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PERCEIVED ACCESS TO FINANCE AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP INTENTIONS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN SINDH, PAKISTAN

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Abstract:

The purpose of this article is to investigate the role of perceived access to finance (PAF) and social entrepreneurship intentions (SEI) among university students in Sindh, Pakistan. The article is based on cross-sectional data, and eight universities were selected to encourage the students for taking part in a survey. Different techniques were applied a five-point Likert-like scale

usedto recognize their agreement and disagreement with the statement. Further, the technique of multiple regression analysis (MRA) is used to examine the proposed hypotheses for a study. The findings of this study found a significant and positive impact of attitudes towards behavior (ATB), subjective norms (SNs), perceived behavioral control (PBCO), and PAF on SEI. The outcome of the study validates the mediatory effect of TPB theory in a developing context. The direct positive relationship between PAF and SEI in the presence of TPB would further enrich the depth of the entrepreneurship literature. Our results have proven that determinants of TPB have a protagonist role in developing EI in general and SEI in particular. Furthermore, our study found a significant and positive impact of PAF on SEI. In our context, there is a significant role of PAF in developing SEI. Therefore, government and policymakers would be benefited from the findings of the study in considering and designing smooth policies for the provision of easy access to finance. Further, our results would help students to evoke SE and help to find out the solutions to be more self-assured when initiating a social business. Finally, a mediatory and direct link of the study would contribute to the literature of entrepreneurship, particularly for developing contexts.

1. Introduction:

Presently, the governmentconfronts various problems and finding out the solutions of such the issues despite being the failure to the solutions tosocial issues in this perspective. Social enterprises are playing an essential role in the provision of solutions to such issues in social lives (Ellis,2010). However, social enterprise is discussed as a practice of ventureaction which is essential and fruitful to the entire human society. Further, it focuses on the motives of social needs that business or government certainlydoes not respondor address to, social entrepreneurship (SE) assists to develop the inventive solutions for the instant social problems and activates notions and obligatory resources for the sustainableprogressofsociety (Alvord et al.,2004).SE works with the various factors of society with respect to socio-political and business perspectives to attain the solutions of the social constructive factors of society (Robinson, 2006). SEis nevertheless at the initial phase of the development in Pakistan, and the capacity prevails at large in the country.

Social enterprises related to the objectives of social issues and solutions of social and environmental problems so as to provide benefits to society. Hence, approximately, these enterprises apply 51% of yearly gross return for re-investment in the detection of socioenvironmental purposes. The most essential contribution of social business in socioeconomic perspectives assured through the authorization of the social enterprises in Enterprise Law 2014. Thus, legalization supports policies and encourages the sustainable development of social enterprises among the communities of Pakistan. Entrepreneurship grows quantitatively or qualitatively with respect to the entrepreneur's growth (Krueger, 2003). Entrepreneurship behavior can be indicated through the entrepreneurial intention (EI)(Ajzen&Fishbein,1980), andassisting in businessstrategies (Lee et al.,2011). For the plausible purpose; it is necessary to focus on the enterprise intentions and the constructive strategy of the social entrepreneurial objectives. Parting with this, social intentions are shaped through financial strategies (Evans & Leighton, 1989), and fiscal assistance also supports entrepreneurial intention. Moreover, the perceived financial access helps to grow the SE. Further, the study covers empirically the objectives of the effect of perceived financial access on SEI and the mediatory contribution of TPB theoryas a mediator in predicting SEI.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Derivation:

The vast field of relevantthe literature review is aimed to explain the terms including SE with the prevalent field literature for this study. More importantly, this section of empirical studies is linked with SEI.

SE is counted as the branch of entrepreneurship research (Steyaert, 2006). SE grows and develops from the research of entrepreneurship (Chell, 2007). According to Peredo and "SE is a new and better form sustainingsocialvalues". Robinson (2006) discusses the initiative fact of a social business as a strategy that covers the exposure of the particular social issue and a special solution to such an issue. Further to focus on social impacts, the sustainability of the business; and business models for the creation of social mission and development concerning tonongovernmentalorganizations (NGOs). Thus, the solution of social problems and the creation of social value is the main purpose of the social business(Martin&Osberg,2007; Zahra et al.,2008).

An intention is associated with mind that makes aware to individuals prior to act (Krueger, 2003). Intention to initiate an enterprise is a reasonable slot intended for the growth and operation of new commercial strategies (Bird, 1988). Thus, such an initiative step promotes creativity, independence, acceptance of risks, and development of fresh value in the existing enterprise. Elfocuses on the way an individual to initiate a future business. It discloses the mechanization and potential of the person to become familiar with the opportunities and create new values in a society. Further, entrepreneurial intention explicitly explains the person's longing and pledge to develop new business. In a similar vein, SEI and SE contextually related to a person's determination, desire, and belief to set up a new social enterprise. Among the Spanish university students, the finding of Ruiz-Rosa et al. (2020) suggests SEI reduces in times of worst socioeconomic crises and highly risk i.e., that instigated by COVID-19. The factors such as self-efficacy, perceived desirability, and perceived feasibility are found to be the significant predictors of EI among the business students of Pakistan (Soomro et al., 2020). Further, the EI is predicted through TP factors such as ATB, SNs, and PBCO through entrepreneurship education (Soomro & Shah, 2015; Shah & Soomro, 2017). Collectively, the TPB has a vital role in the development of EI in Pakistan and Thailand (Soomro et al., 2018).

According to Ko & Kim (2020), the locus of self-definition is the protagonist forecaster of SEI. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial education positively contribute to support young graduates identifying and nurturing an SEI. Further, perceived university support and entrepreneurial networks are observed to not correlate with SEI (Hassan, 2020). The empirical investigation of Urban & Ratsimanetrimanana (2019) highlights the moderating effect of the TPB on EI. Besides, education level and gender differences also affect such association. The entrepreneurial alertness suggestively enlightened SEI, although SE is appeared to be a positive mediating effect in developing such association (Urban, 2020).

As research study discusses that SE is atthe early stage of development. The various studies are related to SEI that is generally associated to the TPB (Ajzen, 1991) and entrepreneurial event as well as the development of the SE model (Shapero & Sokol, 1982; Mair & Noboa, 2006). Moreover, SEI is shaped through the impact of the interaction between individual and situational factors and focusing on the person's level in this perspective.

SEI develops the relationship of perceived feasibility (PF), perceived desirability

(PD) with SE (Mair&Noboa, 2006). However, perceived feasibility is impacted through perceived social support (PSS) and self-efficacy. Besides this, moral judgment and empathy as affected through the perceiveddesirability. According to the study by Ernst (2011) that SEI comprised of a sample size of 203, students of four different universities of Germany where he enlarged a classic TPB model with support of three components (ATB, SNs, and PBCO) with respect to a new model that affected the SEI. Further, he expanded the model with components:(perceived social entrepreneurial skills and experience and perceived social entrepreneurship information), social personality (innovativeness, risk-taking propensity, need for independence, need for achievement, the pro-social personality and pro-activeness such of social responsibility as socialcapital(networkandperceivedsupport, perceivedknowledgeofinstitutions). SE is concerned with the new visions along with social intentions (Tranet al., 2016).

In addition to this, the social cognitive career theory supports the formation of SEI on the basis of this model in the research. Thus, the model involves two antecedents including social entrepreneurial outcome expectations and socialentrepreneurial self-efficacy. Moreover, this study provides new avenues for research to design a model of EI on cognitive career theory. As Hockerts (2017) confirmed andmodifiedMair &Noboa's (2006) model through the exclusion of thereasonable variables (PF and PD) and investigating the impact of ethicalresponsibility, ESE,PSS,and empathyon SEI. Further, the study highlighted three different samples and showed the association between positive relationships with SEI. As the study by Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria (2017) investigated theassociation between self-efficacy, cognitive styles, and EI among undergraduate students. Thus, such the investigation tested the effect of cognitive styles on SEI. In addition to this, it is obligatory to understand and analyze the components which impact the rational process of the persons. Hence, the present study avails a new strategy based on cognitive theory to discover the development of SEI. However, Ajzen's (1991) TPB along with the models are generally applied in the field of EI investigation (Engle et al., 2010). TPB is grounded on the basis of the notion of intent to deal with a specific attitude as formed through the behavior of the individual towards the ability and behavior to perform such an attitude. In addition to this, intentions are the outcomes of attitudes that established through individual characteristics and experience (Ajzen, 1996). Moreover, in a study by Ajzen (1991), intentions focus on three factors to perform in TPB.

Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) highlight ATB is a "person's good or bad assessment toward performing or not to perform certain behavior"). Hence, it iscompulsory to make initiatives to divert an individual's personal behavior (Krueger & Brazeal,1994). The EI investigations highlight a substantial role of ATB towards EI (Erikson,1998; Koçoğlu& Hassan, 2013). Besides this, the attitude fluctuates from the features associated with the valuation nature by a specific intention (Armitage & Conner, 2001). SNs are continually stated to be the most contradictory component in the TPB. The theory explains that those who possess high-level SNs would have high levels of SEI. Subjective pointers play a substantial role contribution in estimating the intentions (Kolvereid & Isaksen, 2006). SNs mention to the insight of social pressure to implement or not that behavior as well as the family's and friends' pressure and other beloved or associated individuals (Ajzen, 1991).

In the entrepreneurship studies, PBCO is regarded as one of the sturdiestforecasters of intention (Liñán & Chen, 2009). More unambiguously, it is the personal belief of its capability to accomplish a definite assignment. Further, PBCO as the perceived acceptance,

ease, or difficulty of accomplishing the specific task (Ajzen, 2002). In this way, PBCO can be the forerunner for concretecontrol levels (Armitage & Conner, 2001). The SEI is predicted through TPB factors (Ahuja, 2019). As a result, numerous scholars have applied the TPB theory to predict the EI among the different students (Liñán & Chen, 2009; Soomro & Shah, 2015). However, in the Pakistani context, the investigation of TPB is still at a nascent stage particularly with SEI (Shah & Soomro, 2017; Soomro et al., 2020). In this way, to examine SEI through TPB, we proposed:

- H1.ATB is significantly and positively associated with SEI.
- H2.SNs are significantly and positively associated with SEI.
- H3. PBCO is significantly and positively associated with SEI.

Previous studies indicated that potential individuals haveslightaccesstofinancialcapitalfor initiating their own ventures. Therefore, there is the build the required least to fundsdue financialrestraints(Evans&Jovanovic,1989). However, someobserved shreds of evidence reflect that a lack of access to finance creates problems in the financial structure. Particularly, in developing economies, it is observed as a significant challenge for nurtured entrepreneurs (Kristiansen & Indarti, 2004).

In SE, individuals who possess financial capital are more probably to become entrepreneurs (Gentry &Hubbard, 2004). According to Evans & Leighton (1989), financial constraints are the protagonist issues in the field of entrepreneurship. Blanchflower & Oswald (1990) proposed, if the government willing to enhance entrepreneurship activities, then, it would be required toproduce more financial capital for latent entrepreneurs who had inadequatecapital. Kristiansen & Indarti (2004) claimed that the provision of PAF capital and active financial infrastructure is responsible for the upgradation and boost the business in developed economies.

In our investigation, the insight of access to finance was measured as an investigation of the individual's capability to discover, utilization, and access capital efficiently. In consequence, a high level of PAF can directly influence SEI. However, among the university students of Sindh, Pakistan, it is still not enough concentrated (Shah &Soomro, 2017, 2018; Soomro et al., 2020). Thus, we proposed:

H4. PAF increases SEI.

Besidesadirecteffect, the present study examines that PAF can influence SEI through the TPB's components. Inthebusinessstudents' context, an individual's PAF isanenergetic variable that can be fascinated by the three components: ATB, SNs, and PBCO. The mediating impact of the three components is likely due to the change of PAF overtime. Consequently, PAF indirectly influences SEI. Easy access to financial resources is the most significant obstacle raised by students with EI. Young entrepreneurs confront substantial obstacles in trying to get the essential financial resources due not to have a market sufficient assurance (Rusu & Roman, 2019). In the perception of Luc (2018), financial access significantly affects EI. The study also suggested the impact of ATB, SNs, and PBCO on SE. As a result, the direct link of PAF with SEI is examined (Luc, 2018; Rusu & Roman, 2019). However, the mediatory effect of TPB between PAF and SEI is not investigated yet particularly in the context of Pakistan. Henceforth, we proposed:

H5. PAF increases SEI through the determinants of the TPB as a mediator.

3. Methods:

3.1. Sampling and procedure

We acquired the response from business students of the different universities of Sindh, Province. We surveyed eight universities to encourage the students for taking part on voluntary basis. 210 responses were obtained through the final survey strategy. A five-point Likert-like scale was applied in order to notice their agreement and disagreement with the statement. The random technique was applied to give the chance to students equally. The technique of multiple regression analysis (MRA) is used to examine the proposed hypotheses for such a study. The regression is a reasonable strategy to inspectlatentconstructs and revealther elations between them (Field, 2006).

3.2. Variables of the study and measures

Entrepreneurial intentions can be measured through a well-recognized pattern and the development of a questionnaire with the intention (Liñán & Chen, 2009). It is generally abene fittous ingthe questions developed and validated by others since it has previously been sufficiently confirmed and found appropriately good. Ajzen (2002) and Liñán & Chen (2009) developed to measure ATB, SNs, and PBCO. Further, this study is framed to measure PAF scale, the authors consult 15 experts i.e., social entrepreneurs and lecturers.

3.3. Ethical protocols

The person's behavior is governed by ethics which is a principal mode of moral. Research ethics is regarded as doing what is legally and morally right in research. In this way, we correctly followed the ethical protocols of the respondents by taking care of numerous ethical concerns at diverse levels of this process to ensure the smoothness in every step of the research practice (Bickman & Rog, 2009). Initially, we made aware the respondents of the aim and objectives of the study. The then, they were fully guaranteed about the utilization of the information that has been taken from them. They were ensured about their privacy in terms of demographic data and their voluntary participation in the study. Before get filling the questionnaire, formal consent was obtained based on their willingness for taking part in the survey.

4. Results:

4.1. Demography:

In total, 210 respondents have participated in the study. The demography of the respondent shows that 68.57 % (n=144) were male, and 31.43% (n=66) were female students. With regard to the age of the respondents, a majority (80.95% or n=170) were in between 21-30 years of age. 15.71 % (n=33) had less than 21 years. We found 2.86% (n=06) in between 31-40 years of age. Finally, only 0.48% (n=01) was found between 41-50 years of age.

4.2. Hypotheses testing:

Three steps measure was applied to test the proposed hypotheses through SPSS version 26.0 for windows. In the first step, Pearson's correlation was used to observe the association among the independent and dependent variable. In the second step, MRA utilized to confirm the effect. In the last, the mediation effect (indirect effect) was assessed. In this ways, the scores of Pearson's correlation and regression a positive and significant effect of the factors of the TPB theory (ATB, SNs, and PBCO) on SEI show [(H1=r= 0.455**; β = 0.399**; P ≤ 0.01); (H2=r=0.369**; β = 0.473**; P ≤ 0.01); (H3=r=0.503**; β = 0.315**; P ≤ 0.01) (Table 1 and 2)]. Henceforth, H1, H2, and H3 were accepted. Further, we also found a significant effect of PAF on SEI (H4=r=0.309**; β = 0.460**; P ≤ 0.01) (Table 1 and 2). Thus, H4 was also supported. For this model (without mediation), the F value =42.762**; R²= 0.398; adjusted R²= 0.327 and Change in adjusted R²= 0.398 were noticed (Table 2).

Table 1: Pearson's correlation

	Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1	Social entrepreneurship intention		-		-	
2	Attitudes towards behavior	0.455**				
3	Subjective norms	0.369^{**}	0.271^{**}			
4	Perceived behavioral control	0.503**	0.348**	0.399*		
5	Perceived access to finance	0.309**	0.443**	0.451	0.219**	

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

Table 2: Multiple regression analysis

Independent variables	Dependent variable Social entrepreneurship intention Standardized β		
Attitudes towards behavior	0.399**		
Subjective norms Perceived behavioral control Perceived access to finance	0.473** 0.315** 0.460**		
F value R ² Adjusted R ² Change in adjusted R ²	42.762** 0.398 0.327 0.398		

Notes:*p>0.10; **p>0.05

Lastly, we confirmed the mediatory effect of TPB on SEI through two steps. In the first step, the significance beta (β) was noted to ensure the effect among predictors, mediator, and outcome variables with the support of the regression as suggested by Field (2006). In the last

^{*.} Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

step, the indirect effect of predictors was made assured. As a result, the PAF factor was significant with the outcome variable SEI. It reveals a strong significant effect of predictors on the outcome variable (Table 3). In other words, the PAF predicts SEI (Field, 2006). In the second step, the indirect effect of the PAF on the outcome variable (SEI) was investigated by mediating the variables of TPB. The outcomes show (Effect = 0.2530; Boot SE =0.0969; Boot LLCI =0.0972; Boot ULCI =0.3821) (Table 4). If the scores of the indirect effect (Boot ULCI) are not significant at the $P \le 0.01$, it means there is an indirect effect of predictors on the outcome (Field, 2006). In our study, the values of Boot ULCI confirmed the indirect effect of PAF on SEI (Table 4). As a result, H5 was also supported by the data.

Table 3: Outcome variable SEI

Attitudes towards behavior	Coefficient	SE	t	P
Subjective norms	0.4839	0.0353	4.1832	0.000
Perceived behavioral control	0.3763	0.0365	5.6272	0.000
Attitudes towards behavior	0.2452	0.0492	6.2932	0.000

Table 4: Indirect effect of PAF on SEI

	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
TPB variables	0.2530	0.0969	0.0972	0.3821

5. Conclusion:

In the domain of entrepreneurship, the factors of TPB and PAF are both robust analysts of the intention to start a venture. The present study proposed such an issue by designing the hypotheses for further contribution. The SEI is selected as the main dependent variable. We attempted to examine the mediatory role of TPB theory in between PAF and SEI and through the mediation of TPB. Our results reflect a positive and significant effect of TPB factors on SEI (H1, H2, and H3 accepted). These findings are supported by various scholars like (Liñán & Chen, 2009; Koçoğlu & Hassan, 2013; Luc, 2018) who supported the same results. The impact of TPB on SEI may exist due to the comfortable and highly feasible environment which may help in shaping business intentions.

Further, the results also had the same outcomes that of Liñán & Chen (2009), who claimed TPB is the strongest predictor of business intent. In the Pakistani context, the relationship of TPB factors with EI is accorded with (Soomro & Shah, 2015; Shah & Soomro, 2017) rather than SEI. Our findings have proven that determinants of TPB have a protagonist role in developing EI in general and SEI in particular. Further, our study found a significant and positive impact of PAF on SEI. Likewise, these findings are in line with various studies like (Kristiansen & Indarti, 2004; Luc, 2018) who underlined the same conclusions. In our context, students are willing to initiate their own business if they were provided with easy accessibility over finance. Through financial access, the students would feel the initiate of social enterprise is easy or challengingearlier the creation of intention in social business. In their perceptions, SE is significant and highly valued by society to solve

social problems. PAF, when starting a social business, would positively affect the desire of students to become social entrepreneurs. In the last, our findings revealed a mediatory role of TPB theory in developing the positive link between PAF and SEI. These links are supported by domain literature (Luch, 2018; Rusu & Roman, 2019) in different contexts. In our society, PAF is found to be a dynamic element that can be absorbed by the three determinants: ATB, SNs, and PBCO. The TPB factor is more responsible in connecting the factors PAF and SEI because along with PAF, personal control, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial behavior are obligatory factors to make the strong ties between PAF and SEI.

In conclusion, MRA results demonstrate a significant and positive impact of ATB, SNs, PBCO, and PAF on SEI. Moreover, TPB constructs (ATB, SNs, and PBCO) have a mediatory role in developing the association between PAF and SEI. The findings confirm and other empirical evidence in a developing country (Pakistan).

6.Implications, Limitations, and Future Research Avenues:

PAF is one of the barriers which shape EI and SEI (Evans & Leighton, 1989). In our context, there is a significant role of PAF in developing SEI. Therefore, government and policymakers would be benefited from the findings of the study in considering and designing the smooth policies for the provision of easy access to finance. Further, our results would help students to evoke SE and help to find out the solutions to be more self-assured when initiating a social business. Finally, mediatory and direct link of the study would contribute to the literature of entrepreneurship, particularly for developing contexts.

The study was conducted in a developing country, so it offers numerous implications. Entrepreneurship can only nurture if the quantity and quality of the entrepreneur's growing (Krueger, 2003). In such a situation, EI is the best sign for entrepreneurship behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) and value for business progressions (Lee et al., 2011). In this regard, the study would provide support in rational incentives and policies in understanding SEI and the developments of establishing the intention to become social entrepreneurs. The study is restricted to the survey that was conducted from university students in Sindh Province of Pakistan through a survey questionnaire from 2010 respondents, so the consequences of the analysis may not be representative of the overall scenario. Our assessment focused on the PAF and TPB factors to examine SEI. However, other constructs were not being taken into account, hence it may not entirely imitate all the facets influencing the SEI. Our study does not focuson other in-depth problems of SE, i.e., personality traits, leadership, social and human capital, and decision making.

In the future, more longitudinal studies are required to validate the outcomes in the different contexts further. More, the sample size is needed to generalize the results further. We take TPB theory (mediator) to examine the link between PAF and SEI. There are other entrepreneurship theories like the theory of reasoned action (TRA), entrepreneurial event theory (EET), and entrepreneurial attitude orientation scale, which must be applied in future studies.

Author's contributions:

All authors have equally contributed to the manuscript write up, the development of the questionnaire, data collection, and analysis.

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