

# UNDERSTANDING ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN UTTARAKHAND: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

*The entrepreneurship as a profession is helping individuals to strengthen the positive impact by offering psychological, managerial and financial independence to entrepreneurs. Therefore, there is continuous growth and upsurge in understanding the role that psychological process of humans' plays in achievement of a goal/ decision making. In the context of entrepreneurial behavior, intention of individuals helps to demonstrate the future projections of human behavior which can predict the possible course of action. The Empirical study of this paper is an attempt to identify the factors which determine Personal attitude, Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioral Control related to entrepreneurial behaviors of University Students of Uttarakhand State by adapting Ajzen's TPB, Theory of Planned Behavior Model and to examine the influence of the above said three constructs on their entrepreneurial intention. A total of 210 respondents were selected which includes MBA, B.Tech and B.Pharma students. Data Analysis has been done through Cross Tabulation and Chi Square Test. The results showed that the three constructs of Ajzen, Personal Attitude, Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioral Control has significant relationships to detect entrepreneurial intention of University Students. Further, the result of the study contribute significantly by solving the emerging problems of the students in becoming an entrepreneur and help them to tap their resources by increasing motivation and participation in entrepreneurship and help policy makers to make sound and effective implications.*

**Keywords:** entrepreneurship, intention, behavior, youth entrepreneurs of Uttarakhand.

**JEL classification:** M1, M13

## Introduction:

The concept of Entrepreneurship was first established in the 1700s, and the meaning has evolved ever since. Today, entrepreneurship is regarded as one of the best economic development strategies to develop country's economic growth and sustain the country's competitiveness in facing the increasing trends of globalization (Schaper & Volery, 2004). It is a mechanism by which many people enter the society's economic and social mainstream, aiding culture formation, population integration and social mobility (Hisrich & Grant, 2007). An entrepreneur is one who is willing to bear risk for a new venture if there is a

significant probability of profit. Creation of new innovative ideas leads to positive outcomes in business which brings monetary gain and to remain consistent in the competitive market. The development of entrepreneurial activity is vital to stimulate the economic growth of any country. More specifically, entrepreneurship is a major engine driving many nations' economic growth, innovation and competitiveness (Scarborough & Zimmerer, 2003). Consistent entrepreneurial development increases the GDP of the country. Entrepreneurship helps to increase employment opportunity in all societies and that is why entrepreneurial development

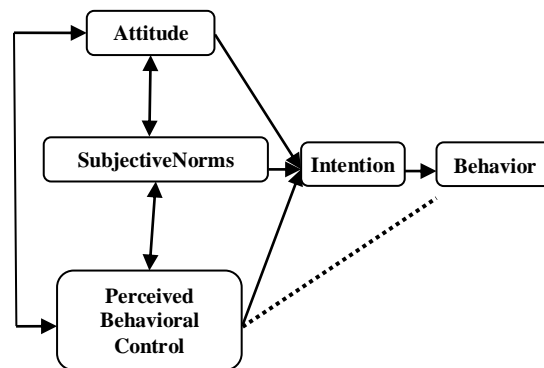
is vital for any nation. In the developing countries successful small business generates jobs, reduce poverty and provide income to the poor. Therefore the responsibility of Government is crucial to encourage entrepreneurship by implementing friendly policies and providing initiatives on entrepreneurial business. The process of entrepreneurial development starts from entrepreneurial intentions (Ngugi, Gakure, Waithaka & Kiwara, 2012). According to Bird (1988), intentionality has been defined as a state of mind directing a person’s attention, experience and action towards a specific goal. There is a growing body of literature arguing that intention plays a very relevant role in the decision to start a new firm (Linan & Chen, 2009). Study on influencing factors of individual’s entrepreneurial intention is vital. It is not widely known whether contextual founding conditions or personality traits drive the individual’s career decision towards self-employment (Luthje & Franke, 2003). Peng, Lu & Kang (2012) states that, the employment problem of university graduates is more and more serious. The unemployment of post-graduates is one of the most consequential issues that many of the developing countries are nowadays dealing with (Veysi, Veisi, Hashemi & Khoshbakht, 2015). Only a limited number of studies have been focused on the entrepreneurial intent among students (Luthje & Franke, 2003). To overcome this situation it is important to understand the exact factors which give barriers to positive entrepreneurial intention of university students. It is widely accepted that the educational system of universities has to provide an academic environment that may serve as a catalyst for high technology set ups (Franke & Luthje, 2004). According to GEM India report, Saraf & Banerjee, 2013 finds that India has the lowest rate of entrepreneurial intentions among all factor-driven (economic growth determined by primary factors of production: land and labor) countries. Therefore, to understand the factors affecting entrepreneurial intention on student’s perspective is an important field to research.

**Literature Review:**

Entrepreneurship is defined as “the process of creating new venture and new organization” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Through that process, some significant things will be created from nothing (Sciascia & Vita, 2004) by contributing time, money, risk and work effort to get intrinsic rewards like personal satisfaction or autonomy and extrinsic rewards like monetary rewards (Hisrich, Langan-Fox, & Grant, 2007). Within this decade, number of entrepreneurial research has increased significantly. Mazzarol, Volery, Doss & Thein, (1999) states that, entrepreneurial research is conducted mostly in two main directions: Focus on the entrepreneurs with

related factors like internal personal characteristics, specific traits and human capital factors. And Focus on the influence of exogenous factors like general environment, culture, political system and economic growth. Major researches have been done on both directions out of which internal personal characteristics known as intention was popularized by two set of theories; The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and Entrepreneurial Event Model (Shapero & Sokol, 1982). With these set of theories, Kruger’s model of Entrepreneurial intent (Kruger, Reilly & Carsurd, 2000) is also significant to understand the intent factor on entrepreneurs.

**Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behavior by Icek Ajzen**



The Theory of Planned Behavior describes entrepreneurial intent is based on three elements; persons attitude towards the behavior; subjective norms and the perceived behavioral control. According to (Ajzen, 1991) attitude towards the behavior gives importance on how the individual evaluates performing of behavior. The subjective norms can be explained as attitudes and beliefs held by others and the resulting pressures to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). And the perceived behavioral control defines the degree that the individual believes in their ability to execute the planned behavior and the perceived degree of control over the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The Entrepreneurial Event theory explains the entrepreneurial intent is dependent on three factors: perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, and propensity to act (Shapero & Sokol, 1982; Krueger 1993). Perceived desirability relates how attractive it is to an individual to become an entrepreneur and it is an indication of the individual’s propensity to own their own business (Shapero, 1982). Second factor perceived feasibility describes the individual’s perception of their chances of starting their own business (Shapero, 1982). The third factor propensity to act refers to an individual’s willingness to take action once they decide they want to become an entrepreneur (Shapero, 1982). Entrepreneurial intention among university students and impact of Individual, Family and Environment on entrepreneurial intention is a critical factor to

understand. According to Lee, Wong, Foo & Leung (2009) intentionality has been defined as a state of mind directing a person's attention, experience and action towards a pre determines of specific goal. Entrepreneurial behaviors are also intentional behaviors and intention is a predictor of entrepreneurial behaviors. When intention is high, an individual will venture out and initiate entrepreneurial behaviors. It has been proven by (Autio, Keeley, Klofsten, Parker, & Hay, 2001) that entrepreneurial intention to be the primary predictor of entrepreneurial behaviors.

On individual/ Psychological factors many researchers have explored the impact of individual's gender on their entrepreneurial intentions. (Boz & Ergeneli, 2013); Yusof, Sandhu & Kishore (2008) finds that males have stronger intentions than females. Some argue that low entrepreneurial intention for females because of their low level of self-efficacy. The females may avoid starting their own business because of lack of necessary capability (Malewicki & Leitch, 2010). A responsibility towards their family and look after their children creates barrier for women. Researches also focus on the effect of personality traits on individual's entrepreneurial intentions. Personality trait factor is considered as an important factor by many researchers. When comparing with other people, entrepreneurs show some personality traits like strong achievement orientation, willingness to take risk, strong individual control, endurance and intelligence (Shaver, 2005). Opposite of that other researchers like (Carter, Gartner, Shaver, & Gatewood, 2003) believes that personality traits cannot be taken as an effective explanation of individual's choice of starting business. Some researchers argue attitude of individual's towards entrepreneurship are related to their entrepreneurial behavior, which is mediated by intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein, *The Influence of Attitudes on Behavior*, 1977). Individual's attitude constitute the important influencing factors of their entrepreneurial intention (Ajzen, 1991). Individual's entrepreneurial intentions are also affected by their subjective norms which is influenced by perceived expectation level from those who are important to the person like family, relatives, friends, parents, colleagues and so forth to their particular behaviors and individual's obedience to these expectations (Krueger, 1993). Many researchers try to understand the relationship between the self-efficacy of individual's entrepreneurship and their entrepreneurial intention. Krueger & Brazeal (1994) explained that individual's judgment on feasibility of starting a business comes from the judgment of their self-efficacy of implementing and planning of their entrepreneurial behavior. (Collins, Hanges, & Locke, 2004) argues that adult's entrepreneurial intentions can be predicted by the entrepreneurial competence in their childhood. Sirivanh, Chaikew & Sateeraroj

(2013) studies on individual's entrepreneurial competences and their impact on entrepreneurial intentions from different perspective. Schmitt-Rodermund (2004) states that student's entrepreneurial competencies refer to their leadership, curiosity and entrepreneurial skills which are influenced by personality traits and family education. On the context of family background factor, impact of family towards entrepreneurial intention differs from researcher to researcher. The main factors that influence the entrepreneurial intention from family background are role molding perspectives and parents play an important role in children's entrepreneurial career. Whereas some researchers do not think that parents behavior would impact children's entrepreneurial intentions (Gordon & Davidsson, 2013).

Environmental factors also influence the entrepreneurial intention process. Social environmental factors like government support and legal rules are an important factor affecting individual's entrepreneurship (Mueller & Dato-On, 2008). Researchers like Teixeira & Forte (2009) indicates that both supporting and hindering factors prevailing in social environmental factors.

Peng, Lu & Kang (2012) concludes that both supporting policies and entrepreneurial environment of society plays significant positive impact on student's entrepreneurial attitude, subjective norm and entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which produce significant positive impact on individual's entrepreneurial intentions. Lack of self-efficacy, confidence, family support, business skills and entrepreneurial educations are some of the barriers which negatively impact in entrepreneurial intention (Garba, Kabir, & Nalado, 2014). Krueger & Brazeal (1994) argued that entrepreneurial intention could also be influenced by background factors like personalities, values, confidence and environment (contextual factor). These contextual factors have stronger effect on entrepreneurial intentions compared to personality factor (Gartner, 1989). External factor in the form of perceived environmental support which play its role to increase entrepreneurial intention through perceived behavior control and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Susetyo & Lestari, 2014). Mainly there are three important contextual elements as external environment factors which lead to entrepreneurial intention; these are access to capital; social networking; and information availability (Muafi, Hartati & Gusaptono, 2010). (Davidsson & Honig, 2003); Linan (2007) argues that social values and beliefs regarding entrepreneurship will affect the motivational antecedents of intention. It means that when the individual's closer or broader environment is highly supportive of the entrepreneurial activity it is expected that the individual will feel keener towards his/ her career option.

Entrepreneurial development programs conducted by universities plays significant role on entrepreneurial

intention. (Abbas, 2013) finds that among the three determinants of Theory of Planned Behavior, perceived behavioral control plays important role. It means students will possess higher entrepreneurial intention when they see business is an interesting career (Abbas, 2013). On university perspective, entrepreneurial intention can be generated through different techniques and tools. Introduction of entrepreneurship education in university as well as in engineering and technical institutions, experienced business people with proven track records should be recruited for mentorship programs (Saraf & Banerjee, 2013). Academic context is an important part of the student's environment as universities are in a position to shape and encourage entrepreneurial intentions (Franke & Luthje, 2004). Activities like initiations, development and support by universities triggers the intentions of students to become entrepreneurs and encourage them towards more ambitious start up plans (Franke & Luthje, 2004). Truker & Selcuk (2009) found that if universities provide adequate knowledge and inspiration for entrepreneurship, the possibility of choosing an entrepreneurial career among young people might increases. Moi, Adeline & Dyana (2011) argued that if the university is positive towards their action to foster entrepreneurship will leads to a stronger willingness to start up own business in the future. On the other hand (Ewert & Baker, 2001) found that higher education differently prepares people humanistic and technical; and individual in different academic major fields who grasp different knowledge which may act as a mediate role for entrepreneurship abilities. In this context Singh (2014) also stated that entrepreneurship related courses and training are needed to increase the university student's entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention.

### Hypothesis:

There shall be three hypotheses to measure influencing Entrepreneurial Intention.

1.  $H_0$ : Personal Attitude towards Entrepreneurship has no significant relation with Entrepreneurial Intention.
2.  $H_0$ : Subjective Norms does not have any significant relationship with Entrepreneurial Intention.
3.  $H_0$ : Perceived Behavioral Control over the decision to start a new firm is not related to Entrepreneurial Intention.

### Data Analysis:

The hypothesis generated has been individually tested using various analytical tools through SPSS software.

### Research Methodology:

The study of this paper is based on descriptive research design. The population of this study is final year (full-time) students of Management (MBA & PGDBM), B.Pharm and B.Tech both public and

private Universities and Institutes studying in Uttarakhand region. A sample size of 210 participants was taken using Convenience Sampling technique very often used in entrepreneurship research and after filling up the questionnaires by the students a total of 180 samples are found suitable for the study.

Both primary and secondary data was collected in this study. Primary data was collected with the help of questionnaires which was administered on final year Management, B.Pharm and B.Tech students. The researcher collected the data from various institutes/universities both public and private located in Uttarakhand region. Secondary data was collected from journals, books, magazines, published and unpublished work etc.

Secondary data shall be collected from journals, books, magazines, published and unpublished work etc.

### Testing hypothesis H 1:

$H_0$ : Personal Attitude towards Entrepreneurship has no significant relation with Entrepreneurial Intention.

To test the above hypothesis, Chi-square test and Cross-tabulation has been applied.

The calculated value of Pearson chi-square is = 74.224<sup>a</sup> which is more than the critical value at 5 % level of significance with degree of freedom 36. Also the p value is much lower than .05. This shows that the hypothesis is rejected. It means that there is a significant relationship between personal attitude of the respondents and their entrepreneurial intention.

### Testing Hypothesis H 2:

$H_0$ : Subjective Norms does not have any significant relationship with Entrepreneurial Intention.

To test the above hypothesis, Chi-square test and Cross-tabulation has been applied.

The calculated value of Pearson chi-square is = 117.393<sup>a</sup> which is less than the critical value at 5 % level of significance with degree of freedom 36. Also the p value is much lower than .05. This shows that the hypothesis is rejected. It means that there is a significant relationship between Subjective norms of the respondents and their entrepreneurial intention.

### Testing Hypothesis H 3:

$H_0$ : Perceived Behavioral Control over the decision to start a new firm is not related to Entrepreneurial Intention.

To test the above hypothesis, Chi-square test and Cross-tabulation has been applied.

The value of Pearson chi-square is = 61.594<sup>a</sup> which is higher than the critical value at 5 % level of significance with degree of freedom 36. Also the p value is .005 which is lower than .05. This shows that the hypothesis is rejected. It means that there is a significant relationship between perceived

behavioral control of the respondents and their entrepreneurial intention. Therefore it is clear from the rejection of hypothesis that more control over the behavior will lead to more strong and favorable intentions towards the entrepreneurial behavior.

### Result and Discussion:

The final result after the analysis using Chi-square and other tests shows that the three constructs of Ajzen; Attitude towards the behavior, Subjective Norms and Perceived behavioral control are associated to understand the entrepreneurial intention of university students. Though the study of entrepreneurial intention of university students using TPB model is almost nil in Indian context, from the present study of this paper it is confirmed that the end result is successful to extract the entrepreneurial intention of university students of Uttarakhand region.

Our finding complements the study of (Linen and Chen, 2009) where they focused on the University students of Spain to understand entrepreneurial intention. One interesting point that comes out from the study is that, the second construct Subjective Norm of Indian Students are different from the university student of other country. The entrepreneurial environment in Indian context is somewhat not positive to encourage the university students to start up their own business. Parents doing jobs especially in Government sector, encourage their children to go for job rather than to become an entrepreneur. Another interesting factor that comes out from the study is that the intensity of MBA students to become an entrepreneur is much higher than B.Pharm and B.Tech students. The reason behind this is the impact of entrepreneurial subjects in the curriculum and exposure to business environment that are integral part of MBA course.

As pointed out by Ajzen that the more propensity of the attitude, family and dear one's support to become an entrepreneur and one's willingness to start up a business when combines and fuse together, the entrepreneurial intension is much higher. The same criteria were also seen in this study where the three constructs are perfectly suited to extract out the entrepreneurial intentions of university students. This research has given us a direction to further explore the impact of family, attitude and other cognitive behavior of university students and a new cross cultural study of university students between India and other developing country so that to understand the psychology of Students of Uttarakhand to create more inclination towards entrepreneurship for the betterment of the society.

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**Table 1: Cross Tabulation data of Attitude**

			Being an entrepreneur would give me great satisfaction.						Total	
			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Agree		Strongly Agree
If I had the opportunity and resources, I would love to start a business.	Strongly Disagree	Count	12	11	10	3	1	1	3	41
		% of Total	6.7%	6.2%	5.6%	1.7%	0.6%	0.6%	1.7%	23.0%
	Disagree	Count	6	17	4	4	7	3	5	46
		% of Total	3.4%	9.6%	2.2%	2.2%	3.9%	1.7%	2.8%	25.8%
	Somewhat Disagree	Count	7	10	4	4	2	1	3	31
		% of Total	3.9%	5.6%	2.2%	2.2%	1.1%	0.6%	1.7%	17.4%
	Undecided	Count	4	3	1	2	0	1	1	12
		% of Total	2.2%	1.7%	0.6%	1.1%	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%	6.7%
	Somewhat Agree	Count	6	4	4	2	3	1	0	20
		% of Total	3.4%	2.2%	2.2%	1.1%	1.7%	0.6%	0.0%	11.2%
	Agree	Count	2	5	4	1	1	3	0	16
		% of Total	1.1%	2.8%	2.2%	0.6%	0.6%	1.7%	0.0%	9.0%
	Strongly Agree	Count	3	6	3	0	0	0	0	12
		% of Total	1.7%	3.4%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%
Total		Count	40	56	30	16	14	10	12	178
		% of Total	22.5%	31.5%	16.9%	9.0%	7.9%	5.6%	6.7%	100.0%

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	74.224 <sup>a</sup>	36	.001
Likelihood Ratio	40.045	36	.295
Linear-by-Linear Association	.686	1	.408
N of Valid Cases	178		

Table 2: Cross tabulation data of Subjective norm

			My professional goal is to be an entrepreneur							Total
			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
My immediate family would approve of my decision to start a business	Strongly Disagree	Count	6	6	8	0	2	0	0	22
		% of Total	3.3%	3.3%	4.4%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	12.2%
	Disagree	Count	2	2	10	2	0	4	2	22
		% of Total	1.1%	1.1%	5.6%	1.1%	0.0%	2.2%	1.1%	12.2%
	Somewhat Disagree	Count	2	0	6	4	4	0	0	16
		% of Total	1.1%	0.0%	3.3%	2.2%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	8.9%
	Undecided	Count	2	6	4	4	2	0	8	26
		% of Total	1.1%	3.3%	2.2%	2.2%	1.1%	0.0%	4.4%	14.4%
	Somewhat Agree	Count	4	2	0	6	2	8	2	24
		% of Total	2.2%	1.1%	0.0%	3.3%	1.1%	4.4%	1.1%	13.3%
	Agree	Count	18	6	10	6	10	2	0	52
		% of Total	10.0%	3.3%	5.6%	3.3%	5.6%	1.1%	0.0%	28.9%
	Strongly Agree	Count	6	6	0	4	2	0	0	18
		% of Total	3.3%	3.3%	0.0%	2.2%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>Count</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>180</b>
		<b>% of Total</b>	<b>22.2%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>21.1%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	117.393 <sup>a</sup>	36	.000
Likelihood Ratio	123.859	36	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.451	1	.502
N of Valid Cases	180		

Table 3: Cross Tabulation data of Perceive Behavioral control

			I am able to control the creation process of a new business.							Total
			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Starting a firm and keeping it viable would be easy for me.	Strongly Disagree	Count	10	12	6	4	4	0	0	36
		% of Total	5.6%	6.7%	3.3%	2.2%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%
	Disagree	Count	4	26	8	10	2	6	8	64
		% of Total	2.2%	14.4%	4.4%	5.6%	1.1%	3.3%	4.4%	35.6%
	Somewhat Disagree	Count	6	12	10	2	4	0	0	34
		% of Total	3.3%	6.7%	5.6%	1.1%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	18.9%
	Undecided	Count	2	12	4	6	2	0	0	26
		% of Total	1.1%	6.7%	2.2%	3.3%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	14.4%
	Somewhat Agree	Count	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
		% of Total	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
	Agree	Count	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	6
		% of Total	1.1%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%
	Strongly Agree	Count	4	2	2	0	2	0	0	10
		% of Total	2.2%	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%
<b>Total</b>		<b>Count</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>180</b>
		<b>% of Total</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>38.9%</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	61.594 <sup>a</sup>	36	.005
Likelihood Ratio	68.047	36	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.560	1	.059
N of Valid Cases	180		

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