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ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION OF SAUDI STUDENTS: ROLE OF SAUDI ARABIAN UNIVERSITIES IN ACHIEVING THE GOAL OF VISION 2030*

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Abstract. The present study is focused on Saudi students' entrepreneurial intention and Saudi Arabian universities' role in achieving Vision 2030. The paper examines Saudi universities' role in the predictive value of students' self-efficacy, subjective norms, and attitudes towards entrepreneurship for entrepreneurial intentions. The data were collected from the student enrolled in the varied programs in Saudi universities. A total of 208 Saudi students enrolled in various disciplines, and those who attended entrepreneurial educational programs offered by the universities participated in the research. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and stepwise multiple regression analysis. Results of the study revealed that Saudi universities strengthened the students' self-reliance and positive attitude toward entrepreneurship and reduced the impact of social norms on entrepreneurial intentions.

Keywords: self-efficacy, subjective norms; attitude towards entrepreneurship; entrepreneurial intentions; universities

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JEL Codes: M1, M13, I21, I23, J24

1. Introduction

Global unemployment rates are continuously rising. Many countries are proactively addressing these reoccurring concerns through numerous policies and strategies. Entrepreneurship is a suitable and widely used alternative approach to reduce the adverse impact of unemployment (Nazri et al. 2016). The relevance of Entrepreneurship in the growth of the national economy, innovativeness, and job creation is highly significant (Badulescu and Badulescu 2013). Entrepreneurial education is needed to equip young minds for success in today's work and to embrace them in living environments. However, shifting the young mind towards entrepreneurship and developing entrepreneurial intentions is among the big challenge for policymakers.

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Many global debates have been observed to identify the factors that contribute most to developing entrepreneurial attitudes. Entrepreneurship education is one of the main factors for developing entrepreneurship intentions, and it has attracted many researchers and academicians for many decades (Wach and Głodowska, 2019). Entrepreneurship education is a strong foundation and provides essential knowledge, skills, and motivation in new business setups (Lee et al., 2005). Entrepreneurship education can be among the vital sources to change the mentality of job seekers to job providers and helps to consider business as a career option. Developing entrepreneurship intentions to generate interest towards self-employment, start-ups, boot start-ups, and small and medium businesses can become an essential source of employment generations. Besides entrepreneurship education, researchers have also identified several other factors which contribute most to entrepreneurial intentions are as; cultural and social norms (Wach, 2015), early childhood education (Huber et al., 2014), secondary education (Rachwał et al., 2016), higher education (Wach, 2019) learning experiences (Hägg and Kurczewska, 2021), professional perspective (Marona and Głuszak, 2014).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the largest oil-producing countries in the world. The economy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is based on oil production and its export. Like other developing and developed nations, Saudi Arabia has also recognised the challenges of unemployment and trying to boost supportive entrepreneurial activities in the region with a comprehensive strategic plan named "Saudi Vision 2030", launched in April 2016. It included several strategic objectives, specified targets, and KPIs that would be achieved through collaboration between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's public, private, and non-profit sectors (KSA Vision 2030). "A key focus for Vision 2030 is creating an environment that unlocks business opportunities, broadens the economic base, and creates jobs for all Saudis. Vision 2030 is creating future jobs, supporting innovation, and promoting exports by providing services to SMEs, which are important drivers of economic growth. The Vision is creating employment opportunities for citizens by supporting entrepreneurship, driving privatisation, and attracting investments in new industries" (KSA Vision 2030). Remarkably, one of the critical aims of Saudi Vision 2030s is to develop and support entrepreneurial education to provide more job opportunities and encourage self-employment among young Saudi graduates; hence objectives are to reduce the unemployment rate from 11.6% to 7 % by 2030. However, it is vital to identify young talent and facilitate them with all requirements. In this regard, universities and higher educational institutions can contribute and facilitate in achieving the set targets of enhancing entrepreneurial education in the region.

The present research examines the student's entrepreneurial intentions and the role of universities' facilitation towards entrepreneurial education in Saudi Arabia. More specifically, the emphasis is to analyse the impact of entrepreneurship education on the student's attitude, capability, skills, knowledge, and intentions toward entrepreneurship. To explore the students' willingness and abilities to be entrepreneurs and nurture their entrepreneurial sense. A brief introduction to the topic is discussed in the first section of the paper. In the second section hypothesis and conceptual framework are discussed in the light of a detailed literature study. In the subsequent section, the methodology of the research and results are discussed. In the last section of the paper, the conclusion has been drawn, and policy implications have been discussed.

2. Review of Literature and Hypothesis Formulation

A great deal of research explores entrepreneurial intentions, mainly focusing on university students (e.g., Franke and Luthje, 2004; Dahalan, et al., 2015; Laspita and Sarri, 2019; Liu et al., 2019; Usman, 2019; Zovko, Dulcic, and Bilic, 2020; Alrubaishi, 2020). Entrepreneurial intentions are the attributes that inherently encourage an individual to incorporate a self-driven and self-monitored business unit. Entrepreneurial intentions are an individual's motives to turn ideas into a business and to work as an entrepreneur (Hmieleski and Corbett 2006). These are the prerequisites as desires and mindsets that help an individual develop practical and specific business plans and may be considered an essential predictor of planned entrepreneurship behaviour. It also ensures, to a great extent, that individual efforts and attitudes are self-motivated (Krueger et al., 2000).

The role of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions has been examined in numerous research studies and observed diverse outcomes. Such as the relevance of entrepreneurship education and the university environment in influencing students' entrepreneurial interests is significant among Saudi Arabian students. (Ababtain and Akinwale, 2019). Wang and Ortiz (2022) also endorsed a statistically significant and positive relationship among entrepreneurship learning, entrepreneurial attitude, entrepreneurship education, and management students' entrepreneurial intention. Entrepreneurial education significantly facilitates individuals to establish a new venture. Another perspective of entrepreneurial education in developing students' ability to recognise opportunities and take advantage of them is that new start-ups have been found significant (Zhang et al., 2020). At the same time, entrepreneurial education significantly improves the fundamental knowledge for initiating new businesses (Rive et al., 2017).

On the contrary, Alrubaishi (2020) findings indicated that the university entrepreneurial environment has no significant impact on the entrepreneurial intentions of Saudi students. Whereas another study by Zovko et al. (2020), more precisely on Croatian students, revealed no vital relationship exists between self-efficacy, social norms, education, and entrepreneurial intention. In the same opinion, Betáková et al. (2020) also confirm that, generally, entrepreneurial support is expected by students. Still, it seems to be insufficient knowledge provided by the university in specific countries like Slovakia, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary.

It is evidenced in numerous research studies that several antecedents may influence entrepreneurial intention. Such as Bird (1988) categorised personal and environmental as the two main factors affecting entrepreneurial intentions. Thus, individual characteristics are developed and exercised within the interaction of environmental and related activities. Two fundamental models which also help to analyse the different intentions towards entrepreneurship are: "Entrepreneurial event theory" (EET) (Shapero and Sokol, 1982) and "Theory of Planned Behavior" (Ajzen, 1991). Entrepreneurial event theory argues that entrepreneurial intentions result from an individual's perceptions of "personal desirability, feasibility, and the propensity to act". At the same time, the theory of Planned Behavior suggests that personal factors such as "personal attractiveness, social norms, and feasibility" generally develop entrepreneurial intentions. Other factors which also have a significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions are sociodemographic, environmental, and economic variables (Liñán et al., 2011), situational and social-cultural factors (Elfving et al., 2017), "seeking opportunities, valuing entrepreneurial traits, capability beliefs, taking responsibility and risk aversion" (Stephan et al., 2009).

Based upon the above-discussed research studies, the first research gap was identified regarding mixed impressions of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intentions. Second, a comprehensive model predicts entrepreneurial intention with a mediating effect of entrepreneurial education towards entrepreneurship on the specific group of students. Based on the above-stated research gaps, the research aims to identify and analyse the entrepreneurial intention and mediating role of universities towards entrepreneurship. Hence, the following hypothesis has been formulated.

H1 Students' attitudes about entrepreneurship significantly influence their intentions toward entrepreneurship.

H2 Subjective norms significantly influence students' intentions about entrepreneurship.

H3 Self-efficacy exerts a significant effect on students' desire for entrepreneurship.

H4 Entrepreneurial education significantly improves the association between student's attitudes and entrepreneurship intentions.

H5 Entrepreneurial education significantly improves the association between subjective norms and entrepreneurship intentions.

H6 Entrepreneurial education significantly improves the association between self-efficacy and entrepreneurship intentions.

3. Research Design

The study design for the research is a cross-sectional study. Data has been collected with the help of online structured questionnaires. The questionnaire design is based on Entrepreneurial Intentions Questionnaire (EIQ) developed by Liñán and Chen (2009). Another reference has been taken from Shah et al. (2022) to make the questionnaire more precise. Some items from the scale have been removed, and some new items have been included to complete the questionnaire more related to the study and objectives. The scale was categorised into five parts, namely students' "Demographic factors", "Entrepreneurship intentions (EI)", "Subjective Norm (SN)", "Self-efficacy (SE)", and "Attitude toward Entrepreneurship (ATE)".

Generally, universities offer entrepreneurship programs in many ways. Every university has a different approach to highlighting the importance of entrepreneurship. In the present questionnaire, the university offerings were clubbed into four different types of programs, i.e., 1) Specific workshops, Lectures, or seminars on Entrepreneurship, 2) Specific Training for Networking and coaching opportunities, 3) Entrepreneurship Advisory/guidance units, and 4) Specific academic course on Entrepreneurship.

The respondents for the research work were the students of graduate and postgraduate programs enrolled in Saudi Universities. The data was collected from the students during 2022-23. The targeted students in the survey were in the third year or fourth year of the graduate program and were selected based on the random sampling technique. All questionnaire was filled under the observation of the faculty members. The collected data has been classified into two categories of students, i.e., one group who have completed or attended any entrepreneurship program or support and the second those who have not attended any program in any form. The number of students who participated in the survey was 308, out of which 96 students did not attend any entrepreneurial program offered by the university; hence they were eliminated from the research. Thus, the total number of students who have taken the entrepreneurial educational program and were considered for the study was 208. Data analysis was conducted with SPSS statistics and Amos 26, using frequencies and binary logistic regression.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1 represents the demographic variables of a sample of males and females. The sample consists of 58.17% male and 41.82% female. Sample selected from Government Universities 78.36% and 21.63% from Private Universities. Similarly, the field of study accounted for 59.61% of management, 22.59% of engineering, and 17.78% of other streams of study. Students enrolled in the Bachelor program represent 82.21%, diploma 12.50%, and others represent 5.28% of the sample distribution.

Table 1. Distribution of the sample and Demographic characteristics (N=208)

Variables	Frequency	Result
Gender		
<i>Male</i>	121	58.17%
<i>Female</i>	87	41.82%
University Type		
<i>Government</i>	163	78.36%
<i>Private</i>	45	21.63%
Field of Study		
Management	124	59.61%
Engineering	47	22.59%
Other	37	17.78%
Program enrolled		
Bachelor	171	82.21%
Diploma	26	12.50%
Others	11	5.28%

Know Entrepreneur		
Attended Entrepreneurship Education program (in any four forms)	208	69.42%
Not Attended Entrepreneurship Education program (in all four forms)	96	31.57%

The main objective of this research is to find the influence of university entrepreneurship education programs on the entrepreneurial intention of the study. The number of participants who completed the survey questionnaire was 304; out of the total participants in this research, 69.42% were known to entrepreneurship through courses offered by the university or different entrepreneurial programs organised by the university to make them aware of the new start-ups.

Table 2 shows the internal consistency of items selected for this research based on the item total Bivariate correlation matrix. The most significant aspect of students' attitude towards entrepreneurship is a career as an entrepreneur revealed a correlation of .649, which is significant at .01 levels. Attitude toward entrepreneurship among various options they would instead prefer to be an entrepreneur showed a correlation of .648 followed by being an entrepreneur would entail great satisfaction (.595), the opportunity and resources, I would like to start a firm (.558), and entrepreneur implies more advantages than disadvantages (.299). The participant's awareness of entrepreneurship through the courses offered and programs organised by the university attracted the attitude towards entrepreneurship.

The Vision 2030 of Saudi Arabia is highly favourable toward entrepreneurial activity and revealed a correlation of .597 which is significant at .01 levels of significance. Most people in Saudi Arabia consider it acceptable to start their own business (.570), followed by belief in the entrepreneur's role that contributes to the economy in Saudi Arabia (.569). Vision 2030 attracts the youth towards entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia.

Self-Efficacy is one of the important facets of entrepreneurship that attracts participants toward entrepreneurial intention. The relationship between the overall score of scale and one of the aspects of self-efficacy revealed a significantly high internal consistency (.676) that as an entrepreneur, they would have sufficient control over the business followed by participants are prepared to start a viable business showed a correlation of .616 significant at .01 level of significance as a result of university contribution towards entrepreneurship. The internal consistency score between the overall score of scale and the necessary practical details to start a firm revealed .515 significance at .01 levels of significance. The university accounted for developing entrepreneurship skills among the students to create their businesses to realise Vision 2030. The internal consistency between overall score and professional goal to start their own business revealed a significant relationship (.681) beyond .01 levels of significance. The participants are willing to take risks and start their businesses, showing an intention towards entrepreneurship, revealing an internal consistency score of .668 which is significant at .01 levels of significance, followed by the determination of participants to run their businesses to realise the Saudi Arabia Vision 2030.

Table 2. Internal consistency of selected items and Cronbach's Alpha based on standardised Items for sub-scales

Item Codes	Items of scale	Internal consistency of individual item of scale	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardised Items for sub-scales	Overall reliability of test determined by Cronbach's Alpha
ATE1	Being an entrepreneur implies more advantages than disadvantages to me	.299**	.836**	
ATE2	A career as an entrepreneur is attractive for me	.649**		
ATE3	If I had the opportunity and resources, I would like to start a firm	.558**		

ATE4	Being an entrepreneur would entail great satisfaction for me	.595**		.893
ATE5	Among various options, I would rather be an entrepreneur	.648**		
SNR1	My family members believe that I should pursue a career as an entrepreneur	.530**		
SNR2	My mentors at the university believe that I should pursue a career as an entrepreneur	.535**		
SNR3	Most people in my country consider it acceptable to start their own business	.570**		
SNR4	The Vision 2030 of Saudi Arabia is highly favourable toward entrepreneurial activity	.597**	.845**	
SNR5	The entrepreneur's role in the economy is generally valued in Saudi Arabia	.569**		
SE1	To start a business and keep it working would be easy for me	.485**		
SE2	I am prepared to start a viable business	.616**		
SE3	As an entrepreneur, I would have sufficient control over my business	.676**		
SE4	I know the necessary practical details to start a firm	.515**	.835**	
SE5	If I tried to start a firm, I would have a high probability of succeeding	.588**		
ITE1	I am ready to do anything to start my own business	.668**		
ITE2	My professional goal is to start my own business	.681**		
ITE3	I am determined and will make every effort to start and run my firm	.626**		
ITE4	I intend to start a business within five years of graduation	.564**	.879**	
ITE5	I have chosen entrepreneurship as a career option	.565**		

Source: Shah et al. (2022)

Results revealed in Table 2 showed the items of scale had been standardised. In the second step, Cronbach's Alpha based on standardised items for sub-scales as attitude toward entrepreneurship and total score found .836 significant at .01 levels of significance determines the reliability of sub-scale. Similarly, Cronbach's Alpha between total score and subjective norms (.845), Self-efficacy (.835), and Intentions toward entrepreneurship (.879) are highly significant that determine the reliability of sub-scales. Finally, the overall reliability of the test has been determined by Cronbach's Alpha .893. The test is reliable for measuring entrepreneurial intention.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlations (N=208)

Factors	Mean	Sd.	ATE TOTAL	SNR TOTAL	SE TOTAL	ITE TOTAL
ATE TOTAL	20.4712	3.59672	1			
SNR TOTAL	18.9279	3.92312	.537**	1		
SE TOTAL	17.4135	3.90370	.521**	.598**	1	
ITE TOTAL	19.2548	4.51166	.572**	.484**	.601**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment correlation between subscales and Intentions toward the entrepreneurship scale. The mean and sd. of attitude toward entrepreneurship were found 20.47 and 3.59. In contrast, for Subjective norms, it appeared at 18.92 and 3.92, and the correlation between attitudes towards entrepreneurship and subjective norms was calculated at .537, which is significant at .01 levels of significance. The mean and sd. on self-efficacy were observed at 17.41 and 3.90. In contrast, the mean and sd. of intention towards entrepreneurship appeared at 19.25 and 4.51 with a correlation of .601 significant at .01 levels of significance. The scores were found normally distributed for all sub-scales of the test. Based on this analysis, a Model of Intention toward Entrepreneurship has developed as an effect of university roles.

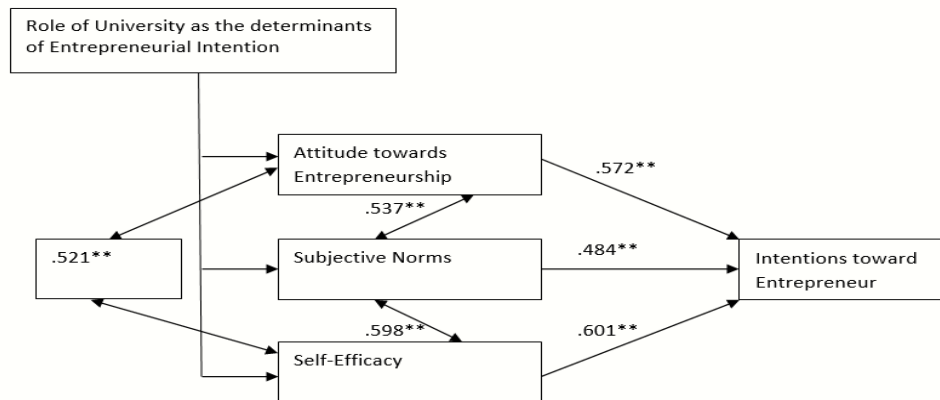


Figure 1. Intention towards Entrepreneurship Model

University played a significant role in entrepreneurship among the students—intention towards entrepreneurship results from an attitude towards entrepreneurship, subjective norms, and self-efficacy. The university is considered an external factor that accounted for the development of entrepreneurial intention among the students. The Saudi Universities offer specific academic courses on entrepreneurship, organise different workshops, lectures, and seminars, and provide particular entrepreneurship training programs for the students.

The proposed entrepreneurship model has shown the relationships between the factors and intention toward entrepreneurship. The interrelationship between attitude towards entrepreneurship and subjective norms found .537 is significant at .01 levels. The relationship between subjective norms and self-efficacy established a significant positive correlation of .598 ($P < .01$). The relationship between attitude towards entrepreneurship and self-efficacy revealed a significant positive correlation of .521 at .01 levels of significance. The relationship between attitude towards entrepreneurship and intention towards entrepreneur observed .572 significant at .01 influencing intention towards entrepreneurship. Subjective norms and intention towards entrepreneurship significantly correlated with .484 at .01 levels. Finally, self-efficacy and intention towards entrepreneurship revealed a significant positive correlation of .601 beyond .01 levels of significance. Attitude toward entrepreneurship, subjective norms, and self-efficacy contributed to developing intention towards entrepreneurship among students to create and run their businesses.

Table 4. Model summary of Regression analysis on Intention towards Entrepreneurship among University students in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (N=208)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Change Statistics		
				R Square Change	F Change	Sig. F Change
1. Self-Efficacy	.601 ^a	.362	.358	.362	116.649	.000
2. Self-Efficacy, Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship	.673 ^b	.453	.448	.092	34.468	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Efficacy						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Efficacy, Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship						

Table 4 presents the model summary of regression analysis indicating that self-efficacy appeared to be the most dominant predictor of intention toward entrepreneurship among Saudi Arabian students. In the first step coefficient of correlation between self-efficacy and intention towards entrepreneurship was found R=.601 regressed the intention towards entrepreneurship, and the coefficient of determination was observed R²= .362, which accounted for 36.2% variation in the dependent variable. A significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and intention towards entrepreneurship and observed self-efficacy emerged as the predictor of intention towards entrepreneurship among university students (Franke and Luthje, 2004; Dahalan, et al., 2015; Laspita and Sarri, 2019; Liu et al., 2019; Usman, 2019; Zovko, Dulcic, and Bilic, 2020; Alrubaishi, 2020). The result attributed to self-efficacy that encourages an individual intention towards entrepreneurship to incorporate a self-driven and self-monitored business unit. The result suggested that self-efficacy influenced entrepreneurial intention among university students. Entrepreneurship education and training play a significant role in developing entrepreneurship intentions (Wach, and Głodowska, 2019). Entrepreneurship education is a strong foundation and provides essential knowledge, skills, and motivation in new business setups (Lee et al., 2005). The F change (F=116.649, p<.001) on the intention towards entrepreneurship was significant. Thus, the proposed hypotheses H3 and H6 were accepted that self-efficacy influenced intention towards entrepreneurship. In the second step observed coefficient of correlation between self-efficacy, attitude towards entrepreneurship, and intention towards entrepreneurship found R= 0.673 regressed the intention towards entrepreneurship, and the coefficient of determination R²=0.453 accounted for 45.3% variation in intention towards entrepreneurship and attitude towards entrepreneurship alone accounted for 9.2% variation in intention towards entrepreneurship. Attitude towards entrepreneurship emerged second most dominant predictor influencing choice towards entrepreneurship among university students. Wang and Ortiz (2022) observed a significant and positive relationship between entrepreneurship learning, entrepreneurial attitude, entrepreneurship education, and management students' entrepreneurial intention. The value of F change (F=34.468) is significant beyond .001 levels of significance. The proposed hypothesis H1 and H4 is accepted.

Table 5. ANOVA of Multiple Regression analysis on Intention towards Entrepreneurship among University students in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (N=208)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1523.326	1	1523.326	116.649	.000 ^a
	Residual	2690.169	206	13.059		
	Total	4213.495	207			
2	Regression	1910.540	2	955.270	85.034	.000 ^b
	Residual	2302.955	205	11.234		
	Total	4213.495	207			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Efficacy						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Efficacy, Attitude towards Entrepreneurship						

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1523.326	1	1523.326	116.649	.000 ^a
	Residual	2690.169	206	13.059		
	Total	4213.495	207			
2	Regression	1910.540	2	955.270	85.034	.000 ^b
	Residual	2302.955	205	11.234		
	Total	4213.495	207			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Efficacy						
c. Dependent Variable: Intention towards Entrepreneurship						

It is evident from the result shown in Table 5 that the obtained F- value for intention towards entrepreneurship as the effect of self-efficacy was found significant (F = 116.649, p < .001). Similarly, the effect of Attitude towards Entrepreneurship and Self-Efficacy on Intention towards Entrepreneurship was observed significantly, and the F-value (F = 85.034, p > .001) was found significant. The results suggested that predictors contributed to Intention towards Entrepreneurship among university students. Thus, in the case of the above predictors, the proposed hypotheses were accepted.

Table 6. Coefficient of Regression on Intention towards Entrepreneurship among Students in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (N=208)

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.154	1.148		6.231	.000
	Self-Efficacy	.695	.064	.601	10.800	.000
2	(Constant)	1.759	1.406		1.251	.212
	Self-Efficacy	.481	.070	.416	6.875	.000
	Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship	.446	.076	.355	5.871	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Intention towards Entrepreneurship						

Table 6 represents the regression coefficient for the intention toward entrepreneurship of university students in Saudi Arabia. In the first model intention towards entrepreneurship made constant at B=7.154 unstandardised coefficient B=.695, standard error 0.064 for self-efficacy in the regression equation. Self-efficacy appeared as the most dominant predictor of intention toward entrepreneurship among students. The variations in sample scores are shown as standard errors in the regression equation. The standardised coefficient Beta for self-efficacy was found 0.601 explained all variables in standardised form with a significant t-value (t=10.80, p<.001) showing a linear relationship. In the second model, attitude toward entrepreneurship along with self-efficacy emerged as the predictor of intention towards entrepreneurship among university students in Saudi Arabia. In this model 1.759 made constant, unstandardised B= 0.481 with a standard error of 0.70 for self-efficacy, and unstandardised B=.446 with a standard error of 0.76 observed for attitude towards entrepreneurship. Standardised coefficient Beta calculated .355 with a significant t-value (t= 5.871<p .001) alone for attitude toward entrepreneurship among students showing the linear relationship and fit for the regression model. The standard error shows the variations in the sample scores. The results of the present research revealed that self-efficacy and attitude toward entrepreneurship influenced the entrepreneurial intention of Saudi students.

5. Conclusion and implications

The present study aimed to investigate the role of Saudi universities and their impact on the entrepreneurial intentions of Saudi students. The study focused on Saudi Arabian students enrolled in varied disciplines at different universities. The results significantly approve the proposed model of study. The descriptive analysis of the study results signifies that The Vision 2030 of Saudi Arabia is highly favourable toward entrepreneurship. Students accepted Saudi Arabia as an excellent place to start their own business and believed in the entrepreneur's role and contribution to the economy in Saudi Arabia. Hence, the results signify that Vision 2030 attracts youth toward entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia. The study results confirm that the students who have attended or participated in the entrepreneurial program significantly affect their self-efficacy and intention toward entrepreneurship. The above results are consistent with the studies like Liu et al. (2019), Usman (2019), Zovko, Dulcic, and Bilic (2020), Alrubaishi (2020), which supports the significant effect of the entrepreneurial program on students' self-efficacy and intention toward entrepreneurship. The study's results affirm Saudi universities' role in enhancing the students' self-efficacy and appeared as a major predictor of intention toward entrepreneurship (Valliere, 2015; Sondari, 2014).

Further, it is confirmed by the results that entrepreneurship education plays a significant role in establishing a remarkable association between Saudi students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intentions, which signifies similar results in the study conducted by Wach and Wojciechowski (2016) on a group of students in Poland. The results support the finding of Gerba (2012), Maresch et al. (2016) and confirm that the students who completed any entrepreneurship educational program have a more significant influence on entrepreneurship intentions. However, subjective norms appeared weak in the results and have no relationship with entrepreneurial intentions. It has been observed that Saudi universities strengthened the students' self-reliance and positive attitude toward entrepreneurship and reduced the impact of social norms on entrepreneurial intentions. Results are in support of the studies of Carey et al. (2010), Miranda et al. (2017) and Zovko et al. (2020), who also confirmed an insignificant relationship between social norms and entrepreneurial intentions. Overall, the study's results inferred that Saudi universities effectively enhance the entrepreneurial intentions among Saudi students and significantly the approach towards the objectives of Vision 2030.

The results of the study proposed several implications for academia and policymakers. First, the research under discussion emphasises the significance of entrepreneurship education and how it affects entrepreneurial intentions in connection to self-efficacy, societal norms, and entrepreneurial attitude. Second, for policymakers, the study will be a valuable tool for identifying the determinant of entrepreneurial intention. Further, the present study signifies the mediating role of universities in developing young entrepreneurial minds in Saudi context, which helps universities to promote their entrepreneurial programs.

6. Limitations and scope of future research

The small sample size and few factors utilised to predict entrepreneurial intentions are limitations of this study. Future studies can better predict students' entrepreneurial desires using a broader sample of Saudi universities. Additional empirical research is required to comprehend how entrepreneurship education can inspire students in other disciplines, such as corporate entrepreneurship or intrapreneurship. Furthermore, more investigation into the impact of digital academic entrepreneurship on students' entrepreneurial motivation and behaviour is necessary.

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