



Research Article

Proactive personality as determinant of entrepreneurial intention: An empirical evidence from management students

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ABSTRACT

Present study is an attempt to examine the predictive role of proactive personality towards entrepreneurial intention as entrepreneurial intention is considered as an important predictor of entrepreneurial behavior of individuals. For this purpose, 352 business management students of final year enrolled in various public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan were surveyed. Close-ended questionnaire having Likert type questions about current study variables is used as data collection instrument. Scales for measuring current study variables were adopted from previously available literature. For getting empirical evidences, various statistical tools like scale reliability & validity, correlation and regression were employed. Results revealed that proactive personality is significantly positively associated with entrepreneurial intention and have a significant impact on entrepreneurial intention among university students.

Keywords: *Proactive Personality; Entrepreneurial Intention; Management Students*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Comprehending the factors that influence entrepreneurial intention is crucial, as it serves as a fundamental element in individuals' journey to becoming entrepreneurs (Mensah et al., 2021). Consequently, countries that aspire to encourage their younger generation to establish their own businesses should actively identify and understand the determinants of entrepreneurial intention. This knowledge will enable them to invest in and focus on those specific areas that can enhance entrepreneurial activities within the country (Costa et al., 2022). Thus, the aim of this study is to present a model that elucidates the determinants, particularly the proactive personality traits, associated with entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurship is the process of identifying opportunities to create new innovations with fresh ideas and improve individuals' lifestyles. It involves coordinating opportunities, resources, and people. Recognizing opportunities is the first step in the entrepreneurial journey and is undoubtedly an intentional process (Krueger et al., 2000).



The role of personality is crucial in the establishment and success of new ventures and businesses (Wang et al., 2016). Among the various determinants of entrepreneurial intention, proactive personality stands out as a significant factor. Proactive individuals demonstrate behaviors such as taking responsibility (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), being proactive in pursuing opportunities and possessing a relax job orientation according to Parker et al., (1997). Previous research has contended various factors predicting entrepreneurial intention and behavior just like personality traits by Henry et al. (2003), perceived feasibility by Krueger (1993), and education by Kolvereid (1996). Proactive personality falls also in the realm of personality traits.

In recent times, Pakistan has garnered attention worldwide, albeit for unfavorable reasons. As a result, the Pakistani economy has faced significant challenges, leading to social issues such as unemployment. However, despite these setbacks, there is optimism for recovery, and entrepreneurship could be a key factor. Entrepreneurs create job opportunities and contribute to a thriving economy, unlike individuals who solely rely on seeking employment and become a burden on the economy. Simultaneously, the government needs to recognize that entrepreneurs are essential for achieving desired rates of development. Therefore, it is imperative for the government to formulate policies that promote and support emerging entrepreneurs.

Researcher choose this topic keeping in mind the following research questions for present study to investigate:

RQ1. Does Proactive personality have any association with Entrepreneurial intention among university students?

RQ2. Does Proactive Personality have any impact on Entrepreneurial intention of university students?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION

Entrepreneurial intention pertains to an individual's desire to establish his or her own business and to pursue an entrepreneurial career in the future (Hmieleski & Corbett, 2006). Ajzen and Fishbein (1975), note that entrepreneurial intentions encompass intentional attitudes and actions towards initiating a new business or exploring opportunities within an existing organization. Kuratko et al. (2007), emphasize that entrepreneurial intention involves creating a practical and specific plan for launching a business, as well as a desire to own and initiate a private enterprise (Krueger et al., 2000). Considered as a prerequisite mindset for starting a new venture (Youn & Hyun, 2019), entrepreneurial intention is reflected in the personal efforts of entrepreneurs to undertake activities associated with launching a business, driven by individual interests and actions (Krueger et al., 2000). Furthermore, entrepreneurs' positive attitude and consideration towards establishing their own business in the future are significant indicators (Crant, 2000; Kim, 2012). Founding a startup is a natural outcome of entrepreneurial intention, as emphasized by Katz and Gartner (1988), who consider an individual's entrepreneurial intention as a crucial predictor

of entrepreneurship. Many studies have investigated the antecedents of entrepreneurial intention, examining the factors that influence it. Bird (1988), proposed two primary categories of factors that influence entrepreneurial intention: individual characteristics of entrepreneurs, including personality, abilities, and experience, and environmental factors. These individual-level factors are acquired through interactions with the environment and participation in entrepreneurship-related activities.

2.2. PROACTIVE PERSONALITY

The identification and development of opportunities are essential for effective utilization, which requires individuals to possess a proactive attitude. Bateman and Crant (1993) emphasized the importance of proactivity in recognizing and capitalizing on opportunities. A proactive personality is characterized by a persistent inclination to take action and influence one's surroundings. Bateman and Crant (1993) described individuals with high proactive personality as those who are not easily hindered by external factors and who have a significant impact on making changes in their environment. Such individuals possess the ability to identify opportunities and actively seek ways to improve their surroundings and their own lives. They take initiative in a variety of situations and persist until the necessary changes are made. Non-proactive people, on the other hand, frequently exhibit passive and reactive behavior and adapt to their environment rather than making changes.

A proactive personality, as defined by Bateman and Crant (1993), is a personality trait that relates with a person's propensity to take action to improve their situation. Additionally, they created a scale to gauge the proactive personality construct and tested its validity across several research, proving its convergent, discriminant, and predictive nature. Since then, the validity of the proactive personality concept has been established by researchers using the PPS (Liñán et al., 2011). Other typologies, like the five-factor model, fall short of fully capturing a specific trait that this construct captures.

The Proactive Personality Scale (PPS) and the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality showed a weak correlation in Crant and Bateman's study from 2000. Furthermore, previous research has shown that the PPS is a better predictor of performance than traditional personality tests (Crant, 1996). According to Prabhu et al. (2012), the propensity for action may be a key component in why people choose entrepreneurship as a career. Students that exhibit a high level of proactivity are more likely to seize an opportunity when they see it. Various scholars have established a positive correlation between students' entrepreneurial intentions and their proactive personality. For instance, Crant (1996), Zampetakis et al. (2008), and others have revealed that proactive personality accounts for variations in students' entrepreneurial intentions (Gupta & Bhawe, 2007).

2.3. PROACTIVE PERSONALITY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION

According to Ardichvili et al. (2003), an individual must recognize the existence of an opportunity and formulate a plan to seize it in order to benefit from it. Bateman and Crant (1999) emphasized the importance of proactivity in recognizing opportunities and defined it as taking action to create change, rather than simply anticipating it. They further

explained that proactivity involves not only adaptability and resilience but also taking steps to improve the business. Conversely, individuals who are not proactive tend to wait passively and miss out on opportunities.

Proactive behavior involves an active approach to one's career. It also includes one's attitude towards taking responsibility, creativity and having an elastic orientation (Parker, 2000). Proactivity has been found as an important element having positive effect on career choice and job performance, feedback seeking, career development, newcomer familiarity and leadership (Crant & Bateman, 2000). Furthermore, proactive behavior has also been examined at the collective level in shape of examining team work and socialization (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999).

Previous studies have indicated proactive personality as relatively stable personal attribute associated with proactive behavior. Proactive personality as defined by Bateman and Crant (1993), is an individual's dispositional factor that differentiates them based on the extent to which they respond to the opportunities for impacting their surroundings. They also developed proactive personality scale (PPS) to measure proactive personality construct. The PPS has been shown to possess concurrent, discriminant, and predictive validity in a variety of studies

Gartner (1988), raised doubts about the ability of researchers to identify a personal-level indicator of entrepreneurship and suggested that focusing solely on personal characteristics was insufficient to explain the phenomenon. While we agree that traits alone are not enough, we believe that qualities such as Proactive Personality (PP), in combination with other factors such as Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE), can help shed light on who is likely to become an entrepreneur. Not all individuals recognize opportunities in the same way, and even among those who do, not everyone takes action on them. Researchers argue that individuals having strong proactive personality attribute are more likely to seize opportunities once they perceive them than those with lower levels of proactivity. Theoretical evidence supports a strong association between proactive personality and entrepreneurial intention. Krueger and Carsrud (1993), encouraged researchers to consider "tendency to act" when examining why people become entrepreneurs, a concept that is similar in theory to PP. Proactive personality was found significantly linked with innovation in employment by Seibert et al. (2001), where employees are oriented towards generating and implementing new ideas. Crant (1996) in his study by taking 181 students contended that that proactive personality brings variation in entrepreneurial intention of students. Finally, Becherer and Maurer (1999), discovered that PP levels were highest among small business presidents who started their own businesses, followed by the owners of purchased business organizations, and then individuals who became businessmen by inheritance or supervised businesses but did not establish them. Based on these findings, researchers postulate that PP, combined with other factors, can aid in predicting who is likely to engage in entrepreneurship. The proposed model is presented in Fig. 1 below:

H₁: Proactive personality is significantly positively associated with entrepreneurial intention among university students.

H₂: Proactive personality have a significant impact on entrepreneurial intention among university students.

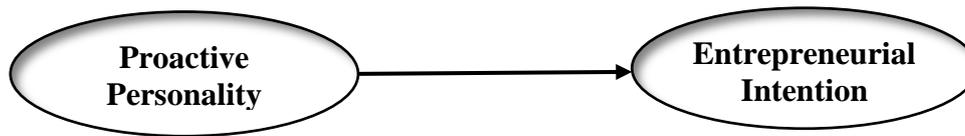


Fig. 1. Theoretical Framework

3. METHODS AND MATERIALS

Business students of final year enrolled in various public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan comprised the target population of present study. Due to homogeneous population, simple random sampling technique was employed to choose respondents from the target population. Questionnaire, having Likert type questions about current study variables was used as data collection instrument. Total 352 students were surveyed. Scales, measuring current study variables were adopted from previous literature. Proactive personality was measured through 17-items scale developed by Bateman and Crant (1993), whereas entrepreneurial intention was measured through scale developed by Liñán and Chen (2009), having total 6 items.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The collected data was then analyzed by applying various statistical tools like scale reliability & validity, correlation and regression, to get empirical evidences for current study.

4.1. SCALE RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The initial stage of data analysis is to check the reliability and validity of scale employed by the researcher in social research process. Scale reliability was checked through checking the Cronbach Alpha (α) value whereas scale validity was checked through exploratory factor analysis by checking the sample adequacy case Bartlett Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Tests. Results obtained are presented in Table 1 & 2 as below

Table 1. Reliability and Validly statistics of Proactive personality

Reliability and Validity Statistics (PP)			N=352	
Reliability coefficient (α)			.831	
KMO measures of sampling adequacy			.752	Matrix
Bartlett's test of Sphercity	Approx. Chi-Squa	1591.555	Items	Factor Loading
	df	1.36	PPQ1	.735
	Sig.	.000	PPQ2	.681
	Required	Computed	PPQ3	.795
KMO test	=or>=.7	.752	PPQ4	.678
Bartlett's test	=0r<.05	.000	PPQ5	.603
Factor Loading	=0r>.4		PPQ6	.580
			PPQ7	.670
			PPQ8	.686
			PPQ9	.684
			PPQ10	.591
			PPQ11	.754

Reliability and Validity Statistics (PP)		N=352
		PPQ12 .672
		PPQ13 .720
		PPQ14 .749
		PPQ15 .736
		PPQ16 .681
		PPQ17 .757

Table 2. Reliability and Validity Statistics of Entrepreneurial Intention

Reliability and Validity Statistics (EI)		N=352		
Reliability coefficient (α)		.880		
KMO measures of sampling adequacy		.839	Matrix	
Bartlett's test of Sphercity	Approx. Chi-Squa	1145.505	Items	Factor Loading
	df	15	EIQ1	.596
	Sig.	.000	EIQ2	.786
	Required	Computed	EIQ3	.855
KMO test	=or>=.7	.839	EIQ4	.850
Bartlett's test	=Or<.05	.000	EIQ5	.843
Factor Loading	=Or>.4		EIQ6	.805

4.2. CORRELATION ANALYSIS

For testing Hypothesis 1, correlation analysis was conducted. Empirical results obtained from the analysis are presented in table 3 as under

Table 3. Correlation Analysis Coefficients

Construct		Proactive Personality	Entrepreneurial Intention
Proactive Personality (PP)	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	
	N	352	
Entrepreneurial Intention (EI)	Pearson Correlation	.609**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	-
	N	352	352

** Correlation is significant at the level 0.01

Results in the above table 3 presents the results about correlation analysis of current study variables. Results revealed that proactive personality is significantly positively associated with entrepreneurial intention ($\beta=.609$, $p=.000$) among university students in the present study context. Hence the hypothesis one i.e. H_1 , developed for the current study is accepted.

4.3. REGRESSION ANALYSIS

For testing Hypothesis 2 developed for present study, linear regression analysis was conducted. Empirical results obtained from analysis are presented in table 4 below:

Table 4. Regression Analysis

Model Summary											
Model	R	R ²	Adjust. R ²	SEE	Change Statistics					F	Sig.
					R ² Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change		
1	.609	.371	.370	.60771	.371	206.846	1	350	.000	206.846	.000

Model		Coefficients				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.253	.258		.980	.328
	Proactive Personality	.952	.066	.609	14.382	.000

a. Predictor: Proactive Personality b. Criterion: Entrepreneurial Intention

The first portion of above table 4 illustrates the empirical results obtained from regression analysis about R, R², adjusted R², F statistics and overall model significance levels. R value represents the degree of association predictor with criterion construct of current study i.e. .609 which means that almost 60% change will occur in the value of criterion construct due to single unit variation in the value of predictor construct. Table 4 also shows R² value which indicates the collective variation occurs in the value of criterion construct due to change occur in the value of independent variable i.e. .371 which means total 37% change in dependent variable caused due to change in independent variable. The value of adjusted R² should be near to the value of R² which in the present case is also recorded satisfactory i.e. .370. The value of F shows the model fitness which crossed the minimum required value in present study analysis whereas the Sig. =.000 shows that the overall model calculating the impact of predictor on criterion variable is highly significant. Second portion of above table 4 presents the results about individual variation occurs in dependent variable due to independent variable. Here as in current study a single predicting variable i.e. proactive personality is used hence the same value of R is recorded as the variation in the value of entrepreneurial intention due to proactive personality which is .609 with p-value of .000. Hence hypothesis two i.e. H₂, developed for present study is also accepted.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The aim of present study was to empirically examine the predictive role of proactive personality towards entrepreneurial intention among university students. Two basic research questions were focused i.e. RQ-1 Does proactive personality has any association with entrepreneurial intention among university students? and RQ-2 Does proactive personality have any impact on entrepreneurial intention of university students?. For this purpose, 352 final year students of business administration program studied in different public sector higher educational institutions of KP, Pakistan, were surveyed. Scale reliability & validity, correlation and regression, statistical tools were employed to get empirical evidences for current study. Results revealed the significant positive association of proactive personality with entrepreneurial intention in the sample of present study context. Results also revealed that proactive personality has significant impact on entrepreneurial intention of university students. The findings of current study are consistent with previous results obtained by Miao (2015), who contended in his study a significant positive relationship of proactive personality with entrepreneurial intention and also found a significant cause –and–effect relationship between these two study variables.

On the bases of above findings, it is concluded that proactive personality is an important personality attribute which is necessary for shaping entrepreneurial intention of university students and divert their intention towards establishing their own particular ventures and

to put their share in the economic development of any country instead of to become a job seeker and to be a burden over the economy.

Author Contributions:

Tufail Nawaz conceptualized the idea of this research study and completed the introduction and discussion sections. Ahmad Ali contributed in data collection and methodology section. Rafid Ullah completed the literature review section. Further, the analysis section was completed by Muhammad Kamran Khan and Muhammad Hamayun. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Institutional Review Board Statement:

The ethical committee of the Department of Business Administration, Gomal University, Dera Ismail Khan, KPK reviewed and approved the questionnaires before distribution among the prospected respondents.

Informed Consent Statement:

Primary data was collected by approaching individuals at their workplace, with prior authorization obtained from the higher authorities of the chosen organizations.

Data Availability Statement:

Data will be available on request according to the policy of the journal.

Acknowledgments:

Not Applicable.

Conflicts of Interest:

The author affirms the absence of any conflict of interest.

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