significant for organizations in this regard.

Partner selection itself has been recognized as a vital challenge for CSPs, because many partnership experiences fail or struggle hardly due to issues related to pairing with their partners (Seitanidi et al., 2010; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012). It is complex to define partner selection factors, and this inherent complexity comes from the fact that these variables have two components simultaneously. The first aspect is that organizations select a proper partner based on their own needs, and the second aspect, which is taken into consideration along with the first aspect, stems from the fact that, in addition to the willingness to satisfy their own needs, organizations prefer certain partners depending on the resource profile of them and their other organizational features.

In a CSP, for instance, an organization needs information to fulfil its objectives. In this case, access to information is a key element for partner selection, but at the same time, the organization may consider other factors

such as the legitimacy of the partner, its reputation, or the level of expertise of its human resources. One of the most common bases for partner selection is the resource profile of each partner (Gray & Stites, 2013), and as discussed earlier, these resources can be either tangible (human, financial, technological, and physical resources, and information) or intangible (reputation, legitimacy, and trust). In a CSP, partners try to choose each other so that their capabilities complement each other's competencies, and, in this way, their collective resource profile meets their partnership's goals (Dahan et al., 2010). As an example, usually, business organizations have good business-oriented expertise and financial resources, while nonprofit organizations which lack business mind-set and financial resources, have other important capitals, such as the expertise in generating and distributing public goods and services or facilitation and negotiation skills (Gray & Stites, 2013).

Some of the intangible resources of CSPs are well-established in the literature. Reputation and legitimacy are among them, as they can enhance the capabilities of organizations to attract partners (Hitt et al., 2000). Studies show that trust is among the most important factors in partner selection, determining the success or failure of CSPs in reaching their goals and producing the values they plan to propose. Trust is also linked to the professional and personal experience of partners (Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2018). Gulati and Nickerson (2008) shared that pre-existing trust increases partnership performance dramatically. The higher level of pre-existing trust leads to less formal governance approaches, which reduces the partnership conflicts, and in this way, reduces cost and saves more time for the partnership itself (Hayes et al.,

2011). Hence choosing trustworthy partners is clearly an important factor in partnerships.

Organizational type or sector of the partnering organization is another important factor in partner selection. Fu and Li (2019) argued that there are many evidence that businesses prefer to partner with NGOs on multiple social issue areas (e.g. Du & Vieira, 2012; Shumate & O'Connor, 2010b). According to Shumate and O'Connor (2010a), businesses deliberately make partnerships with NGOs to accumulate political and social capitals. In return, businesses share their financial resources and other types of support with NGOs. In this way, their partnership will be mutually beneficial for both partners. Besides, many businesses and NGOs try to run collaborations with universities and research institutes (Du & Vieira, 2012; Saffer et al., 2018), communities (Dahan et al., 2010) and governments (O'Connor & Gronewold, 2013) to increase their legitimacy.

In CSPs, having shared values among partners play an important role as well. Partnerships and organizations have their own views on important matters in different situations based on their value system. If they find shared values, it decreases the risk level both during the partnership governance and its performance on fulfilling the partnership goals (Hayes et al., 2011). Therefore, organizations are motivated to select partners who have similar values. Gray and Stites (2013) argued that when partners have similar values, the conflicts will be much lesser, but it also limits the partnership's potential to find breakthrough solutions to solve an issue. A study on the potential impact

of CSP on nonprofit organizations' legitimacy found that with regard to partner selection, nonprofit organization seek business partners who are similar to them at least in terms of their values (Herlin, 2015). This common value setting needs more considerations while partners develop new roles, activities, or relationships (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2017). Figure 5 shares different components of "partner selection factors" in CSP.
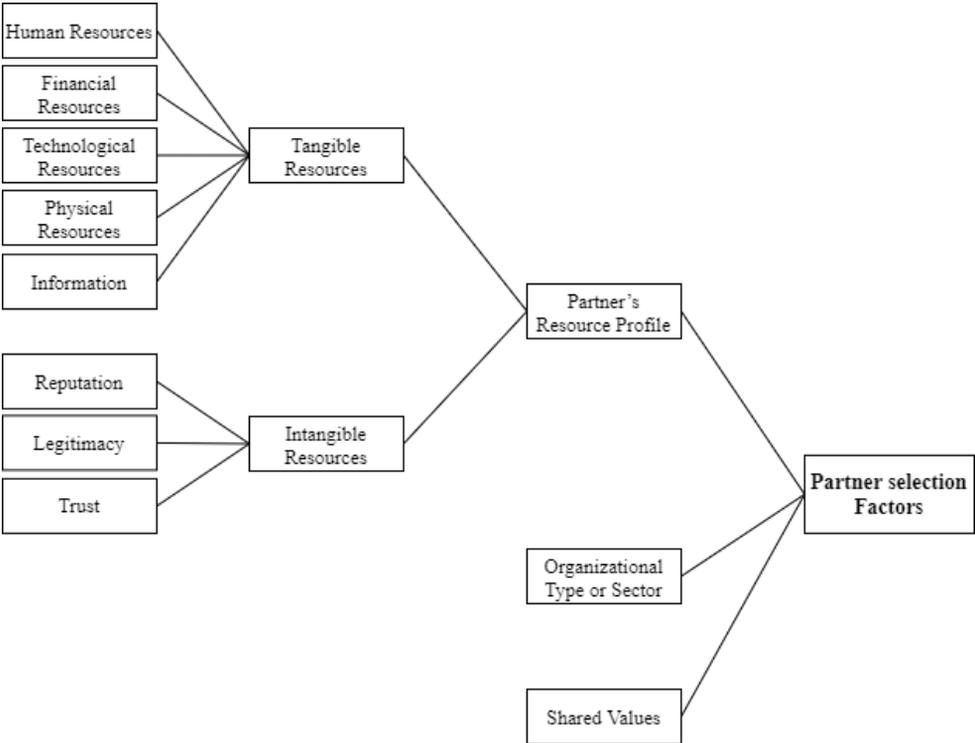

Figure 5. Partner selection factors (Source: authors)

Organizational Factors

In this paper, organizational factors, as the third category of CSP drivers, refer to the imperatives or drivers that exist in an organization and encourage it to work across sectors to address societal, socioeconomic, or environmental problems. Before forming a partnership, each organization is an individual entity, so it makes sense for organizations to engage in alliances to meet their own goals or to facilitate their own goal achievement as an initial motive.

The most important motives in this category are professional considerations based on a mutual understanding of each partner's contribution to achieving CSP's goals (Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2018). It is crucial that the total effectiveness of the CSP is depended on both its ability to achieve strategic goals of each partner and how it meets the social goal of the partnership (Clarke & MacDonald, 2019).

In this article, resources have been addressed in the section on secondary drivers. Resources would also be addressed in this section (organizational factors). In these two parts, however, there are slight variations between the meaning of "resources". In secondary drivers, obtaining resources is organizations' goal, but in the current section, organizations' dependence on resources to achieve their own goals is discussed.

Resource dependency theory is among the most developed theories in cross-sector partnership and collaboration. The main assumption of this theory is that individual organizations do not possess all the needed resources to

achieve their goals, and they must acquire these resources from other organizations, groups, or individuals in their environment. Having this perspective in mind, organizations run resource exchange relationships that have actual or potential consequences for them on fulfilling their goals (Bretschneider et al., 2015). As shared by McDonald and Young (2012), when companies perform their CSR activities through CSP, they have some main motives as below: resource dependency, necessity, innovation opportunities, efficiency, improved stakeholder relations, employee engagement and reputation and publicity. In the above categories, resource dependency theory justifies how partner organizations benefiting from skills, knowledge, and financial exchange and, therefore, how they create a sense of interdependence (Waddock, 1991; Austin, 2000; Samu and Wymer, 2001; Rondinelli and London, 2002).

In previous studies, some other organizational factors have been listed as control variables, and there is a need for more research to see whether they can be counted as drivers or not. However, in order to ensure the comprehensiveness of our research on CSP drivers, these variables are briefed here. These factors for all three sectors include: organizational type (Pittz et al., 2019; Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2020), size of organization (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2020), industry type (Lin, 2014; Schuster & Holtbrügge, 2014; Chen et al., 2019), region of effects (Chen et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020; Nelson, 2020) and for two sectors of non-profit and for-profit include: founder's characteristics such as age, gender, and education (Chen et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020), age of organization (Chen et al., 2020), and presence of other interorganizational ties (Ashraf et al., 2017; Chen et al., 2019; Chen

et al., 2020; Nelson, 2020). Previous CSP experience also can influence the initial interest of organizations in contributing to CSPs, positively or negatively, depending on how organizations have accomplished their previous partnership. CSP experience in earlier studies have been examined at the process level of collaboration (e.g., Lin, 2014; Joniškienė et al., 2020). Figure 6 has summarized the organizational factors which influence a CSP's initiation.
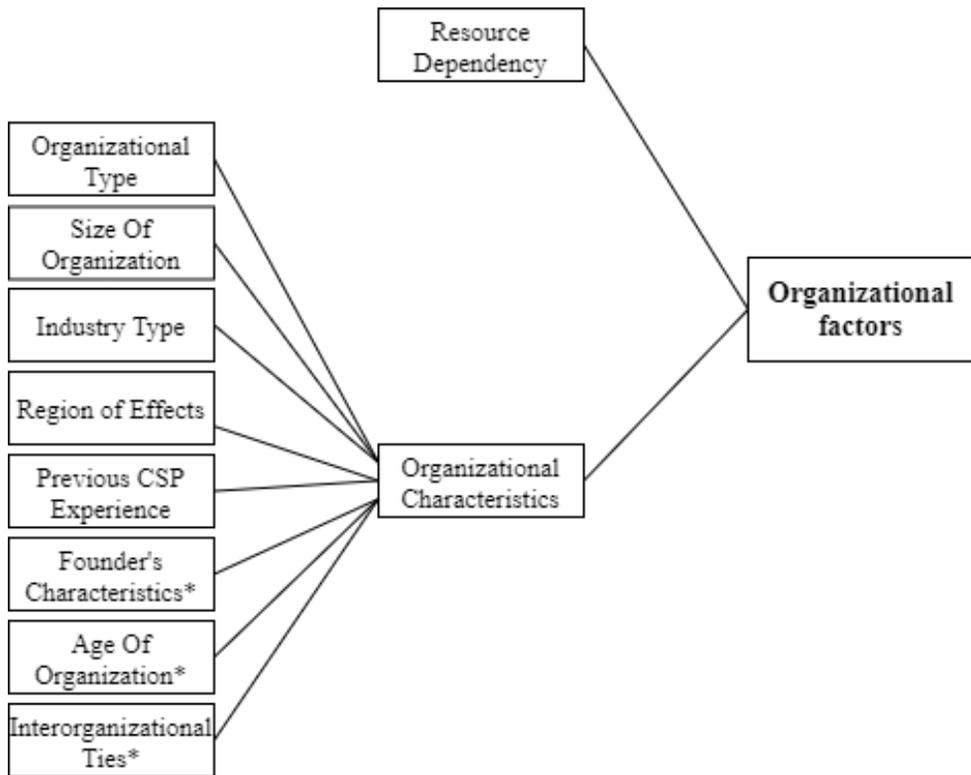
Figure 6. Organizational factors (Source: authors)

Contextual Factors

The last category of factors called contextual factors is all related to the environment and ecosystem in which the partnership occurs. Below a brief explanation of these factors in previous research on CSPs are shared. Organizations in every sector face changing pressures and evolving public expectations that encourage them to partner across sectors (Selsky & Parker, 2005). Contextual factors are those ecosystem factors that affect an organization's tendency to become active in CSP (Gray & Stites, 2013). These factors include policies of governments (Warhurst, 2001; Brunson et al., 2012; Hartman & Dhanda, 2018; Susha et al., 2019), the regulatory environment (Gray & Stites, 2013; Lin, 2014; Schuster & Holtbrügge, 2014), international developments (Soublière & Cloutier, 2015a; Sullivan & Skelcher, 2017; Susha et al., 2019), concerns about globalization (Warhurst, 2001; Marano & Tashman, 2012; Gray & Stites, 2013; Hartman & Dhanda, 2018; Joniškienė et al., 2020), economic context (Warhurst, 2001; Rein & Stott, 2009; Hamann et al., 2011; Susha et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2020), cultural context (Rein & Stott, 2009; Soublière & Cloutier, 2015b), social context (Scott & Thurston, 2004; Rein & Stott, 2009; Gray & Stites, 2013), and technological developments (Gray & Stites, 2013; Hartman & Dhanda, 2018). Figure 7 provide a schematic view of contextual factors in starting a CSP.
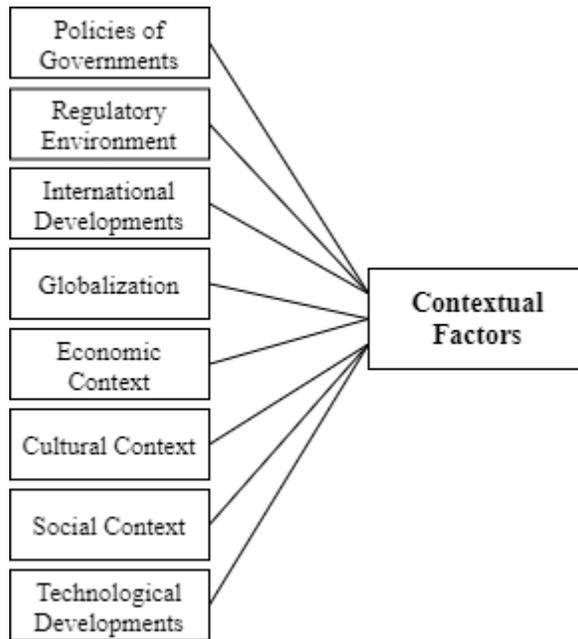
Figure 7. Contextual factors (Source: authors)

Conclusion and future directions

As explained earlier in this paper, the main goal of us was to propose a comprehensive perspective on drivers and motives of a cross-sector partnership. In a world that many types of organizations from governmental to business and nonprofits are trying to have a better impact on the societies and communities, CSP is an inevitable option which helps them to move smoother toward social innovations by sharing their capabilities. The number of CSPs is growing in all corners of the world and both in developed and developing countries. But not all these CSPs are successful ones, and we recognized that one of the main reasons for the success or failure of CSPs lies in the first stage

and how they choose their partners and plan to start a partnership. In this regard, having a comprehensive view of the main drivers of a CSP is critical, and if partners consider these factors in the initial decision-making process for their CSP, their success chance would be higher. Our other suggestion to future researchers is that they can do more investigations to find out other success factors in the next stages of a CSP as well, because we only have considered the initial stage of a CSP process and for sure there are many more factors which need to be studied on next stages of a CSP process. Although it looks rational and there is some evidence in this regard, as shared in our paper, but still, we need more academic investigations on the impact of each category or each one of these factors on the success or failure of CSPs.

In the current paper, we categorized all drivers and influencing factors of CSPs into five general groups, including main drivers, secondary drivers, partner selection drivers, organizational factors, and contextual factors and this typology can be used by future researchers to develop more structured outputs in this regard. It is suggested to future researchers to do more studies on the importance or weight of factors in each category to give more detailed and practical guidelines for academicians and practitioners.

As our framework covers almost all factors influencing a CSP together with the drivers of a CSP, the link between these dimensions and the next steps of the CSP process, which is shared in the introduction of this paper, can shed light to the influence paths or the stages that these factors have the most impact on CSPs. This finding can help CSP actors to be able to plan their contingency plans better by considering the stage they may face a certain

type of challenge. Also, it can help them to know when and where they can harvest the fruits of their efforts on the initial stages of their CSP.

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Sharafi Farzad, F., Amran, A., Salamzadeh, Y., & Hafezalkotob, A. 2021. What drives organizations to start a cross-sector partnership?

Fatemeh Sharafi Farzad is a PhD candidate doing her research on social innovation and game theory. She has published about ten research articles in national and international conferences and journals. Having an MBA in strategic management, she has worked as a management expert for about five years. She is now working as a graduate assistant in the Graduate School of Business at Universiti Sains Malaysia. Her fields of interest include strategic management, CSR, social innovation, game theory, system dynamics, network analysis and social enterprises.

Azlan Amran started his career as a lecturer at the School of Management, Universiti Sains Malaysia, in 2006. He is now a Professor at the Graduate School of Business in the same University. Prior to joining USM, he worked as an accountant for several years. He has published a significant number of articles in the area of CSR in both local and international journals. He is currently supervising PhD, MBA, and Masters candidates in CSR. At present, he holds the position of Dean at the Graduate School of Business. In terms of practical experience, he has been involved in several training and consultancy projects in Accounting-related issues and Corporate Social Reporting. He is currently holding several grants to support his research on CSR-related issues. He is also a member of the editorial board for several international journals. At the national level, he is a Technical Committee member for ISO 26000.

Yashar Salamzadeh is a Senior Lecturer in the Graduate School of Business at Universiti Sains Malaysia. He has published more than 100 research articles in international and national journals and conferences. He has the experience of eleven years teaching MBA and Master of management courses in five different universities. He has supervised more than 70 graduate students (On MBA and Master level) in their thesis and dissertation and is supervising 8 PhD and DBA students as well. He has developed many managerial workshops on leadership, social entrepreneurship, HRM, Business models in different countries. He has worked as a project manager in many national and international research projects. He has experience of five years of management consultancy for different public and private organizations on Leadership, Organizational re-structuring, EFQM, Culture, HRM systems, Organizational behaviour. He also has cooperated in more than twenty international journals as an editorial board member and review board member. He is also an EFQM auditor. He has served GSB as Head of "Global Strategy and Organizational Behavior" research cluster since 2018. He is leading the micro-credential initiative of GSB as well. His fields of interest include entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial universities, leadership and digital leadership, business models, strategic management, green business and CSR, HRM (HCM) and networked organizations.

Ashkan Hafezalkotob received the M.Sc. and PhD degrees in industrial engineering from the Iran University of Science and Technology, Tehran, Iran, in 2007 and 2012, respectively. He is currently an Associate Professor and the Head of Department of Operational Research (PhD) and the Head of Department of Logistics and Supply Chain (M.Sc.) with the College of Industrial Engineering, Islamic Azad University (South Tehran Branch), Tehran, Iran, where he is also a member of Young Researchers and Elite Club. He has authored over 70 peer-reviewed papers, many in highly ranked international journals, including IEEE Transaction on Cybernetics, Information Fusion, Information Sciences, International Journal of Production Economics, Transportation, Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review, Expert Systems with Applications, Resources Policy, Journal of Cleaner Production, Socio-Economic Planning Sciences, and Applied Soft Computing. His current research interests include environmental policy-making, game theory, supply chain management, multi-criteria decision-making with uncertainty, optimization, and mathematical modelling. Dr Hafezalkotob was a recipient of the "Researcher of the Year: 2016 Award" from Islamic Azad University (South Tehran Branch), Tehran, Iran.