Investigating Attitudes and Intentions among Potential Entrepreneurs of a Developing Country: A Conceptual Approach

Naimatullah Shah¹ and Bahadur Ali

Abstract—Field of entrepreneurship has largely been accepted as a field of economic development. Entrepreneurship activities are associated to generate job, ventures, innovation, creativity, opportunities and multiple other economic benefits. Development of this activity is due to targeted entrepreneurship education programmes which could have influence on the attitudes and aspirations of youth. There is a need to understand how to develop and nurture potential entrepreneurs even while they are still students. The purpose of this study is to investigate the attitudes and intentions of individuals towards entrepreneurship directly with the Theory of Planned Behaviour factors such as attitudes towards the behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control and through attitudinal variables like achievement, self-esteem, personal control and innovation. This is a conceptual paper which have supported from the literature. This study may be recognized as one of the vital for the youths to understand and foster an entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviors towards entrepreneurship education programmes.

Keywords—Entrepreneurship Attitudes, Intention, Psychological Factors, Theory of Planned Behaviour

I. INTRODUCTION

TODAY, entrepreneurship has the center role in developed and developing economies because of facing big challenges of globalisation, social development, competition and economic downturn. This field has a great force for economic growth, recovery and societal progress in turn of employment, social empowerment and innovation. Being an economic and socio economic agent, most commonly, entrepreneurship provides individuals remarkable distinction with the freedom to pursue their own goals, dreams, and desires in new firm creation [1]. Creation of new businesses can play important role in terms of generating employment, income and new markets. Thus, it is belief that entrepreneurship is a great activity for economic mobility, innovation, new jobs creation and originate, grow and diversify small business sectors. To this extent, concept of entrepreneurship has been underlying many common aspects such as opportunity identification, risk-taking, and newness. According to [2] that entrepreneurship employs the process of carrying out new groupings of enterprise and the individuals who perform this task is known as the entrepreneurs. The individuals who perform innovative thinking for introducing self job are known as the entrepreneurs. Performing economic and socio economic agent role, entrepreneurs have been recognised as a leader who are made not born and can be learnt and taught through education and training programs [3]. They need to know the process and sustainability of entrepreneurship through systematic development and planned efforts [4] [5]. In the literature main characteristics of potential entrepreneurs have been centered such that knowledge, skills and attitudes [6]. These factors can be fulfilled by entrepreneurial education programmes. To this extent, large research evidences have been found that entrepreneurs can be taught and entrepreneurship education programmes have positive influence to encourage favourable attitudes towards entrepreneurship [7] [8]. Entrepreneurial attitudes predict entrepreneurship intentions which lead to individual behaviour. To this vein, education for entrepreneurship place importance in their development and foster mindset and skills of an individual to embrace entrepreneurship [9]. Literature witnessed that entrepreneurship education support to develop attitudes and behaviour in self-employment promotion, formation of new business and interest in starting up a business [10].

In this regard large stream of research is available with different models such that Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), Theory of Reasoned Actions (TRA), Entrepreneurship Teaching Programmes (ETPs). Apart of educational insight other factors like individual’s social context, personal and environmental have positive influence to develop attitudinal behaviour [11] [12] [13]. Over the past few decades, large insights have been found through these factors but so for little research has been found to assess the entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviour through psychological and behavioural approach. Recently, [14] combined both psychological and behavioural factors to examine the individuals’ attitudes and intention through the entrepreneurship education programme. By applying Theory of Planned Behaviour and environmental factors this study followed to psychological and behavioural factors to provide more insight of the conceptualisation to
investigate the attitudes and intentions of individuals towards entrepreneurship in a developing country. Researcher argues that education and environment learning can affect to the mind set of individuals. On the basis of the argument, this study proposes aim to investigate the individuals’ attitudes and intentions towards entrepreneurship through TPB and environmental factors.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Significant numbers of people are living in intolerable circumstances such as unemployment, poverty, low level of business and low income due to the reasons like over population, illiteracy, disease economic downturn and social backwardness. In view of that situation, entrepreneurship is considering as a means for economic development through creation of new businesses, jobs, make stronger competition and even increase productivity through technological changes. [15] [16] [17] [18] [19] [20]. Of great importance is that entrepreneurship provides individuals remarkable distinction with the freedom to pursue their own goals, dreams, and desires. Being an economic growth agent, researchers require possessing the ability and capability of potential entrepreneurs. From this stream, many researchers believe that problem solving and leadership in entrepreneurship can be learnt and taught through education and training programs [5] [21]. There is a strong support that the education for entrepreneurship place importance in their development and increase foster mindset and skills of an individual to embrace entrepreneurship [22]. According to [23] that appropriate education and training programs in entrepreneurship are expected to increase the number of people becoming entrepreneurs because the better educated the population the higher the level of entrepreneurial activity. In this connection, many studies have been reviewed like [24] [25] [26] [27] found that entrepreneurship education can have an effect of entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes have a stronger relationship with intentions and indicated future acceptance for entrepreneurship as a profession and also many respondents preferred the entrepreneurial option for earning more money. From the literature many factors such that subjective norm, attitudes to ownership, income, independence, risk, work effort, perceived behavioral control, inspiration, entrepreneurship education, universities support, earning more money, creativity and be his/her own boss factors have positive effect on developing entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes. [28] [29] [30] [31] [32] [20]. However, majority of researchers used behaviour theory (Theory of Planned Behaviour) to assess the attitudes and behaviour of potential entrepreneurship through targeted entrepreneurship education programmes.

Developing attitudes and intentions towards the entrepreneurship is one of the important issues which has been defined as the extent to which people think about the good opportunities for starting a business. The idea regarding the start up a business is intentional and is best predicted by attitudes. In the literature attitudes development is based on the attitudes towards the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. However, individual intentions are effective in predicting planned behaviour and with the support of Theory of Planned Behaviour, behavioural intention is predicted by attitudinal factors. Different researchers tested the intentions model through targeted entrepreneurship education programmes and found positive and significant effects [33] [26] [25] [24] [17].

Apart of that attitudes exist in personal and environmental factors which are interconnected with each other. For example attitude of family members with the business would be closely related to the attitude towards business in general. This degree of affiliation in an individual consideration has been found rarely. To this extent, researchers pointed out several personal variables which have identical characteristics like need for achievement, propensity to take risk, locus of control, self esteem, innovation and tolerance of ambiguity. These objects are known as personalist theory which is related with humanistic psychology. In literature these characteristics of individual are associated with entrepreneurship. But researchers have distinct results [34] and [14] found self confidence positively and significantly related with entrepreneurs. [35] revealed no relationship between need for achievement and entrepreneur behaviour. According to [14] that personal attitude has positive effect on entrepreneurial intention. [36] showed strong influence of innovativeness on entrepreneurial intention.

Indeed, intention predicts behaviour and attitudes predict intentions. To assess the extent of attitudes where beliefs predict intentions, and that intentions predict behaviours, the researcher attempts to link the development of these attributes to entrepreneurship education. We support our researcher on [37] theory of Planned Behaviour and perceptions of participants regarding personal and social desirability. Following to intention model of [37] and environmental characteristics of [34] Robinson et al. (1991) this study has been conceptualized in following figure to investigate the individual attitudes and intentions towards entrepreneurship (see Figure 1). Researcher has proposed entrepreneurship intention directly with the support of factors such as attitudes towards the behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control and through the personal and social attitudinal characteristic like achievement, self-esteem, personal control and innovation.

![Proposed Conceptual Model Developed by Researchers](image)

Entrepreneurial intention is defined by [37] as “intention are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behaviour; they are indication of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to
exert, in order to perform the behaviour”. This concept of intention contends the individual’s will or effort to do something in a particular manner. Intention can be predicted through attitudes and assessing the extent of attitudes researcher supported attitudes towards the behavior which is represented an individual's likes, dislikes, beliefs and opinions regarding a particular behavior, subjective norms represent a person’s perception of important others’ (family, friends, teachers, experts) beliefs that he or she should or should not perform the behavior and perceived behavior control represents an individual's perceived ease or difficulty of performing a particular behavior. Apart of that researchers proposes personal characteristics like achievement which refers to concrete results related with the start up and growth of business, innovation which is related with new techniques to act upon business activities, Perceived control is concerned with the individual’s perception of control over the business and finally self esteem is pertained to the self confidence and competency of an individual for business affairs. Reflecting to entrepreneurial behaviour, investigating these factors may be support to field experts to improve the targeted entrepreneurial education. There is claim for the factors that support to developing individual’s attitudes and intentions is essential for promoting to new business and researchers proposed additional insights for the issue. This longitudinal study would be undertaken in public and private higher educational institutions where those students who have studied entrepreneurship courses would be the targeted participants.

This study may be recognized as one of the vital for the youths to understand and foster an entrepreneurial because due to over population, technological advancement and saturation in government employment, individuals may develop their attitudes and behaviors towards entrepreneurship. The significance of this study is that before studying entrepreneurship courses students are intended to get job in private or governmental institution but after studying the courses of entrepreneurship their mind might be diverted towards starting their own business because it creates income as well as self employment. This piece of research might inspire further research work to course developers for higher educational institutions and may also support to those students who can opt for new business after completion of their studies. Possibly Pakistan can boost its economy through entrepreneurial promotion where as university students if properly trained can play a leading role in the society. Results of this study might be contributed to the literature of the domain in general and particular for developing countries. This study may be contributed to policy makers and domain researchers for developing a strong conceptualization for further research.

III. CONCLUSION

Today entrepreneurship is widely recognised as a field of economic and socioeconomic development. Entrepreneurship activities are final stage of economic activities to generate job opportunities and multiple other economic benefits which brings prosperity and economic growth. However the impact of entrepreneurship on education has been recognized as one of the fundamental factors that help youths to understand and foster an entrepreneurial attitude. Due to the influence, education could have on the attitudes and aspirations of youth and there is a need to understand how to develop and nurture potential entrepreneurs even while they are still students. The purpose of this study is to investigate the attitudes and intentions of individuals towards entrepreneurship. Researcher has reviewed large amount of literature and based on research gap developed a conceptual framework in which entrepreneurship intention has been directly connected with the variables such as attitudes towards the behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control and through attitudinal variables like achievement, self-esteem, personal control and innovation. This study may be recognized as one of the vital for the youths to understand and foster an entrepreneurial because due to over population, technological advancement and saturation in government employment, individuals may develop their attitudes and behaviors towards entrepreneurship education programmes. The significance of this study is that before studying entrepreneurship courses students are intended to get job in private or governmental institution but after studying the courses of entrepreneurship their mind might be diverted towards starting their own business because targeted entrepreneurial education programmes may affect to individuals attitudes and intention. This piece of research might inspire further research work to course developers for higher educational institutions and may also support to those students who can opt for new business after completion of their studies.

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