



## THE IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE ON STUDENTS' CAREER INTENTIONS IN OMAN? EVIDENCE FROM DHOFAR UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship education is assumed to be relevant for academic programs all over the world. The aim of this study is to examine the influence of entrepreneurship and previous experience on student's career intentions in Dhofar university. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The sample size of 120 undergraduate and postgraduate students from different majors in different colleges in Dhofar university has been selected randomly to obtain the data. The multiple regression model was used to analyze the data. According to the research analysis, the results show that there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and student's career intentions in Dhofar university, while there is a significant relationship between previous experience and student's career intentions in the university. This may be attributed to the fact that; an entrepreneurship education has been adopted in last few years in different colleges in the university.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship education, previous experience, career intentions, Oman.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship plays an important role in economic growth and development in many countries as well as in job creation for citizens. According to (Smith, 2010) "the level of entrepreneurship in a given country has a significant positive effect on the level of economic growth in that country". In this regard, the government of Oman has given attention to diversify the economy and to be a good opportunity for creating jobs instead of depending on public jobs that are created by government corporations.

Entrepreneurship education is crucial to increase the motivations of individuals and students to be able to run their own business. The entrepreneurship education previous experience helps students to develop their ideas and promote new products. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) explored by (Ajzen, 1991) says that there is a relationship between beliefs, entrepreneurial and career intentions.

Recently, most universities and higher colleges in Oman have started to offer entrepreneurial education particularly in business schools as part of their curriculum. In 2015, the ministry of high education launched a pilot program on carrying out entrepreneurship education in all

governmental and private universities in Oman. As this will encourage undergraduate to bring entrepreneurs after graduation. Few researches focus on the impact of entrepreneurship education in Oman. Therefore, no one knows about the interest of students in Oman toward career entrepreneurship intention. This research is an attempts to explore the effect of entrepreneurship education and previous experience on student's Intentions in Dhofar University.

The main objectives of the study are:

- To Examine the relationship between entrepreneurship Education and student's Career Intentions in Dhofar university.
- To Examine the relation between previous experience and students careerIntentions in Dhofar university.

The findings of the study may help decision makers to create a policy that may help students to start their own business.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years, entrepreneurship has been claimed as a major driver of economic growth. Successful entrepreneurs have the ability to lead a business in a positive direction through proper planning. This literature presents the concepts about entrepreneurship education, pervious experience and career intention.

### 2.1 Entrepreneurship Education

Previous studies have focused on exploring a wide array of possible enablers of entrepreneurship education. For example, (Ekpoh and Edet, 2011) tested the impact of entrepreneurship education on career intentions among 500 students in selected universities in Nigeria, the results show that there was a strong relationship between entrepreneurship education and intention of students to being entrepreneurs after they will be graduated. Along the Same line (Izedonmi and Okafor, 2010) confirmed that the students' who receive entrepreneurship education and previous experience has positive influence on the student's Career intentions. Many authors such as (Maki, 1999), (Douglas &Shepherd, 2002) and (Dean, 2004) claimed that entrepreneurial education increases the intention to start business among University undergraduates.

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (Reynoldsst al.2001) has emphasized that getting an adequate and a proper education may encourage entrepreneurial intention of an individual. Universities play a major role in the process affect the intention aspects to be entrepreneurs. Many universities in the Middle East countries have recognized this role and established entrepreneurship centers on campus in order to motivate students to be future potential entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurial education is focused on developing youth with the passion and multiple skills. It aims to guide the enterprise successfully through its initial stage to the maturity stage. A standardized questionnaire was developed to explore students' professional orientation or expectations and their personality traits. The study revealed that a vast majority of students responded that they have the intention of starting up a business after graduation.

Do students' motivations for entrepreneurship relate to their entrepreneurial education? University emphasis on academic knowledge which can encourage entrepreneurial action among students.

## 2.2 Previous Experience

According to Mitchell et al (2002) for starting a new business many factors influence entrepreneur intention like desirability, feasibility, and entrepreneurial experience, but it varies culture to culture and nation to nation.

Miralles et al. (2016) analyzes the relationship between entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial intention, and the mediating effects of the TPB perceptual variables: personal attitude (PA), social norm (SN), and perceived behavioral-control (PBC). A structural equation model (SEM) of a sample of 431 respondents. The results showed that entrepreneurial knowledge positively influences entrepreneurial intention. These findings contribute to the understanding of the entrepreneurial intention for experienced individuals and consolidate the use of the TPB model to study individual entrepreneurial intention. It has been argued that feasibility perceptions regarding entrepreneurship are influenced by prior exposure to entrepreneurial experiences. For example, (Shapero and Sokol, 1982) contended that prior exposure to entrepreneurial activity would have a positive effect on perceptions of feasibility (and perceived desirability).

Cristina and Dwayne (2009) argued that perceived feasibility and desirability has direct impact on entrepreneur intention and also there is a direct relationship between entrepreneur experience and intention, entrepreneur, experience plays an important role, experience influences the intention, due to experience their performance increase, experience motivated towards risk taking for new venture .Due to entrepreneur expertise that is gained from previous experience makes strategies more effective (Zhao et al., 2005)

## 2.3 Career intention

Self-employment intention has been defined as the intention to start a new business Zhao (2005). The individual decision to choose an entrepreneur as a career is sometimes assumed to depend on personality traits. Theory of Planned Behavior Ajzen (2013) has become the most popular used theoretical framework in past studies of entrepreneurial intention.

The intention to be self-employed is a necessary antecedent to the actual behaviour of choosing self-employment as a career option. As indicated by (Kolveroidand Isaksen 2006), number of studies have emerged addressing individual's personal characteristics and their entrepreneurial intention, (Boyd &Vozikis, 1994), (Krueger &Carsrud, 1993) etc. these models are largely based and influenced from two basic theories, which are namely, The Entrepreneurial Event Model, (Shapero, &Sokol, 1982) and The Theory of Planned Action, (Ajzen, 1991). Kumara, (2012) suggested that there is a statistically significant positive modest correlation between entrepreneurial belief and entrepreneurial intention, and between attitude towards self-employment and entrepreneurial intention. Davidsson, (1995) suggests that primary determinant of entrepreneurial intention is person's conviction that starting and running one's own firm is a suitable alternative for him/her.

Jusoff (2009) who also did a survey using the “Big Five” personality measure on undergraduates in institution of higher learning agreed that entrepreneurial intention was positively correlated with openness but not conscientiousness. Reference Ismail et al (2012) who did a survey on undergraduates in three private universities agreed that there was no significant effect of need for achievement towards entrepreneurial intention besides internal control. They claimed that both independent variables may be affected by other variables. intention. These findings provide important insight to promote and produce a positive image of entrepreneurship as a career. Atnafu (2016) investigate determinants of Students’ entrepreneurial intentions among newly established universities of Ethiopia. The results show that, the over level of entrepreneurial or self-employment intentions of students newly established Universities of Ethiopia was too low. Further students perceived the way entrepreneurship course delivered and entrepreneurial environment created in the university is not adequate enough to urge students to pursue entrepreneurial career as an option for their future career.

### 3. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

As we mentioned earlier, the main objective of this research is to evaluate the influence of entrepreneurship education and previous experience on student’s Career Intentions in Dhofar university.

Following previous literature, the following hypothesis were formulated and tested by the researchers:

H1: There is a significant relation between entrepreneurship education and student’s Career intention.

H2: There is a significant relationship between previous experience and student’s career intentions in Dhofar university.

### 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to evaluate and analyze the influence of entrepreneurial education and previous experience on student’s Career intentions in Dhofar university. In order to obtain such data about the students, a survey has been carried out in Dhofar University. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The sample size of 120 undergraduate and postgraduate students from different majors in different specialization namely, college of Commerce and Business Administration (CCBA), college of Engineering (CE), College of Arts and Applied Sciences (CAAS) has been selected randomly. The questionnaire excludes undergraduate students in the first year from the survey because we thought that they were not exposed to the entrepreneurial education. The questionnaire is a closed one and consists of two sections. The first section concentrated on personal, demographic characteristics from students. The second sections ask students to rate the relative to each specific question. The multiple regressions was used to analyze the data.

### 5. RESULTS

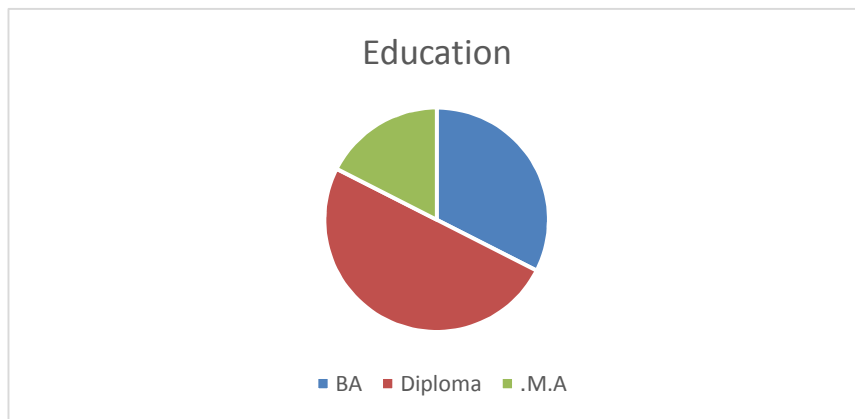
### Demographics Analysis

In this section personal and demographic analysis was conducted.

**Table 1: Education Level**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	BA	39	32.5	32.5	32.5
	Diploma	60	50	50	82.5
	M.A.	21	17.5	17.5	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

The above table showed that, the respondents studying in different education levels. Majority of the respondents 47.5% studying at Diploma, while, 32.5% studying at BA and 17.5% studying at master level.

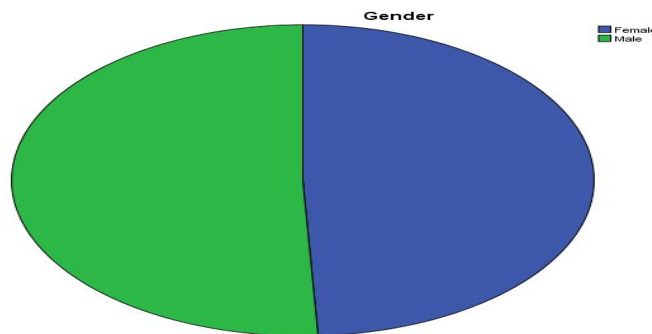


**Fig. 1: Educational level of students**

**Table 2: Gender**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	59	49.2	49.2	49.2
	Male	61	50.8	50.8	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table two above presented that, there were 59 females (49.2%) and 61 were male (50.8) individuals (50.8%).

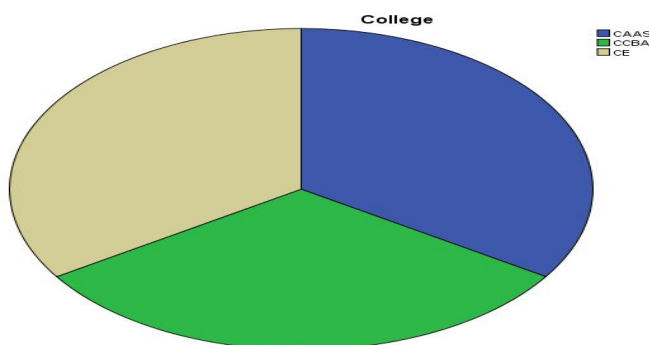


**Fig. 2: Gender of respondents**

**Table 3: College Distribution**

		Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	CAAS	34.2	34.2
	CCBA	31.7	65.8
	CE	34.2	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table three above showed that,34% respondents were from CAAS, 31.7% formCCBA,while34.2% were from CE.

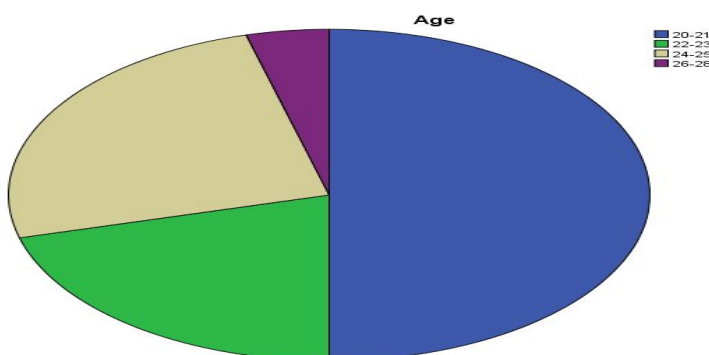


**Fig. 3: college distribution**

**Table 4: Age Distribution**

		Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-21	50.0	50.0	50.0
	22-23	20.8	20.8	70.8
	24-25	25.0	25.0	95.8
	26-28	4.2	4.2	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

The results from table 4 presented that the data were collected from the different age groups. 50% of the respondents were between 20-21 years, 20.8% were between 23-24 years. 25% were between 24-25 years, while 4.2% between 26-28 years.



**Fig. 4: Age distribution**

### Hypotheses Testing

To test the effect of Entrepreneurship education and previous experience on the entrepreneurial intention, the multiple regression was used. In this model there are two

independent variables, entrepreneurship education and previous experience and one dependent variable named as entrepreneurial intention.

**Table 5: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.113 <sup>a</sup>	.013	-.004	1.00210033

a. Predictors: (Constant), Experience., Entrepreneurship Education

Table 5 above presented that the R is .113 which indicates that the relationship between entrepreneurship education, previous experience is not significantly correlated. The results also preset that R square was .013. This means that all independent variables namely, entrepreneurship education, previous experience collectively account for about 13 % of the variation in career intention, and the rest are due to other factors. This ratio supports the results of the study.

**Table 6: Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-.177	.183		-.971	.334
Entrepreneurship Education	.034	.092	.034	.363	.717
Previous Experience	.095	.084	.104	1.122	.043

Table 6 above shows that, the standardized Coefficients B was .034 and the statistical significance is .001, this means it is more than the statistical significance level (0.01). Therefore, the results confirm that there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and student's career intentions in Dhofar university. This results show that the model is not significant and entrepreneurship education till now has no influence on the student's career intention. As a result, the decision is to reject the hypothesis of the research (H0) that there is a positive significant relation between entrepreneurship education and student's Career intention. As for the relationship between previous experience and student's career intentions in Dhofar university, the B was .095 and the results confirm that it is statistical significant at .05. level of significance.

## 6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

During last two decades, entrepreneurial education has a great intention in the literature and it has become such important part of education. In Oman, in last view years, the government has focused on entrepreneurship education and ministry of high education asked all universities to include some courses in their curriculum to be delivered to the students in different specialization.

The main objective of this research is to evaluate the relationship between entrepreneurship education, previous experience on student's career intentions in Dhofar university. A sample of 120 students was selected randomly in different colleges in different specialization for students at undergraduates and post graduates level except students at first level because they



do not exposed to entrepreneurship education. To evaluate whether there is a relationship between dependent and independent variables, the multiple regression model was used to analyze the data.

After analyzing the data, the results show that there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and student's career intentions in Dhofar university. This may be attributed to the fact that, an entrepreneurship education has been adopted in last few years in different colleges in the university and it may have an influence in the future. These results are not contrast with (Izedonmi and Okafor, 2010) and (Reynolds *et al.* 2001). As for the relationship between previous experience and student's career intentions in Dhofar university, the results present that there is a significant relationship between two variables. These results are consistent with Miralles *et al.* (2016).

Some limitations have been identified in this study. These can serve as a basis for future research. In this study only two factors have been used as independent variables and in future study attempts should be made to include more independent variables such as self- efficiency, norms etc. In addition, many universities could be included in future research.

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