



## **The Intention of High School Students to Become Entrepreneur-Savvy at Early Age: Exploring the Impact of Formal Education in The Saudi Context.**

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### **Abstract**

This research is aiming at finding a positive link between offering entrepreneurial subjects at the schools and the students' intentions of becoming entrepreneurs. This process of evaluating the impact of education of such subjects on the future actions of school students will provide many valuable perceptions about the current situation of entrepreneurship education in Saudi school and the lacking prevailed in the present practices. Since the new vision of Saudi Arabia 2030 focuses on enhancing the economic development there is a huge pressure on increasing entrepreneurship contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from 20% to 35%. This will help the researcher to come up with some hands-on suggestions to the policy decision makers. These suggestions will have implications on both the schools level and the government level decision makers. It is anticipated that since this study is quite unique in Saudi Arabia, it will assist in influencing the school students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Up and until our current time, the topic did not receive much attention in the country and consequently, it intends to provide an enormous value to the current context.

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurship intention, Saudi vision 2030.*



## 1.0 Introduction:

Entrepreneurship is defined as the willingness and capability to start, manage, and organize a new business endeavor for making a profit ("Business Dictionary, 2017). Entrepreneurship is one of the main factors for the economic development and job creation (Ayyagari, Asli & Maksimovic, 2014). In the past five years, Saudi Arabia has started to promote entrepreneurship activities by providing funding, training and monitoring, in order to reduce the level of unemployment and enhance the economic development. Recently, Saudi Arabia has established 2030 vision which focus on thriving economy. Although there are different private and governmental organizations that are providing funding – there is still a gap in the training and development and more specifically, entrepreneurship education (Khan, 2014). The entrepreneurship capacity also involves the willingness to take risks. In the past, entrepreneurship was considered to be an innate quality. However, since the 1950s, educational institutions from different levels started to include this topic in their curriculum just to develop the managerial skills of the students. However, such entrepreneurial schooling has resulted in this subject gain recognition all over the world (Drucker, 2015). Developed countries like the UK, the US, Germany, France etc. are already getting huge benefits from such education, as every year, these nations are seeing the emergence of hundreds of trained entrepreneurs who are making a lot of contributions to the economies of their countries (Küttim, Kallaste, Venesaar & Kiis, 2014). Entrepreneurship education has enormous impacts on the developing and underdeveloped countries as well. For instance, Pulka, Aminu & Rikwentshe (2015) were influenced by the staggeringly rising number of graduate unemployment in Nigeria and the possible impacts of entrepreneurship education on the career choices of the students. The researchers found that there is a positive link between offering entrepreneurial courses at the universities and the students' intentions of becoming entrepreneurs.

As a result, evaluating the impact of teaching such subjects on the future actions of secondary schools' students will provide a lot of valuable perception about the current situation of entrepreneurship education at Saudi Schools and the lacking prevailed in the present practices. This area of research will help the researchers to come up with some hands-on suggestions for the policy makers. These implications will include both the schools' level and the government level decision makers. It is anticipated that since this study is quite unique in Saudi Arabia, it will assist in influencing the secondary students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Up and until the writing of this research proposal, the topic did not receive much attention in the country and consequently, the result and the finding of this study intends to provide enormous value to the current contexts. In the last report published by The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor GEM in collaboration with Prince Mohammed Bin Salman College for entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia shows that one of the weakness



areas in Saudi Arabia's ecosystem for entrepreneurship is entrepreneurship education. Since 2030 Saudi Arabia's vision focuses on enhancing the economic development, there is a huge pressure on increasing entrepreneurship contribution to GDP from 20% to 35%.

### 1.1 Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are as follows -

1. To obtain and analyze the data on entrepreneurship education among Saudi school.
2. Evaluation the strategy of the Ministry of Education for public schools and policies dealing with the issue of entrepreneurship.
3. Investigate the impact of entrepreneurship education has on high school students' intention to becoming an entrepreneur.
4. To compare entrepreneurial intention between students who study entrepreneurship subjects in privet high school and students who didn't.
5. Uncover the reasons leading to the success of existing young entrepreneurs.
6. To make practical recommendations to the policy decision makers in the Ministry of Education.
- 7.

### 1.2 Research Question

- ✓ Does entrepreneurial education impact the students' intentions and awareness to be entrepreneurs in young age?

### 1.3 Research Hypothesis

**Null hypothesis.** There is a normal and positive connection between entrepreneurship schooling and the students' intention to become entrepreneurs.

**Alternative hypothesis.** There is a negative connection between entrepreneurship schooling and the students' intention to become entrepreneurs.



## 2.0 Literature Review:

### 2.1 The Impact of Education on Individuals' Intention to Become Entrepreneurs

This paper is going to address some issues regarding entrepreneurial intention for high school students and how is early education going to affect on there behaviors. It is considered the single best indicator of behavior (Ajzen, 1991,2001; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)

Therefore, the intention of carrying out entrepreneurial behaviors may be influenced by several components, such as, needs, values, wants, habits, and beliefs (Bird,1988; Lee & Wong,2004). These external factors influence one's attitude toward entrepreneurship (Krueger, 1993). The three motivational factors (Ajzen, 1991; Linan, 2004) Personal attitude (PA), Subjective norm (SN), Perceived behavioral control (PBC). In this sense, the researcher going to use only one factor which is (PA) to identify whether the entrepreneurship education positively influence the student's entrepreneurial intentions.

**Figure 1**

**Entrepreneurial Intention Model**

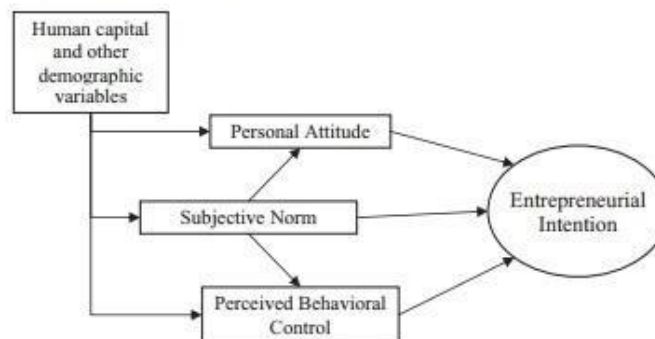


Figure 1, therefore, demonstrates the model we will be using as a starting point for our analysis. It is equal to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) described by Ajzen (1991), and used by Autio et al. (2001), Erikson (1999), Fayolle et al. (2006), Kolvereid (1996b), Kolvereid and Isaksen (2006), Krueger et al. (2000), Reitan (1998), and Veciana et al. (2005), among others. However, in this study simply the researcher omits the (SN) and (PBC) as the researcher found it to be nonsignificant to this research. Entrepreneurship education is assumed to influence (PA)

Moreover, there are different reasons going to affect the student's intention and will cause favorable perceptions if there are under taking one subject or varied entrepreneurial courses in young age in



Saudi Context. Johns (2006,p 386) understands context as situational opportunities and constraints that affect behavior. Moreover, Whetten (1989) draws attention to diversity and manifold facets of context. Conceptually, entrepreneurship can add to our students knowledge of when, how, and why this entrepreneurship happen (Welter, 2011).

## **2.2 The Evolution of Entrepreneurship Education and its Impact and Objectives:**

As mentioned earlier in the beginning, the prime focus of entrepreneurial education was to develop the administrative and managerial skills of business students. Eventually, such education started to focus more on developing the students with multiple skills and the passion to achieve something (Kuratko, 2005). As a result, many of these students turned out to be successful entrepreneurs after finishing their studies. Therefore, universities and governments began to put more emphasis on designing entrepreneurial education in such a way that will motivate more students to launch their own business ventures (Küttimet al., 2014). This form of entrepreneurship education aims to help the students overcome their fears of uncertainties and risks, and enhance their level of maturity. It also changes the thought process and the mindsets of the students (Mycoskie, 2013). According to Oosterbeek, van Praag & Ijsselstein (2010), modern entrepreneurship courses are designed to inculcate and communicate the values, skills, and competencies required for recognizing business opportunities, and organizing and starting new business firms. O'Connor (2013) pointed out that entrepreneurial schooling is one kind of education program, which helps the students to go through more than developmental phases in order to make them more matured so that they can become effective business owners. This education teaches them all the issues related to entrepreneurship and enthuse them to become entrepreneurs (Rasmussen & Sørheim, 2006). The quality of entrepreneurial education is another important factor in this context (Hall, Daneke & Lenox, 2010). For instance, Küttim et al., (2014) believe that many universities from different countries around the world just include entrepreneurship as a core course for the business students. Most of these higher educational institutions do not offer any additional courses, majors, trainings, or workshops on entrepreneurships. Most parts of the world lack specialized educations that are designed to create quality entrepreneurs (Askun& Yıldırım, 2011, Oosterbeek, van Praag & Ijsselstein, 2010;). Because of that, even though the courses on entrepreneurship have such great impacts on developing the business mindsets of the students, they are mostly being ignored. Souitaris, Zerbinati & Al-Laham (2007) mentioned that due to the rapid expansion of global business, more educational bodies are now offering a wide array of theoretical and practical training programs and activities that are designed to develop the necessary entrepreneurship skills in the students. Tessema Gerba (2012) conducted a detailed study for finding out the impacts of such education on the mindset of the university students and the participants and found that these curriculums inspire them to a great extent by creating



entrepreneurial interests in them. As a result, instead of opening a new business just for the sake of being an entrepreneur, many of these students actually go into businesses of their own choices. Their individual interests and passions play a great role in that (Thiel & Masters, 2014). Weber, von Graevenitz & Harhoff (2010) revealed that in modern times, many young people have the intention to do something for the economic progress of their countries. Entrepreneurial programs provoke such intentions even further and develop the right business and management attitudes in them (Zhao, 2005). A study conducted by Hall et al., (2010) found that entrepreneurial education increase the likeliness of business students turning into business owners by more than 25%. In addition, Martin,

McNally & Kay (2013) concluded that students majoring in entrepreneurship are 300 percent more probable to create their own jobs. People gaining specialized education and training in entrepreneurship tend to earn more than their contemporary graduates who work regular jobs ( Zhang, Z., Zyphur, M., Narayanan, J., Arvey, R., Chaturvedi, S., & Avolio, B2009). Additionally, they are also more fulfilled with their lifestyle and jobs (Pulka, Aminu & Rikwentishe, 2015). Gries & Naudé (2011) mentioned that entrepreneurship education builds a wide array of capabilities, skills, understanding, knowledge, and values in the students that are directly related to successfully opening and running a business, and that are not so rampant in general business and management studies. Due to that, students completing entrepreneurship courses have more skills and confidence to be self- employed than the ones who did not take such courses. Such impacts of entrepreneurial studies also increase the overall reputation of the university. Therefore, a better awareness about the issues, which affect the students' entrepreneurship aims could have practical and theoretical implications for the policy makers including both the educational institutions and the government (Wilson, Kickul & Marlino, 2007).

In other hand there is a Saudi study has made by Mohammad Tahlil Azim and Ali H. Al-Kahtan from King AbdulAziz University, they captured a Summary of the objectives of the Entrepreneurial Education Training program as mentioned by different Studies, The following table summarizes the objectives of the EET programs as mentioned by different scholars in this field.

**Table# 1: Summary of the objectives of the EET program as mentioned by different studies**

Study	Objectives
Hills (1988)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ to increase the awareness and understanding of the process involved in initiating and managing a new business, and</li> <li>▪ to increase students' awareness of small business ownership as a serious career option.</li> </ul>
Sexton and Kasarda (1992)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ convince his/her student to become actively involved in entrepreneurship;</li> <li>▪ understand the dynamic nature of the world of entrepreneurship; and</li> <li>▪ slow down the reality shock of the real world by means of formal or informal tuition.</li> </ul>
Garavan and O' Cinneide (1994)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ to acquire knowledge germane to entrepreneurship;</li> <li>▪ to acquire skills in the use of techniques, in the analysis of business situations, and in the synthesis of action plans;</li> <li>▪ to identify and stimulate entrepreneurial drive, talent and skills;</li> <li>▪ to undo the risk-averse bias of many analytical techniques;</li> <li>▪ to develop empathy and support for all unique aspects of entrepreneurship;</li> <li>▪ to devise attitudes towards change;</li> <li>▪ to encourage new start-ups and other entrepreneurial ventures.</li> </ul>
Hisrich and Peters (1998)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop various skills required by entrepreneurs.</li> <li>▪ Technical skills</li> <li>▪ Business management skills</li> <li>▪ Personal entrepreneurial skills</li> </ul>
Roach (1999) at North Georgia Technical Institute:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ knowledge of the characteristics of an entrepreneur;</li> <li>▪ ability to recognize business opportunities;</li> <li>▪ basic skills and knowledge to create an effective feasibility plan for a business venture;</li> <li>▪ ability to identify the various business entry strategies available to entrepreneurs; and</li> <li>▪ understanding of the skills needed and means available to collect the market information needed to evaluate the feasibility of a new business concept.</li> </ul>
Carolyn Brown (2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learn to develop ideas</li> <li>▪ Prepare to start a business</li> <li>▪ Build a viable business</li> </ul>



Ulla Hytti (2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To learn to become an entrepreneur or to develop an individuals' own entrepreneurship</li> <li>▪ To learn more of entrepreneurship, to get some information of entrepreneurship</li> </ul>
Vesper and Gartner (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal Development</li> <li>▪ Enterprise Development</li> </ul>
Jeroen Onstenk (2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To build enterprising key skills</li> <li>▪ To grow the entrepreneur as manager;</li> <li>▪ To develop the entrepreneur as entrepreneur.</li> </ul>
Hytti and O'Gorman (2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learn about entrepreneurship,</li> <li>▪ learn to become entrepreneurial</li> <li>▪ Learn "how to" be an entrepreneur by learning how to start a business.</li> </ul>

### 3.0 Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Fundamental

This research study will have students' participants from different Saudi Arabian's schools (government and privet) in order to collect vital information about the current state of entrepreneurial education in the country and how entrepreneurship courses are influencing the students to become entrepreneurs in the future, it will be evaluated via theory of planned behavior (TPB). According to Ajzen's TPB to build an entrepreneurial intention questionnaire (EIQ) the entrepreneurial intention model is then tested on 300 students' sample from different schools: privet and government. Primary data will be collected from Saudi school via questionnaires and it will include only one of the motivational factors (Ajzen,1991; Linan. 2004) personal attitude. For example :

#### Personal attitude

#### Measures of Core Entrepreneurial Intention Model Elements

##### Personal Attitude

11. Indicate your level of agreement with the following sentences from 1 (total disagreement) to 7 (total agreement).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.a- Being an entrepreneur implies more advantages than disadvantages to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.b- A career as entrepreneur is attractive for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.c- If I had the opportunity and resources, I'd like to start a firm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.d- Being an entrepreneur would entail great satisfactions for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.e- Among various options, I would rather be an entrepreneur	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Secondary data will be gathered from archived economic, financial, and business materials,





government and university publications, collected documents, official sources, journal articles, interviews of business owners and Saudi Arabian entrepreneurs published in other sources, speeches, statements, annual reports, magazines, internet sources, unpublished dissertations and researches, conference papers, pamphlets, and last but not the least, books that will provide significant theoretical frameworks for the research. As mentioned earlier, every aspect of the regression analysis will be used to properly and thoroughly analyze the collected data.

Moreover the researcher going to measure the reasons behind the success of the young entrepreneurs by establish depth interviews for the youth entrepreneurs to see if the education affected them to be entrepreneurs and this will be a detailed longitudinal investigation in order to have a full understanding of the current circumstances of entrepreneurial education in Saudi Arabia.

### **3.2 Description and Data Collections**

The survey will involve obtaining, analyzing, and interpreting data through fieldwork by utilizing a questionnaire that will obtain the necessary data for the research such as the backgrounds of the students, other issues related to their entrepreneurship courses, and its impacts on these students' entrepreneurial intentions, The anticipated number of students' participants is expected to be around 300 and the questionnaires will be distributed to those high school students via email. The sample will be from high school students 150 from privet school who undertake one course and 150 from government schools who do not take this course. The gathered data from the questionnaires will be digitally stored. At least, 90 percent response rate from the participants is expected. The questionnaire will include both open-ended and Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) likert- type scale with five items. The personal attitude will be measured through an aggregate scale. The questionnaire will include variables such as the motivational factors found in the entrepreneurship courses and education offered by Saudi Arabian schools to measure the student's intention to be real entrepreneurs.

The interviews are planned to be conducted by the researcher and her interviewees where the researcher will ask various questions about entrepreneur educations. The sample will be with the youth entrepreneurs who are already in the field and ask them about the factors that help them to be entrepreneurs. The interviews are planned to be conducted with 15 students' entrepreneurs.



### **3.3 Data Analysis**

To analyze the collected data, regression analysis will be used as this statistical tool will help the researchers to study the correlation between the dependent and independent variables and their level of dependence on each other by using SPSS statistics.

The qualitative data will be collected by conducting semi structured interviews where these interviews will audio recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Following the transcription of the recorded interviews, the data will be analyzed by utilizing the QSR NVivo software package to extract codes and themes relevant to the research questions.

#### **Ethical issue**

The researcher is intending to have high privacy code when private information such as beliefs, attitudes, opinions and records, are shared with others , no participants' identities or names will be revealed at any stage of the research. Adequate level of confidentiality of the research data should be ensured. Any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research must be avoided, and any type of communication in relation to the research should be done with honesty and transparency the researcher will also acquire consent and ethical approval from the institution and the participants.

### **4.0 Conclusion**

As mentioned above, the main purpose of this a doctoral research proposal is to study the effects of entrepreneurial education on the school students of Saudi Arabia. In the past, not much focus was put on this topic. As a result, this research will add tremendous value to this field by shedding light on the current situation in the country and also by paving the way for future studies on the same topic. In addition to that, the research will identify the significant policy implications for both Ministry of Education and the policy makers of the Saudi government as well.



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