

ABSTRACT

Research on entrepreneurship intentions have long been a topic of interest to researchers due to its importance to the development of many countries. Despite the continued efforts of policy makers and universities, start-ups in Pakistan are still struggling and unemployment among the youth remains the biggest issue since decades. Therefore, this study wants to improve the understanding about the entrepreneurial activities in universities with the purpose to contribute to the economic expansion of innovation, sustainability and contributing to economic growth. Furthermore, the study aimed to measure the impact of important behavioural factors affecting students' intentions towards university based start-ups. This study applied the mixed method approach and the primary data was collected from the Merhan UET, Jamshoro. Qualitative data for the study was obtained by conducting investigative interviews from the managers of Innovation & Entrepreneurship Centre (IEC) and Science and Technology Park (National Expansion Plan of NICs), Mehran UET, Jamshoro. Quantitative data was collected in order to examine entrepreneurial intentions of university students, using a questionnaire survey on university students in Mehran UET, Jamshoro. A total of 314 engineering students participated in the survey. The data was collected using random and convenience sampling technique. The results indicated that majority of the respondents have intention to become entrepreneurs and their intentions are attributed by their attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Entrepreneurial Attitude), attending courses on entrepreneurship (Entrepreneurial Education), individual's predisposition his or her tendency to experiments (Personal Innovativeness) and the influence from their family members (Social Norms). Furthermore, study also demonstrated that the Risk Propensity among engineers is relatively low, which statistically shows a non significant relationship, proving that engineers by nature are groomed to be risk averse and therefore study implies that curriculum additions may be incorporated into syllabus in which students should be taught to take risks to get good benefits by adopting new approaches in their careers. Finally, the study also implies that in order to become a truly entrepreneurial university, there is a need to establish more career development and facilitation centres in HEIs that may help to foster young minds for future entrepreneurial journey.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Intentions, Entrepreneurial Attitude, Entrepreneurial Education, Personal Innovativeness, Risk Propensity, Social Norms, University based Start-ups.