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The Female Entrepreneurs' Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship: How Entrepreneurial Orientation and Desirability Influence Intention of Entrepreneurial Students?

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Abstract

Does learning about entrepreneurship really change students' plans to start their own businesses? How do a student's desire to be an entrepreneur and their entrepreneurial mindset influence their plans to start a business? Experts and those involved in entrepreneurship have been looking into this topic for a while. To tackle these questions, the authors suggest a model for understanding entrepreneurial intentions. This model is based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour and explores how entrepreneurial education plays a role in this process. Through a method called hierarchical regression analysis with structural equation modelling, it was found that female students studying business are more likely to want to start their own businesses. This points out the significance of having an entrepreneurial mindset and desire, along with the benefits of entrepreneurial education and skills. The research shows that entrepreneurial education, along with other factors such as innovation, control over one's destiny, willingness to take risks, personal beliefs, confidence in one's abilities, and societal expectations, has a significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions at a 5% significance level. The research suggests that the government should back entrepreneurship programs to help change students' perspectives, attitudes, and plans for future entrepreneurial endeavours.

Keywords: Learning about entrepreneurship, the appeal of being an entrepreneur, the mindset of entrepreneurs, the desire to start a business, Oman

Introduction

Females are acknowledged as a crucial pool of business innovators, acting as a catalyst for expansion (Westhead and Solesvik, 2016) and a primary source of new ideas and wealth generation (Brush and Cooper, 2012), as noted by experts and decision-makers. On an international level, starting a business is viewed as a remedy for changing economic landscapes and a force behind economic growth. In the current competitive environment, finding a job after completing studies has become more difficult for graduates, especially in Oman. By February 2019, Oman depended largely on foreign workers, making up 43.7% of the labor force. Nonetheless, Oman's stable political situation and low tax rates make it an appealing destination for business startups. Understanding the significance of entrepreneurship for the country's economic progress is, therefore, crucial. This research seeks to investigate the readiness of female university students to pursue entrepreneurship and play a role in the country's economic advancement. The following section will examine important scholarly works on entrepreneurship theory and ideas.

Literature review

In this section, the writers seek to make the theoretical framework more clear and back up their hypotheses with related research. The theoretical framework employed here builds upon the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by including aspects of entrepreneurship: 1) a tendency to take risks, 2) a level of innovativeness, and 3) a sense of control over one's own life. The justification for choosing TPB is multi-layered. Firstly, TPB has been extensively utilized in global research, resulting in substantial evidence that supports its reliability (Lortie and Casto giovanni 2015; Peterman and Kennedy 2003; Kolvereid 1996; Tkachev and Kolvereid 1999; Roy et al. 2017; Scopus database). The Scopus database reports that by 2019, TPB had accumulated more than 28,000 references, indicating its dominance. Secondly, TPB has been effectively applied across various disciplines such as public health (Godin and Kok 1996), recreation and leisure (Hagger et al. 2003), psychology (Austin and Vancouver 1996), and marketing (Pavlou and Fygenson 2006) to gauge intentions to engage in specific behaviors, showcasing its efficacy when compared to alternative models. Numerous scholars in the area of entrepreneurial intent research have employed TPB (Liñán and Chen 2009; Anwar & Saleem, 2019; Bazan et al. 2019; Krueger et al. 2000; Kolvereid and Isaksen 2006), which is why the writers have chosen to utilize it in this study to explore entrepreneurial intentions among University of Buraimi students, Sultanate of Oman.

Brief description of the theory of planned behavior

According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the creation of a behavioural intention is shaped by three core elements: 1) The individual's attitude towards the behaviour, 2) The social pressure from the individual's reference group (like family, friends, relatives, and peers), and 3) The individual's belief in their capability to carry out the behaviour. "The individual's attitude towards the behaviour" is about how strongly a person feels about a specific action, either positively or negatively. "Social pressure from the individual's reference group" is about how the person's social circle, including family members, buddies, kin, and acquaintances, consider a specific option. Lastly, "Perceived behavioural control" is about how confident the person is in their own skills and qualities to successfully perform a certain behaviour.

Theory of planned behavior and entrepreneurship

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is a well-known concept in academic research for forecasting intentions to engage in specific behaviours across different areas of study. It has successfully mapped out intentions related to starting a business, with estimates ranging from 21% (Autio et al., 2001) to 55% (Liñán and Chen, 2009). Many studies have confirmed that the fundamental components of TPB—Entrepreneurial Attitude (ATE), Subjective Norm (SN), and Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC)—strongly influence intentions to become an entrepreneur (Anwar &Saleem, 2019; Souitaris et al., 2007).

The term "Attitude toward entrepreneurship" describes a person's favourable or unfavourable view of choosing entrepreneurship as a career path. Previous studies have shown that a more positive attitude toward entrepreneurship is linked to a greater desire to begin a business (Anwar & Saleem, 2019; Krueger et al., 2000; Autio et al., 2001; Pruett et al., 2009; Segal et

al., 2005; Van Gelderen & Jansen, 2008). This trend is not limited to studies on entrepreneurial plans but also appears in areas like consumer behaviour, marketing, and psychology, where a positive attitude has been shown to significantly influence results (Ajzen, 1991). Therefore, from this information, it can be concluded that having a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship increases the chance of a person starting their own business.

The second factor, "Social Norm," includes the favourable or unfavourable perceptions of a person's social circle, which can affect a person's choice to begin a business venture. Encouraging comments from this circle can boost an individual's drive to become an entrepreneur, whereas critical comments might reduce it (Anwar & Saleem, 2019; Roy et al., 2017; Bazan et al., 2019).

In the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the third factor, "Perceived Behavioural Control" (PBC), deals with a person's belief in their own capabilities and qualities to execute a certain activity. Essentially, it shows how manageable or challenging one thinks the task is. Consequently, there's a link between greater perceived behavioural control and a stronger desire to become an entrepreneur (Bandura, 1986; Swan et al., 2007). Studies have often pinpointed PBC as an important indicator of the desire to start one's own business, indicating that higher perceived behavioural control increases self-assurance, which further strengthens the desire to embark on entrepreneurship. Considering this

From this theoretical perspective and research findings, we suggest the the following theories:

H1: The desire to start one's own business is positively correlated with having a favorable attitude toward it.

- H2: Norms within a person's social context positively influence the intention to become an entrepreneur.
- H3: The belief in having control over one's actions is positively correlated with the intention to pursue entrepreneurship.

Personality characteristics and entrepreneurship

The studies on entrepreneurial research point out various elements that affect the way entrepreneurs act, which can be split into personal, social, and natural elements. The social elements model is centered around looking into the personal and family history of the individual, as well as their stage in their professional life (Robinson et al., 1991; Alstete, 2002; Green et al., 1996). Furthermore, Gibb (1993) proposed that experiences from one's life should also be taken into account through this social elements perspective. The natural elements cover the surrounding and economic conditions that play a role in the decisions people make about their careers, including their wealth, the job prospects, the economic situation, and the stability or instability of society (Alstete, 2002; Green et al., 1996). Conversely, the personal elements influencing entrepreneurial actions, often explored through the trait model of entrepreneurship, concentrate on individual personality traits (Koh, 1996). This framework suggests that entrepreneurs have unique traits and characteristics setting them apart from those who do not engage in entrepreneurial ventures, leading to specific mindset values that foster an entrepreneurial spirit (Thomas and Mueller, 2000; Koh, 1996). Studies utilizing the trait perspective aim to explore inquiries like who becomes an entrepreneur, the reasons behind their entrepreneurial journey, what factors contribute to entrepreneurial

success, and how successful entrepreneurs differ from their less successful counterparts (Bygrave and Hofer, 1991; Littunen, 2000). This methodology has demonstrated its utility in accurately forecasting entrepreneurial tendencies to a degree. For instance, Entreailgo et al. (2000) pinpointed locus of control, need for achievement, and tolerance of ambiguity as primary influences on entrepreneurial inclination. Stewart et al. (1998) discovered that a desire for success, a willingness to be brave in taking risks, and creativity are key contrasts between business owners and managers in companies. A recent review by Anwar and Saleem (2019) backed up the idea that students who are more likely to start their own businesses scored better in creativity, sense of personal control, willingness to take risks, ability to deal with uncertainty, and desire for success compared to those who choose not to be entrepreneurs. Based on this research, the authors have included three important characteristics—willingness to take risks, creativity, and sense of control over one's life—in this study.

Risk-Taking Propensity

The inclination to take risks pertains to a person's capacity to embrace or sidestep risks within situations that are challenging or unpredictable. This characteristic is particularly linked to the realm of business ownership, as evidenced by Chantilon (1755), who pointed out that a fundamental distinction lies in the willingness of business owners to confront risks and uncertainty in comparison to employees (Entrialgo et al., 2000; Thomas and Mueller, 2000). Risk-taking also sets entrepreneurs apart from managers, as entrepreneurs frequently encounter financial and other risks within the volatile and uncertain market conditions (Erdem, 2001; Brockhaus, 1980; Littunen, 2000). Research findings consistently suggest that entrepreneurs tend to exhibit a higher propensity for risk-taking than the general populace (Anwar and Saleem, 2019; Cho and Lee, 2018; Cromie, 2000; Thomas and Mueller, 2000; Teoh and Foo, 1997). Innovativeness

Innovation is seen as a crucial trait for entrepreneurs because it lets them discover new possibilities through creative ways of making products, entering markets, managing businesses, and competing (Zacharakis, 1997; Entrialgo et al., 2000; Hansemark, 1998). Drucker highlighted that entrepreneurs are always on the lookout for innovation to seize emerging chances, which helps them adjust to evolving market demands with novel concepts and goods (Cromie, 2000). Stewart et al. (2003) claimed that innovation is a fundamental element of entrepreneurship, setting it apart from traditional management roles. Moreover, Utsch and Rauch (2000) discovered a significant link between innovation and the success of businesses. Anwar and Saleem (2019) noted that students who are drawn to entrepreneurship tend to demonstrate greater levels of innovativeness compared to others. Locus of control

Control belief, also known as locus of control, is a key characteristic often seen as essential for business leaders. It's about how an individual views their power over their own destiny (Leone and Burns, 2000). Individuals with a control belief in themselves think that their choices and actions, whether good or bad, directly affect their results because of their own efforts and decisions (Koh, 1996; Riipinen, 1994; Hansemark, 1998). It's widely believed that entrepreneurs should have a self-driven control belief, a viewpoint that's backed by many studies (Mueller and Thomas, 2000; Hansemark, 1998; Koh, 1996; Utsch and Rauch, 2000).

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Gilad (1982) found that successful business owners tend to have a stronger control belief than their less successful peers. Likewise, Thomas and Mueller (2000) discovered that business leaders show a greater sense of control over their own fate. Moreover, a study by Anwar and Saleem (2019) indicated that students who are interested in starting their own businesses tend to have a stronger control belief than those who aren't. From this research, we suggest the following hypotheses:

H4: The tendency to take risks is positively associated with the intention to become an entrepreneur.

H5: Being innovative is positively associated with the intention to become an entrepreneur.

H6: Belief in personal control is positively associated with the intention to become an entrepreneur.

Mediating role of entrepreneurial education

Building on the core concepts from two key theories— (1) Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993) and (2) Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1994)—it is recognized that learning about entrepreneurship is key in determining the desire to become an entrepreneur (Bae et al., 2014; Chen et al., 1998). Becker's (1964) Human Capital Theory suggests that the abilities or knowledge acquired through schooling, training, or various learning processes are a form of human capital. Conversely, Self-Efficacy Theory is about a person's belief in their ability to successfully complete certain tasks (Bandura, 1994). A thorough review by Martin et al. (2013) revealed that learning about entrepreneurship is closely tied to the decision to start a business. This link exists because it not only strengthens this decision but also enhances the belief in one's ability to carry out entrepreneurial activities (Chen et al., 1998). Furthermore, research by Yun (2010) showed that learning about entrepreneurship can influence how one's belief in one's ability to be an entrepreneur is connected to their intention to become one, by softening this connection (Previously, studies mainly looked at how learning about entrepreneurship influenced the desire to start a business (Autio et al., 2001; Liñán, 2004; Lüthje and Franke, 2003). Nowadays, studies have broadened to explore its role in relation to the Theory of Planned Behavior and Trait Approach (Anwar & Saleem, 2018; Martin et al., 2013). Moreover, Rauch & Hulsink (2015) found that learning about entrepreneurship not only directly affects the decision to start a business but also partially explains how one's views on entrepreneurship, societal expectations, and confidence in their ability to engage in entrepreneurial activities interact. Based on this research, the following predictions are made:

H7: Research on entrepreneurship examines how the willingness to take risks, creativity, belief in one's ability to influence outcomes, and the intention to start a business are related.

H8: Studies on entrepreneurship also look into how attitudes towards entrepreneurship, personal norms, the confidence in one's own ability to be an entrepreneur, and the intention to start a business are interconnected.

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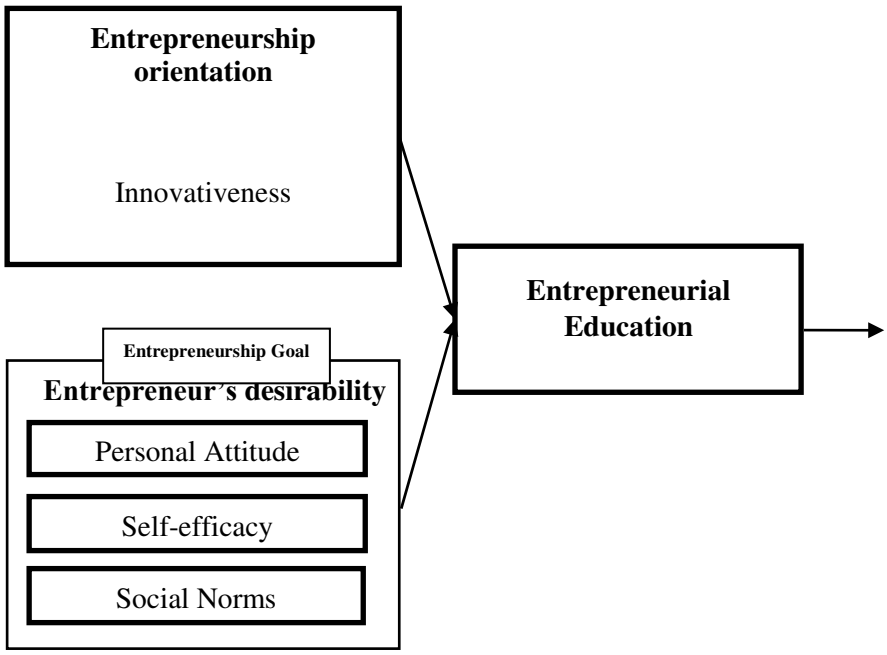
Drawing from prior research, the study introduces the theoretical framework as depicted in Figure 1.



Methodology

To examine our research framework and theories, our focus was on female university students in Oman who had completed a course on entrepreneurship in their curriculum. We employed a questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale, which was modified from studies by Nemati et al. (2010) and Panigrahi, Zainuddin, & Azizan (2014), from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This scale was chosen because of its appropriateness for our study, as reflected by the fast pace of entrepreneurship and the innovation abilities of students. To select participants properly and measure their intentions, we gathered data in Oman. Participants were picked online via Google Docs through a convenience sampling approach. The survey was carried out from April to May 2019, during which 300 surveys were distributed, out of which 269 were returned. Of these, 225 were deemed suitable for our analysis. The number of participants was calculated through a G Power analysis, as suggested by Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner (2007). The response rate was 75%, which is regarded as satisfactory (Fosnacht, Sarraf, Howe, & Peck, 2017; Tabachnick, Fidell, Tabachnick, & Fidell, 2012).

Pre test

In order to confirm the accuracy of the questionnaire, we utilized the card sorting approach suggested by Moore and Benbasat (1991). Every question was written on distinct index cards, which were then mixed up and handed over to two marketing specialists. They were instructed to arrange the cards by themselves. This approach, also referred to as the Q-sort method, aids in determining the dependability and accuracy of the questionnaire (Nahm, Rao, Solis-Galvan, & Ragu-Nathan, 2002).

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Results

The age breakdown of the participants is outlined, but it appears the source could not be located. Out of the total, 47.7% (92) identified as male, while 52.3% (101) identified as female. A significant portion, 50.25%, falls into the younger age group, aged under 25 years; followed by 18.65% (36) aged between 25 and 30 years, 26.94% (52) aged between 31 and 40 years, and only 4.14% (8) participants were found to be above the age of 40.

Table.1 Demo graphic profile

No.	Demographicprofile	Categories	Frequency	%
1	Gender	1.Male	92	47.7
		2.Female	133	52.3
2	Age	1.Lessthan25years	143	50.2
		2.25to30years	56	18.6
		3.31to40years	22	26.9
		4.Above40years	4	4.14
3	Interest to setup of own business	1.Yes	162	8.29
		2.No	63	68.3
4	Family members as a business owner	1.Yes	97	100.0
		2.No	62	64.3

In terms of the students' enthusiasm for launching their own companies, 162 individuals showed a keen interest in owning a business, whereas 62 were not as interested. Moreover, 97 people mentioned that their relatives are business proprietors, while 128 noted that their relatives are not involved in any business ownership.

Data collected via the web was scrutinized using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21, in conjunction with AMOS version 21. The assessment journey began with ensuring the data's reliability and precision, leading to the creation of a model to gauge its consistency and accuracy. Subsequently, the procedure progressed to carry out Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) prior to considering Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to confirm the results, as recommended by Kline (2011). Kline (2011) mentioned that conducting both analyses is not obligatory. The final model, detailed in Error! Reference source not found., outlines the importance of each factor.

Reliability and Validity Assessment

For evaluating the dependability and correctness of our analysis, we utilized a two-phase analytical method as suggested by leading experts (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; F. Hair Jr., Sarstedt, Hopkins, & G. Kuppelwieser, 2014; Hair Jr., Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016). In the initial phase, we focused on checking the dependability and correctness of our methods, while the subsequent phase was centered on scrutinizing the framework to verify the expected connections. Dependability was measured through Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951), rhoA (Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015), and composite reliability (Bacon, Sauer, & Young, 1995). The convergent validity of our measurements was examined by looking at the average variance extracted (AVE)value. For both dependability and convergent validity, the minimum

acceptable threshold values were determined. 0.70and0.50significantly (see. **Error! Reference source not found.**)

Table 2: Reliability and Validity Assessment

Construct	Dimensions	Items	Factorloadings	C.R	AVE
ENT_OR	Innovativeness	IN1	0.850	0.890	0.562
		IN2	0.769		
		IN3	0.772		
		IN4	0.718		
		IN5	0.788		
		IN6	0.812		
	Locusofcontrol	LC1	0.807	0.885	0.667
		LC2	0.865		
		LC3	0.811		
		LC4	0.779		
		LC5	0.740		
	Risk taking propensity	RT1	0.816	0.813	0.613
		RT2	0.885		
		RT3	0.816		
		RT4	0.787		
ENT_DES	Personalattitude	PA1	0.793	0.799	0.598
		PA2	0.776		
		PA3	0.749		
		PA4	0.831		
		PA5	0.827		
	Self-efficacy	SE1	0.866	0.788	0.594
		SE2	0.801		
		SE3	0.795		
		SE4	0.785		
		SE5	0.833		
		SE6	0.915		
	socialnorms	SN1	0.829	0.824	0.636
		SN2	0.884		
		SN3	0.905		
		SN4	0.856		
		SN5	0.882		
		SN6	0.846		
ENT_EDU		EE1	0.705	0.859	0.557

	EE2	0.744		
	EE3	0.795		
	EE4	0.800		
	EE5	0.866		
ENT_INT	EI1	0.820	0.808	0.605
	EI2	0.837		
	EI3	0.944		
	EI4	0.915		
	EI5	0.899		

Note: IN–innovativeness;LC-Locus of control;RT-Risk taking propensity;
PA-Personal attitude;SE-Self-efficacy;SN-Social Norms;
EE-Entrepreneurship education;
EI-Entrepreneurship intention

Structural Equation Modeling

First, we examined the structural model to confirm the outcomes of the analysis, specifically focusing on the R-square (R2), beta coefficients, factor loadings, and their corresponding t-values through structural equation modeling. This included looking at the three aspects of entrepreneurship desirability: innovativeness, locus of control, risk-taking propensity, personal attitude, self-efficacy, and adherence to social norms. It was observed that innovativeness ($R2 = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$), locus of control ($R2 = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$), risk-taking propensity ($R2 = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$), personal attitude ($R2 = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$), self-efficacy ($R2 = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$), and adherence to social norms ($R2 = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$) were all positively associated with entrepreneurship education, accounting for 50% of the variance in entrepreneurship education (Table 3). Subsequently, we investigated the factors within the model that were particularly influential on entrepreneurial intention, such as innovativeness ($t = 2.016$, $p < 0.01$), locus of control ($t = 0.554$, $p > 0.01$), risk-taking propensity ($t = -1.595$, $p > 0.01$), personal attitude ($t = 1.963$, $p < 0.01$), self-efficacy ($t = 0.353$, $p > 0.01$), and adherence to social norms ($t = 2.257$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, we explored the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions, finding a significant relationship ($R2 = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$) with a loadings value of over 0.70, indicating a high degree of validity and a significant t-value of over 1.96, suggesting a strong correlation.

Table.3 Standardized path for hypothesis testing

Endogenous	Path	Exogenous	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Entrepreneur Education	<---	Innovative	0.365	0.099	3.708	***
Entrepreneur Education	<---	Locus Control	-0.060	0.108	-0.554	0.579
Entrepreneur Education	<---	Risk-taking	-0.146	0.091	-1.595	0.111
Entrepreneur Education	<---	Personal Attitude	0.225	0.093	2.412	0.016
Entrepreneur Education	<---	Self -Efficacy	0.123	0.119	1.033	0.302
Entrepreneur Education	<---	Social Norms	0.311	0.158	1.954	0.051
Entrepreneur Intention	<---	Entrepreneur Education	0.266	0.11	2.419	0.016
Entrepreneur Intention	<---	Innovative	0.223	0.11	2.016	0.044
Entrepreneur Intention	<---	Locus Control	0.222	0.113	1.963	0.051
Entrepreneur Intention	<---	Risk-taking	-0.067	0.099	-0.675	0.5
Entrepreneur Intention	<---	Personal Attitude	-0.091	0.101	-0.909	0.363
Entrepreneur Intention	<---	Self-Efficacy	0.044	0.126	0.353	0.724
Entrepreneur Intention	<---	Social Norms	0.396	0.176	2.257	0.024

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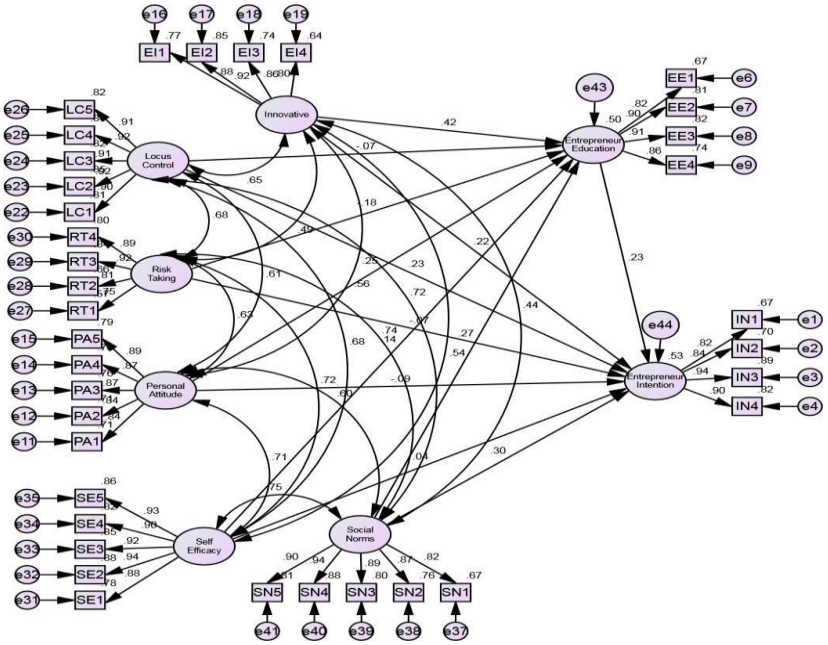

Figure.2 Final Structural Model

As portrayed in the study, the correlation coefficient (R2) for the entrepreneurial intention among entrepreneurs is 0.530, and for entrepreneurial education, it is 0.500, which has sufficient explanatory significance. Nonetheless, relying solely on the R2 value is insufficient to fully back up the model (Radović-Marković, Shoaib Farooq, &Marković, 2017). Consequently, a Q-square (Q2) test was conducted to evaluate the adequacy of the structural model (Hair Jr et al., 2016).

Conclusions:

The purpose of this research was to evaluate the desire to become an entrepreneur among college students in Oman and to understand the role of entrepreneurial mindset, appeal, and education in shaping this desire. The results show that learning about entrepreneurship greatly influences women's ambitions to pursue it as a professional path. Additionally, the research discovered that receiving entrepreneurial education boosts individuals' personal attitudes and creativity. Nonetheless, it wasn't established that a student's inclination to take risks affects their intention to become an entrepreneur, indicating that some students might be hesitant to embrace risks or manage possible setbacks linked to starting their own businesses.

The research emphasizes the importance of teaching entrepreneurship in a way that meets the unique requirements of each person. For example, students pursuing business often show different tendencies when it comes to taking risks than those not studying business. Thus, developing a broader entrepreneurship education program that helps students from different backgrounds might be a creative solution. Involving students in actual business situations could improve their creativity and willingness to take risks. Schools ought to think about setting up entrepreneurship incubators or centers to actively engage students and expose them to business situations in the real world.

On a theoretical standpoint, this research highlights the importance of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), backed by the entrepreneurial orientation model, in understanding attitudes at the personal level. Fundamentally, it offers understanding into students' readiness and

desire to start their own businesses, indicating that improving students' abilities, knowledge, and skills in entrepreneurship could boost their desire to become entrepreneurs.

Nevertheless, this research comes with a number of constraints. The development of the entrepreneurial model relied on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, and subsequent studies should think about combining this model with additional theories of entrepreneurship. Moreover, the participants for this research were selected from private universities and colleges in Oman, indicating that future investigations ought to include students from public universities as well. Although surveys were conducted on both male and female students, the primary attention was directed towards female entrepreneurs to grasp the viewpoints of male students regarding female entrepreneurship. Subsequent research might consider concentrating exclusively on female students and might find it advantageous to include working adults or people outside the student demographic to achieve a wider comprehension of entrepreneurial motivations.

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