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The Influence of Role Model & Learning Orientation on Students' Entrepreneurial Intentions: Does Creativity, Proactiveness & Opportunism Matter?

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ABSTRACT

Purpose - This research aims to explore the impact of learning orientation and role models on students' entrepreneurial intentions (SEIs) by uniquely combining these external environmental factors with students' personality traits (creativity, proactiveness, and opportunism) to understand the formation of SEIs in Pakistani context.

Study Design/Methodology/Approach - Data was collected through a questionnaire from university-level students enrolled in Undergraduate and master's programs. The Preacher and Hayes process model and structural equation modeling method were used to analyze the data. Correlation analysis and reliability were checked by SPSS version 23.0.

Findings- The findings suggest a positive influence of RM and LO on students' entrepreneurial intention, which indicates that the RM and LO contribute to entrepreneurship development, particularly in enhancing EI. Among the three personality characteristics creativity seems to be partially influenced by the existence of role models, but along with proactiveness makes strong antecedents of EI.

Originality/Novelty- This study contributes to existing literature by providing information to educational policymakers for successfully designing, assessing, and implementing entrepreneurship programs. In addition, this study contributes to the knowledge by investigating the factors that might boost or impede students' entrepreneurial intention among Pakistani students.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial intentions, personality traits, Learning orientation (LO), Role Model (RM)

1 | INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial intentions (EI) are considered to be the most significant predictors of entrepreneurial behaviour (Al-Qadasi et al., 2023). Scholars argue that understating the factors affecting the EIs helps in producing an entrepreneurship-friendly eco-system leading to a better socioeconomic environment, especially in developing and emerging economies (Al-Qadasi et al., 2023; Olarewaju et al., 2023). Research on EI has highlighted several micro, meso, and macro level antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions, shaping the

propensity of entrepreneurial behvaiour, however, EI research is concentrated in developed economies, and less is known about the precursors of entrepreneurial intentions in developing and emerging economies (Olarewaju et al., 2023). Extant scholarship (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015)highlights the attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioral controls as predictors of EI, however, entrepreneurship is an embedded and multifaceted phenomenon, and such factors alone do not sufficiently explain the formation of EI. Variations in the socio-institutional setup across the world necessitate the examination of both formal and informal contexts while investigating the formation of EIs (Sim et al., 2023).

Universities as one of the formal contexts, play a crucial role in breeding EI among students, however empirical research on the role of HEIs in forming the EI of the students remains inconclusive (Mohamed et al., 2023). Keeping in mind this important yet ambiguous context, scholars propose unveiling the role of universities in investigating the factors that shape the EIs of their students (Foss & Gibson, 2015; Nowiński & Haddoud, 2019). Shahid et al. (2017) and (Mustafa et al., 2016) suggest support from the university as one of the strongest determinants of student EI. Karimi et al. 2016; Oosterbeek et al. 2010 propose an insignificant relationship between entrepreneurship education and the EI of students. The current debate in academic scholarship about the impact of universities on the willingness of students to become an entrepreneur requires thorough investigation, as less is known about the EIs of students in emerging economies (Sampene et al., 2023).

Pakistan stands in 5th place with 2.83% of the world's total population, with more than half under the age of 30 (Qureshi & Mian, 2021). A huge chunk of the population is unemployed and 24.3 % lives below the poverty line. The labor force unemployment rate has increased simultaneously. Due to prevailing rates of unemployment most of the educated youth are either working part-time or are underemployed (ibid). In terms of entrepreneurial activity, Pakistan rests at 50th place in Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (Akulava et al., 2020). In recent years, attempts have been made to promote entrepreneurship among university students and youth in Pakistan (Stirzaker et al., 2021), however, the outcomes are still unimpressive. The total early entrepreneurial activity (TEA) rate in Pakistan (from 2019 – 2021) is 15.3%, which is still lower compared to other countries (Shahid & Ahsen, 2021).

Educational institutes worldwide are gradually introducing entrepreneurship education programs. Pakistan is not an exception; to continue promoting entrepreneurship as a lifestyle, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan emphasized that universities include entrepreneurship as a subject in the curriculum. Aslam et al. (2012) indicate that the policymakers' positive behaviour encouraged many universities to contribute to entrepreneurship development by launching business incubators and start-up initiatives. However, institutional initiatives can only work when the external environmental factors are favourable; these are mutually inclusive and complement each other. To date, little research has been carried out to examine how these initiatives, like entrepreneurship education programs (as conceptualized by Learning Orientation for the current research) have influenced the SEIs in Pakistan. Also, studies that investigate the critical external (Role Model in the current research) factors coupled with some personality traits (like creativity, proactiveness, and opportunism) affecting the SEIs in the Pakistani context are rare.

Entrepreneurship promotion programs and the external environment shaping the students' entrepreneurial intention are the central premise of this paper. However, entrepreneurial traits are equally important and need

to be examined. Along with various personality characteristics, 'proactiveness' has a substantial and favourable link with all entrepreneurial goals (lifestyle, high growth). In Pakistan's context, there is still a lack of research to highlight a holistic view of (personality, environmental factors, and policy initiatives) concerning students' entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, this study contributes by exploring the critical external environmental factors (conceptualized as role models in this study) and their impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions in the context of Pakistan by answering the following questions:

1.1 | Research Questions

- How do creativity, opportunism, and proactiveness influence students' EI?
- How do role models and learning orientation influence the relationship of creativity, opportunism, and proactiveness with students' entrepreneurial intention?

The paper is structured as follows, the next section discusses the theoretical background for the research and hypothesis development which is followed by methods and findings. The section concludes the paper with a discussion and recommendations.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 | Theoretical Background & Hypothesis Development

Bandura's Social Cogitative Learning Theory (SCLT) has been widely used as a framework to examine EI. SCT suggests learning being contextual and dynamic occurs in a social context with a dynamic interaction of individual, environment, and behavior (Nwosu et al., 2022). Demographic factors help in the assessment of the external environment as well as the decision to enact any behavior (Bandura, 1997). Contextual factors such as family background, socialization experiences, previous work experiences, and the existence of entrepreneurial role models play significant roles in shaping EIs (Gibson, 2004; Gohar et al., 2022; Otache et al., 2022).

Role Models (RMs) are defined as "individuals who provide an example of the kind of success that one may achieve, and often also provide a template of the behaviours that are needed to achieve success" (Lockwood et al., 2006, p. 36). While (Gibson, 2004) defined the entrepreneurial role model as "a cognitive construction based on the attributes of people in social roles an individual perceives to be similar to him or herself to some extent and desires to increase perceived similarity by emulating those attributes" (Adesola et al., 2019). SCT highlights that individuals' behaviours can be influenced by constant interaction with role models (Al Halbusi et al., 2022) where people are encouraged to learn behaviours that are valued in society (Nwosu et al., 2022). Shapero and Sokol (1982) also highlight the "desirability" and "feasibility" of role model behaviour as essential for shaping EIs and henceforth for the enactment of entrepreneurial behaviour.

Learning is conceptualized as a self-directed and observational process, however, Bandura is an advocate of observation-based learning, where the learning occurs through observation and imitation of the behaviours of the role model (Harinie et al., 2017). For observational learning to take place, "individuals must attend to a model, cognitively retain what the model did, be able to produce the modeled behavior, and be motivated to do so" (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020, p. 1). During the 'attentional process' individuals get attention towards a specific social behaviour (entrepreneurial role model in this case). The ability to pay attention depends not

only on the relevance and desirability of the behaviour in the wider context but also accessibility to whom is being observed. In the 'retention' phase the individual would try to retain and imitate the behaviour of the role model which is then reproduced in a particular context. The re-enactment of that behaviour depends on the motivational processes that are impacted by predictable optimistic antecedents for the execution of modeled relations (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Social cogitative learning theory serves to be a suitable framework for the current study, as it identifies RM as a figure who positively impacts individual abilities and competencies, and hence can lead the change.

2.2 | Entrepreneurial Intention

Scholarly work on EI is the cornerstone of entrepreneurship research (García-Lillo et al., 2023) various researchers have looked at EIs from diverse perspectives with a focus on EI to be the best predictors of entrepreneurial behavior (Batista-Canino et al., 2024). Entrepreneurial intentions are the intent to create new ventures, the desire to be your boss, and a clear plan to enact their behaviour over a specific period (Thompson, 2009). The process of entrepreneurship starts when individuals cultivate a sufficient intention for entrepreneurship (Koe, 2016). A firm intention should ultimately result in an endeavor to create a new venture.

2.3 | Role Model and Entrepreneurial Intention

EIs are thought to be positively shaped by the presence of the Role Model, however, existing research has some conflicting and inconclusive findings (Nowiński & Haddoud, 2019), about the relationship between exposure to entrepreneurial role models and improved entrepreneurial intention. The variation in the findings has been attributed to various environmental and cultural factors (Abbasianchavari & Moritz, 2021). Current research suggests that the presence of a role model can predict entrepreneurial intentions however, only when there are positive social attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Nowiński & Haddoud, 2019), suggesting an embedded nature of entrepreneurial intentions. Research suggests examining the embedded nature of EI which we think can be better explained through social cognitive learning theory. Thus, we propose,

H1: *Entrepreneurial Role model is positively related to students' entrepreneurial intentions.*

2.4 | Role Model and Creativity

Creativity is the ability to combine resources in a novel way and produce something of value (Anjum et al., 2020). The relationship between creativity and entrepreneurial intentions has been of interest to scholars for a long. Some studies have found a direct positive impact of creativity on entrepreneurial intentions (Murad et al., 2021). Furthermore, young individuals who think they are creative show higher EI, and role models seem to enhance their EI (Wu et al., 2021). We add to the conversation by examining the relationship between creativity and EI by considering the role of social context by focusing on entrepreneurial role models. Hence, we propose,

H2*: Role models have a significant impact on students' creativity.*

2.4 | Role Model and Proactiveness

The presence of role models assists individuals in understanding the significance of the planning process and necessary care while determining possible business opportunities. Active role models can be used as illustrations to develop the urge to take initiative and accelerate similar attitudes and abilities (Hossain & Asheq, 2020). So, it proposed that role models will inculcate proactive behaviour among the students.

***H3**: Role model has a significant impact on students' proactiveness.*

2.5 | Role Model and Opportunism

Kristanto and Pratama (2020) highlighted that personality type has a significant association with career choice goals and interests (intentions) and work-related performance. Along with other personality traits of creativity and proactiveness, entrepreneurial opportunism too, is an essential precursor of EI (Vega-Gómez et al., 2020). Anwar et al. (2021) conclude a positive relationship between entrepreneurial opportunism and entrepreneurial intentions. However, the research does not account for the role of any external variable while studying the process of EI formation and entrepreneurial opportunism (Stirzaker et al., 2021). We examine entrepreneurial opportunism and entrepreneurial intentions in the presence of a role model as we propose.

***H4**: Role model has a significant impact on students' opportunism.*

2.6 | Learning Orientation and Creativity

The entrepreneurial process is an ongoing learning process, however, the roads the entrepreneurs travel on, to be successful and the resources that they have are widely different. Role model provides individuals with a reference to the learning experience (Kong et al., 2020). LO reflects peoples' propensity to continuously update their knowledge, which depends on their cognitive abilities. Knowledge enhancement, skills, personal character, and entrepreneurial attitude could be developed through entrepreneurship education (Hussain & Norashidah, 2015). Learning orientation enhances problem-solving ability and helps with risk management because constantly updating knowledge helps boost creativity and innovative solutions (De Clercq et al., 2013). Hence, in proportion to the above discussion, the study intends to assess the influence of learning orientation on students' creativity.

***H5**: Learning orientation has a significant impact on students' creativity.*

2.7 | Learning Orientation and Proactiveness

A recent study showed a significantly positive impact of proactivity on entrepreneurial intentions (Hossain & Asheq, 2020). However, it is also noted that excessive proactivity can harm entrepreneurial intentions. Proactive individuals get frustrated when less help or anything is hindering their achievement. Hence, to better understand the relationship between entrepreneurial proactivity and entrepreneurial intentions, it is imperative to evaluate the relationship through external factors, i.e., learning orientation. This leads to the formation of our H6.

***H6**: LO has a significant impact on students' proactiveness.*

2.8 | Learning Orientation and Opportunism

An opportunistic individual can focus on catering to the opportunities. Such individuals having greater LO give value to the feedback they get from their environment, like observing others (role models) and using it for personal development (Payne et al., 2007). Furthermore, Cui et al. (2021) showed that learning orientation allows people to be open to both opportunities and difficulties to improve their competencies and perform their tasks more efficiently and effortlessly. Hence, in proportion to the above theoretical studies, the study intends to assess the influence of Learning Orientation on students' opportunism. Thus, our H7

***H7**: LO has a significant impact on students' opportunism.*

2.9 | Learning Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurship education improves students' EI (Cui et al., 2021). Entrepreneurship education enhances student's entrepreneurial intentions (Anjum et al., 2020). However, (Barba-Sánchez et al., 2022), introduced the environmental perspective into the relationship arguing that contextual factors play a pivotal role in the success of entrepreneurial initiatives. Hence, in proportion to the above discussion, the study intends to assess the influence of LO on students' entrepreneurial intentions, keeping in perspective the influence of role models. Thus,

***H8**: Learning orientation has a positive impact on student's entrepreneurial intention.*

2.8 | Creativity and Entrepreneurial Intention

Creative people are optimistic and confident in entrepreneurial activities. Most researchers suggest the positive influence of entrepreneurial creativity in shaping and explaining entrepreneurial intentions ((Jiatong et al., 2021; Murad et al., 2021). Studies mentioned above concluded that students with higher creativity levels reflect greater entrepreneurial intentions. Feldman and Bolino (2000) claimed that individuals with a higher creativity level are into self-employment. In the same way, creative intelligence may significantly influence an individual attitude toward starting a business (Kusumojanto et al., 2021).

H9: *Creativity has a significant impact on students' Entrepreneurial Intention.*

2.9 | Proactiveness and Entrepreneurial Intention

Proactive personality plays an essential role in the development of entrepreneurial intention 'the personality-based' approach to entrepreneurship has gradually exposed that during intention formation, various personality traits are involved (Hu et al., 2018). A proactive personality can recognize opportunities and act correctly. Huang et al. (2021) illustrate that proactive persons are more inspired by an individual who wants to change their circumstances rather than allowing themselves to be molded by their surroundings. They are involved in strategic scanning to avoid possible problems and persist until valuable change happens in the achievement of their goal. Thus, this leads to our following hypothesis:

***H10**: Proactiveness has a significant impact on Students' EI*

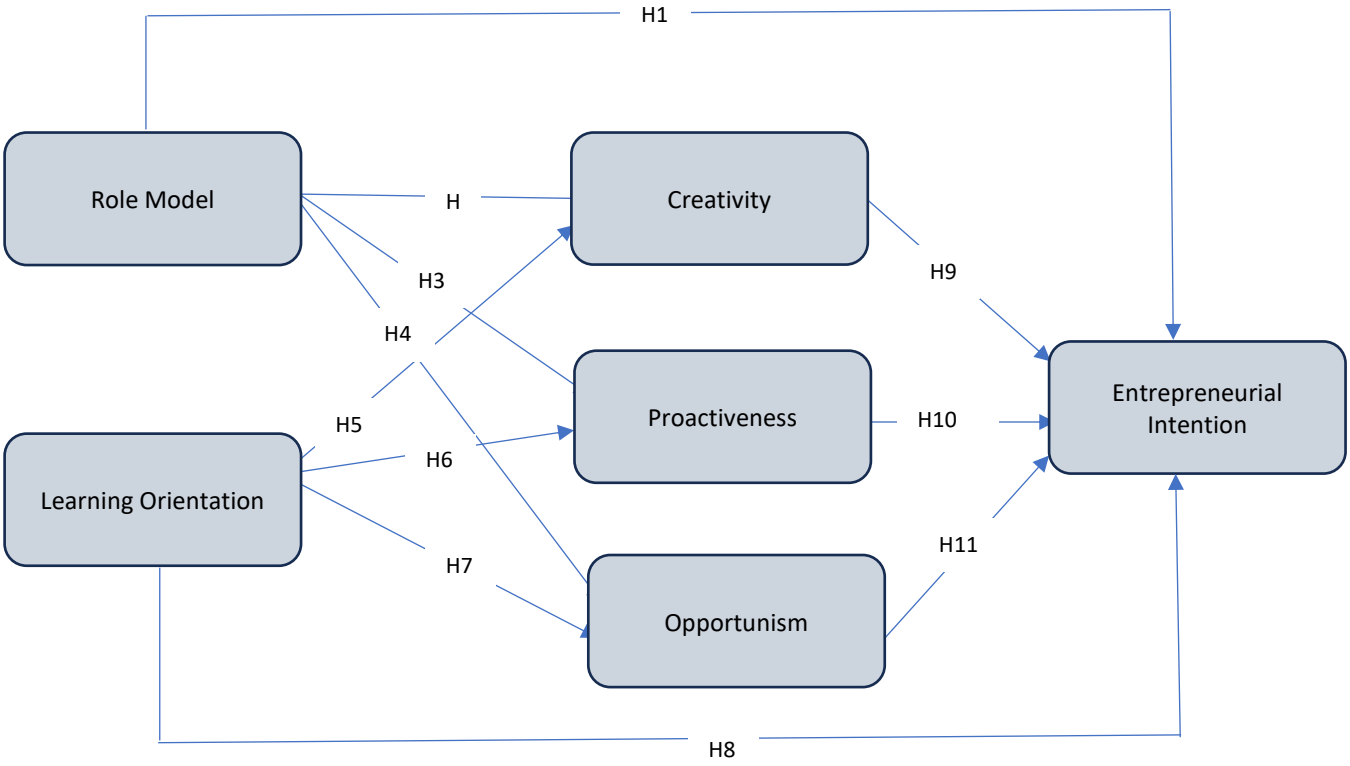
2.10 | Opportunism and Entrepreneurial Intention

Research shows a positive relationship between opportunism and entrepreneurial intentions (Filser et al., 2019). It highlights the determining role of opportunism for entrepreneurial intention. Several researchers have used mediation and moderation mechanisms along with different contextual dimensions, traits, and cognitive aspects in diverse chemistry with EI (Anwar et al., 2021) to understand the role of opportunism in shaping EI. However, none of the studies were found to measure the role of entrepreneurial opportunity identification on EI through mediating the role of opportunism. Therefore, recognizing the problems faced by developing countries in perceiving entrepreneurial capabilities and opportunities, we test them empirically. This leads to the last hypothesis:

***H11**: Opportunism has a significant impact on students' EI.*

Figure 2.1

Hypothesized Research Model



3 | METHODOLOGY & DESIGN

3.1 | Participants

To test the proposed hypotheses, we collected data from different universities in Pakistan. We selected students from various fields for greater variations in the sample of the study. This is important as students

interested in entrepreneurship belong to various disciplines. The data was collected from several first-semester students to the final-semester students of private and public universities in Pakistan.

3.2 | Sampling Strategy and Technique

A survey research method was used, and 300 questionnaires were distributed, with a return response of 219. The sample size was selected according to the guidelines from Kline (2005). It states that a sample of 100 or less is small, a sample between 100 and 200 is medium, and a sample above 200 is large enough to conclude results. The students were asked for their willingness to participate in this research before distributing questionnaires. The sample was selected through convenience sampling selected through a cross-sectional design.

3.3 | Variable Measurements

The instruments used were adopted from previously published research. Students' EI is measured with a 7-item scale developed by Liñán and Chen (2009), while the indicator of creativity is from Biraglia and Kadile (2017). The variable indicator (4-Likert scale) of proactiveness is from Prabhu et al. (2012), and opportunism is measured with a 4-Likert scale by Zhao et al. (2010). The learning orientation indicator variable (5 Likert scales) is adapted from (Olokundun et al., 2018) and the Role Model variable indicator (5 Likert scales) is from Souitaris et al. (2007). The scale used to measure the response is taken from the anchoring technique introduced by (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In the questionnaire, respondents' responses are ranked from “strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," according to their perceptions, denoted by scores 1-10.

3.4 | Control Variables

In this study, our empirical model contained several control variables. Our control variables included gender (0 = male; 1 = female), to accommodate for gender variations in entrepreneurial participation (Klyver et al., 2013), age (17-20 = 1, 21-24 = 2, 25-28 =3, 33-40=4) considering youth is more passionate to start a business (Sutanto et al., 2019). Moreover, as business education favors EI, we included a student's field of study as a dummy variable (0 = other; 1 = business administration).

4 | RESULTS and ANALYSIS

4.1 | Empirical Results

For the research model testing, data was analyzed using the SPSS 23 version (bootstrapping method) to exploit the variance of dependent variables (Karimi et al., 2016). Common method variance was checked, followed by KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The relationship among the variables was examined by correlation analysis. Two-fold data analysis was performed: exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. The constructed variable follows the criteria of (Sutanto et al., 2019) with the Cronbach alpha score.

The model is measured by using the bootstrapping method by Preacher and Hayes (2008). It is a well-accepted SME-based analysis (Qureshi & Mian, 2021). It explores the complex relationship between theoretical level and constructs variable (Karimi et al., 2016). This technique has been excessively used in testing and theory confirmation and is appropriate for examining whether a complex relationship exists (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). It allowed us to inspect what degree RM, LO, and personality traits predict EI.

Table 1

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	11.916	36.110	36.110	11.916	36.110	36.110	4.610	13.969	13.969
2	2.379	7.210	43.320	2.379	7.210	43.320	3.638	11.023	24.992
3	2.272	6.886	50.206	2.272	6.886	50.206	3.609	10.938	35.930
4	1.716	5.200	55.406	1.716	5.200	55.406	3.552	10.764	46.694
5	1.593	4.828	60.234	1.593	4.828	60.234	3.133	9.494	56.188
6	1.163	3.524	63.758	1.163	3.524	63.758	2.498	7.569	63.758
7	.999	3.026	66.784						
8	.918	2.783	69.567						
9	.851	2.578	72.145						
10	.747	2.265	74.410						
11	.707	2.142	76.551						
12	.665	2.015	78.567						
13	.603	1.826	80.393						
14	.583	1.766	82.158						
15	.534	1.619	83.777						
16	.492	1.489	85.267						
17	.467	1.414	86.681						
18	.450	1.365	88.046						
19	.408	1.236	89.282						
20	.394	1.194	90.475						
21	.367	1.114	91.589						
22	.343	1.040	92.629						
23	.315	.954	93.583						
24	.298	.902	94.485						
25	.288	.872	95.357						
26	.261	.791	96.148						
27	.240	.728	96.877						
28	.223	.675	97.552						
29	.198	.600	98.151						
30	.173	.524	98.676						
31	.167	.505	99.181						
32	.153	.463	99.643						
33	.118	.357	100.000						

4.2 | Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test

The KMO test represents the appropriateness of data for factor analysis. Mainly, it tests the sample size adequacy. An acceptable KMO value should be above 0.5, where a KMO of 0.90 is good enough for initial factor analysis (Shrestha & He, 2022). The value of KMO was found to be 0.902. This represents that the values of data sets were appropriate for proceeding to factor analysis. The results are illustrated in Table 2.

4.3 | Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

Bartlett's test of Sphericity tests the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. This test was conducted to check the strength of the relationship between the variables (Shrestha & He, 2022). The results of Bartlett's test of Sphericity are significant as they are 0.000. This indicates that the associated probability is less than 0.05. Hence, we can reject the null hypothesis, and the presented matrix is not an identity matrix.

Table 2

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.902
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4305.401
	Df	528
	Sig.	.000

4.4 | Confirmatory Factor Analysis

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was run to test & establish the reliability & discriminant validity of the construct. CFA helps fill the gap between theory & observations. It gives crucial information related to data fitting precisely to the model resulting from the theory (Eichhorn, 2014).

Table 3

Discriminant and Convergent Validity

Construct/Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	Factor Loadings
Entrepreneurial Intention (EI)	0.910	0.874	0.583	
Component				
EI1				0.756
EI2				0.723
EI3				0.726
EI4				0.770
EI5				0.781
Creativity (CE)	0.895	0.848	0.528	
Component				
CE1				0.815
CE2				0.845
CE3				0.834
CE4				0.833
CE5				0.727
CE6				0.714
Proactiveness (PR)	0.875	0.817	0.529	
Component				
PR1				0.835

PR2				0.701
PR3				0.711
PR4				0.806
PR5				0.842
PR6				0.843
PR7				0.745
Opportunism (OP)	0.876	0.815	0. 526	
Component				
OP1				0.994
OP2				0.857
OP3				0.835
OP4				0.846
OP5				0.842
Learning Orientation (LO)	**0.910**	**0.864**	**0.623**	
Component				
LO1				0.826
LO2				0.851
LO3				0.816
LO4				0.789
LO5				0.721
Role Model (RM)	0.894	0.913	0.681	
Component				
RM1				0.734
RM2				0.717
RM3				0.838
RM4				0.814
RM5				**0.868**

Table 4

Cronbach's Alpha, CR, AVE & Factor Loadings (N = 219)

Threshold:	
Cronbach's Alpha	≥ 0.6
Composite Reliability (CR)	≥ 0.70
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	≥ 0.5
Factor Loadings	≥ 0.7

Table 5

Discriminant Validity (N = 219)

Variables	Entrepreneurial Intention	Creativity	Proactiveness	Opportunism	Learning Orientation	Role Model
Entrepreneurial Intention	**0.763**					
Creativity	.401**	**0.706**				
Proactiveness	.477**	.606**	**0.659**			
Opportunism	.451**	.669**	.677**	**0.623**		
Learning Orientation	.384**	.404**	.510**	.533**	**0.789**	
Role Model	.459**	.617**	.543**	.616**	.537**	**0.655**

Discriminant validity suggests that measures should not be related. Discriminant validity is about the correlation of the various constructs in the model. The AVE's square root needs to be greater than the other constructs' coefficient value, as shown in Table 5 shows Discriminant Validity, which shows all AVE's square root values (0.763, 0.706, 0.659, 0.623, 0.789 & 0.655) are more significant than the other constructs' coefficient values. Discriminant Validity holds for all the variables in our data set in line with the researcher's suggestions (Huberty, 1984).

To determine discriminant validity, the construct measures should be unrelated. Discriminant Validity defines whether the constructs are unrelated or highly correlated in the model. The square root of AVE should be higher than the coefficient value of other constructs, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6

VIF values for all variables

Variables	VIF
Creativity	2.189
Proactiveness	2.125
Opportunism	2.559
Learning Orientation	1.613
Role Model	2.038

To determine whether there is collinearity in the structural model, we checked the variance inflation factor (VIF). The given structural model inner VIF values are between 1.613 & 2.559, which shows that overall values are below 5. When the VIF values are less than 5, no multicollinearity is shown in the structural model (Hair Jr et al., 2014). Table 6 shows VIF values to ensure no collinearity in our structural model. The model's inner VIF values are between 1.613 and 2.559, which means overall values are below 5. VIF values below the threshold suggest no collinearity in the structural model.

Table 7

Bootstrap Validation Outcomes (N = 219)

Hypothesis	Direction	Coefficient	t-statistics	p-value	Note
H1	RM ⟶ EI	0.4087	2.6232	0.009	Accepted
H2	RM ⟶ CE	0.6355	11.518	0.000	Accepted
H3	RM ⟶ PR	0.7308	9.664	0.000	Accepted
H4	RM ⟶ OP	0.7255	11.524	0.000	Accepted
H5	LO ⟶ CE	0.5703	6.455	0.000	Accepted
H6	LO ⟶ PR	0.9407	8.795	0.000	Accepted
H7	LO ⟶ OP	0.8639	9.271	0.000	Accepted
H8	LO ⟶ EI	0.4691	3.7174	0.003	Accepted
H9	CE ⟶ EI	0.3689	2.514	0.012	Accepted

H10	PR ⟶ EI	0.7943	4.596	0.000	Accepted
H11	OP ⟶ EI	0.5982	3.627	0.004	Accepted

5 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research explored the influence of role models and learning orientation on students' entrepreneurial intention through some personality traits including; creativity, opportunism, and proactiveness. The results show a positive influence of RM and LO on students' entrepreneurial intention, which indicates that RM and LO contribute to entrepreneurship development, particularly in enhancing EI (H1 and H8, respectively). Previous studies were unclear on how RM and LO interact to enhance EI. Our results settle the inconclusive research by (Gird & Bagraim, 2008) and confirm a positive relationship between exposure to entrepreneurial role models and improved entrepreneurial intentions. The research suggests that entrepreneurial exposure such as direct interaction with RM nurtures entrepreneurial competencies and abilities at the individual level through creativity, proactiveness, and opportunism.

Current research is like an integrated model that considers personality traits of creativity, opportunism, proactiveness, and external factors like entrepreneurial inspiration to understand the antecedents of EI. Within the presented framework, it was noticed that LO helps students enhance their entrepreneurial intentions (H8). Our findings corroborate Cui et al. (2021) and Farny et al. (2019) research to stress that training and education intensify students' entrepreneurial intentions. The research established that learning orientation must be fostered by any institution intending to develop a culture that boosts students' commitment and builds effective LO in their university environment. The exercise will also play a positive role in bringing new entrepreneurs to the economy.

The findings of H1, H2, H5, and H10 show that the relationship between creativity and EI is partially influenced by a role model and learning orientation. The outcomes of H9 and H10 also confirm that proactive and creative personalities are the main antecedents of EI among students. However, creativity and proactivity shape and determine the crucial intention to start one's venture only if the individual is efficacious and confident enough about the business.

The findings from the study allow practitioners and researchers to reconsider their vision of endorsing entrepreneurial behaviour among youth. Besides analyzes certain features, mainly those associated with the pedagogy implemented in universities and business schools.

5.1 | Implications

This study has significant theoretical and practical implications. The research focused on the creativity, proactive, and opportunistic personalities that are comparatively less explored in entrepreneurship, mainly in developing countries like Pakistan. In the current research, the critical contextual forces impacting SEIs were identified and explicated in detail. Based on that, several implications for universities (entrepreneurship educators) and policymakers at the government level (HEC) are suggested as follows:

5.2 | Implications for Universities

Youth unemployment and graduate unemployment are the significant issues faced by Pakistan (Hassan et al., 2020). Entrepreneurship has resulted in economic growth and the generation of employment in developed and developing countries (Karimi et al., 2016). Therefore, to take that path where entrepreneurship

can be considered as a solution to the problems, governments and universities need to know how best to develop students' entrepreneurial intentions. Results from this study have added to the importance of entrepreneurship education and suggest a comprehensive understanding to enhance the curricula within universities. For instance, various seminars, workshops, training courses, corporate concept competitions, and innovative competition for ideas will enable students to gain real exposure and the ability to initiate and manage new corporate policymakers. They also provide advisors or facilitators to finance viable business ideas for students. A role model is of significant importance; hence students must be exposed to the success stories. This interaction with the role models will shape their EI and allow them to know the complexities of entrepreneurship and be prepared to take it on.

5.3 | Implications for Practitioners

The study also provides some recommendations for policymakers for entrepreneurship development for the youth. It is recommended that when the government develops any policy for entrepreneurship growth, it should make sure that the policy continues by the next government. Also, the government should have passable supervision so that any entrepreneurship development program designed for youth is applied in true spirit. Also, there should be strategies to counter the problems, if any.

The findings highlight the importance of entrepreneurship-friendly regulations to help stimulate students' entrepreneurial intentions. Thus, it is proposed that any barriers in the entry stages, such as strict market regulations, higher transaction costs, bureaucratic hurdles, etc., should be removed. This research would greatly interest NGOs, government, practitioners, policymakers, and other organizations working in self-employment and entrepreneurship dimensions. It should assist them in developing an integrated strategy to promote entrepreneurship at business schools and universities. The aim is to increase entrepreneurial activities among young individuals by introducing new learning systems and teaching methods, facilitating industry interaction, and organizing interactive meetings with new, enthusiastic & and young entrepreneurs.

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