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Attitude towards entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions among
Generation Z: Unleashing the roles of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and social norms in
Pakistani context

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BAM Track: Entrepreneurship

Abstract

Drawing on social cognitive career theory (SCCT), this study aims to examine how university students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education (ATEE) consists of affective, cognitive and behavioral components influences their entrepreneurial intentions. It further examines the role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) as a mediator and social norms as a moderator in the ATEE— entrepreneurial intentions and — ESE relationships respectively.

This paper integrates and utilizes the theoretical backing of SCCT, this study aims to address the following open research gaps. First, to answer various research calls on how the student's ATEE can be enhanced (e.g., Li and Wu, 2019; Shah and Soomro, 2017). This study follows Fenech *et al.* (2019) and proposes that the three components of ATEE namely; affective component (feelings and emotions), behavioral component (action, behavior, and willingness), and cognitive component (belief, thoughts, and knowledge) influence entrepreneurial intentions (e.g., Jena *et al.*, 2020; Pulka *et al.*, 2014; Rudhumbu *et al.*, 2016). Second, this study extends the work of Jena (2020) by introducing entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) as a mediating mechanism and social norms as a moderator in the proposed theoretical model of this study.

A sample of 428 university students from the new generational cohort entering workforce now (i.e., generation Z) from the four main cities of the province of Punjab, Pakistan was considered using an online administered questionnaire. The study analyzes data using SPSS v25 and AMOS v22 and presents descriptive statistics, reliability, validity analysis, and linear regression analysis. Furthermore, to test mediation and moderation hypotheses, Hayes' PROCESS macro v3.0 was used.

The results confirm that individuals' ATEE based on affective, cognitive and behavioral components have significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions. The findings also confirm the strong mediating effect of ESE between the components of ATEE and entrepreneurial intentions. Furthermore, the conditional effects results confirm that social norms strengthened

the positive relationships between an affective, behavioral and cognitive components of ATEE—ESE at three levels (low, medium, and high).

This study is the first of its nature to unlock the missing link between ATEE's components and entrepreneurial intentions using the theoretical foundations of SCCT. Furthermore, this study provides theoretical and practical implications specifically considering a developing country—Pakistan.

Keywords Attitude toward entrepreneurship education, Entrepreneurial intentions, Social cognitive career theory, Entrepreneurial self-efficacy, social norms