

# **Role of Procrastination in the Intention-Action Gap of Student Entrepreneurs**



By

Aimen Amir Khan

00000361982

Department of Human Resource Management

NUST Business School

National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

Islamabad, Pakistan

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# **Role of Procrastination in the Intention-Action Gap of Student Entrepreneurs**



By

Aimen Amir Khan

(Registration No: 00000361982)

A thesis submitted to the National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad,

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Supervisor: Dr. Ayesha Abrar

NUST Business School

National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

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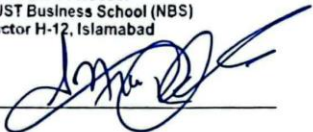
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Signature: 

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Ayesha Abrar

Date: Dr. AYESHA ABRAR  
Assistant Professor  
NUST Business School (NBS)  
Sector H-12, Islamabad

Signature (HOD): 

Date: 9/10/24

Signature (Dean/Principal): 

Date: 09/10/24

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Student Name: Aimen Amir Khan


Signature 

**Examination Committee:**

a. Internal Examiner I: Dr. Madiha Gohar  
Assistant Professor (NBS)

Signature 

b. Internal Examiner I: Dr. Lubaba Sadaf  
Assistant Professor (NBS)

Signature 

Supervisor Name: Dr. Ayesha Abrar

Signature 

Name of Dean/HoD: Dr. Naukhez Sarwar

Signature 

# National University of Sciences & Technology

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We hereby recommend that the dissertation prepared under our supervision by:  
(Student Name & Regn No.) Aimen Amir Khan (00000361982) Titled: "Role of  
procrastination in the intention-action gap of student entrepreneurs" be  
accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of MS I&E degree  
and awarded grade B+ (Initial):

### Examination Committee Members

1. Name: Dr. Madiha Gohar

Signature: Madiha Gohar

2. Name: Dr. Lubaba Sadaf

Signature: Lubaba Sadaf

Supervisor's name: Dr. Ayesha Abrar

Signature: Ayesha Abrar

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Head of Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### COUNTERSIGNED

Date: 09/10/24

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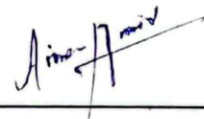
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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents, whose unwavering love, support, and encouragement have been my greatest source of strength throughout this journey. Their sacrifices and belief in me have made this achievement possible.

To my siblings, for their constant companionship, patience, and understanding, thank you for always being there and cheering me on.

This work is as much yours as it is mine.



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## **Abstract**

This study aims to explore the intention–behavior gap of student entrepreneurs who develop entrepreneurial intention in a venture creation course and decide to continue working on the business idea after completing the course. While many students decide to work on business concepts, they often struggle with taking further steps when the course ends. This suggests that the development of entrepreneurial intention in the course does not directly lead to entrepreneurial actions after the course. Hence, this paper examines the sources for the intention–action gap and behavioral responses of student entrepreneurs. This study applied a qualitative research method to examine how student entrepreneurs encounter challenges after the entrepreneurship program and how they respond to them. The sample consisted of graduates from three business schools in Pakistan who had expressed intentions to work on startup ideas after completing their studies. The findings revealed that students encountered substantial challenges after the program, which invoked their procrastinating behaviors. Based on the findings, this study developed a process model of the intention–behavior gap in student entrepreneurship. The process model provides a roadmap to follow the main findings, which consist of three main parts: (1) the antecedents of the intention–behavior gap; (2) procrastination as a behavioral reaction to emerging challenge (3) the outcomes of procrastination. This study contributes to the emerging student entrepreneurship literature by identifying obstacles for students who intend to continue developing a venture after attending venture creation courses, as well as elaborating on possible student responses to these barriers and their subsequent impact on their nascent ventures. Furthermore, the findings contribute to developing the understanding of the intention–behavior gap in entrepreneurship education at higher education institutions by highlighting challenges for students that emerge in the transition phase from course participants to autonomous entrepreneurial actors. Scholars have generally emphasized the vital role of entrepreneurship education in developing the entrepreneurial intentions of students as prospective entrepreneurs. However, researchers have only rarely examined how these intentions are translated into actions. Furthermore, the existing research on students' intention–behavior gap is limited to quantitative studies that demonstrate the existence of the gap empirically or apply theoretically derived moderators to their analysis. Consequently, the literature calls for more qualitative, explorative research approaches to understand what happens to students' entrepreneurial intentions once their entrepreneurship program is over.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial intentions, Entrepreneurial education, Intention-action, Procrastination.

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# 1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction

Entrepreneurship is defined as “The process of incremental wealth creation. This wealth creation process is taken upon by people who undertake foremost risks in terms of career dedication, time, and equity of delivering value for some product or service” (Zhang et al., 2018, p.67). Entrepreneur is “an individual who habitually forms and transforms the ideas to shape something of value and perceived opportunities” (Singh, Bala, & Sharma, 2023). The desire for innovation and execution of creative ideas and innovative solutions are the traits that entrepreneurship demands. It also involves personal skills which includes readiness to face uncertainly and risk in terms of money and career (Soomro & Shah, 2022)

Behind every venture created works the “Entrepreneurship intention” which is defined as “self-acknowledged conviction” by any individual that he/she is willing to initiate new business enterprise, and he/she continuously plans to accomplish this in future” (Rakib *et al.*, 2020, p.10). Entrepreneurial intention is widely examined by researchers in management, psychology, sociology as well as economics due to its significance to the growth of the economy of a country via job creation and wealth creation. Entrepreneurial intentions and its formation leading to action is a critical area of scholarly interest since it signifies the entrepreneurial behavior that act as prerequisite of entrepreneurial action that stimulate ventures (Rakib *et al.*, 2020).

The main argument suggests that having the intention to become an entrepreneur is a necessary condition for actually engaging in entrepreneurship. By observing someone's behaviors, it is possible to gain insights into their future actions. It is widely recognized that a person's intention to behave in a certain way is a crucial indicator of how they will eventually act. Krueger and other researchers have studied entrepreneurial intentions and have found that individuals usually do not impulsively start new ventures, but instead carefully consider the option well in advance (Krueger, Reilly & Carsrud, 2000; Scutjens & Stam, 2006). The motivation for entrepreneurship often comes from within individuals who have a desire to establish their own business.

While there are researchers who argue that situational and individual attributes have limited predictive power when it comes to new business formation (Suomalainen, 2017), it is clear that entrepreneurship often originates from an individual's personal vision and ability to articulate business ideas. As a result, it is not uncommon for individuals to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career path. Hence, entrepreneurship can be seen as a deliberate behavior that



individuals eventually pursue. This perspective highlights the importance of studying entrepreneurial intentions, which are widely recognized as strong indicators of planned behavior and can ultimately lead to the establishment of a new business (Engle *et al.*, 2010). Previous studies have highlighted various factors that can encourage individuals to embark on entrepreneurial projects (Sultana, 2020). Although intention is the prerequisite of action, however, entrepreneurial intentions do not always guarantee or equal to that of an actual venture activity (Liñán, 2004). There still remains a gap in identifying obstacles that impede entrepreneurial intentions from conversion into actions (Sultana, 2020).

While there may be several factors that may act as hindrance and prevent individuals from starting a venture, Entrepreneurial procrastination is one such tendency due to which individuals may delay or put off entrepreneurial activities (Ramsay *et al.*, 2017). Procrastination is widely explained as an 'inability to transform one's intentions into actions in a timely manner' (Dabić, 2021). Procrastination is usually seen as troubling, and its affect is evident throughout history and the world. Procrastination causes have yet to be classified and recognized and now is the right time to work on it as procrastination is on the rise (Davidsson, 2021).

Entrepreneurial procrastination, according to Afzal and Jami (2018), has a lot to do with fear of failure, task aversion, dependency, decision-making, and risk taking and hence might be one of the reasons for the intention-action gap. Hooda and Saini (2016) discovered that procrastination affects people differently depending on whether they are afraid of failure or fear of success. This association may indicate that people put off or delay making decisions and hence in view of this, the study of procrastination may give a good explanation for the intention-action gap.

Much research has been conducted to understand the prospects of new venture creation especially by the students who had studied Entrepreneurship and of other disciplines however the intention-action gap has attracted very limited scholarly attention (Soomro & Shah, 2022).

This research study focuses on why students fail to transform their entrepreneurial intentions into actual entrepreneurial actions. The focus remains on studying the role of procrastination in the intention-action gap concerning student entrepreneurship and the factors that deter the students from taking action to adopt self-employment (Soomro & Shah, 2022)

## **1.2 Research Aim**

The aim of this study is to understand the influence of procrastination on the intention-action gap in student entrepreneurship, with a focus on understanding why students struggle to transition from entrepreneurial intentions to tangible entrepreneurial activities.

## **1.3 Research Question**

***What is the role of procrastination in the intention-action gap of student entrepreneurship?***

## 1.4 Research Objectives

- To understand the barriers for students in translating intentions into actions.
- To understand the influence of procrastination on the intention-action gap in student entrepreneurship

## 1.5 Justification of Research

Procrastination, while common in academics, demands particular attention in the context of student entrepreneurs. The complex, iterative nature of launching a business—involving lengthy decision-making processes and concrete action planning—makes this group especially vulnerable to procrastination's negative effects. Current literature on everyday procrastination fails to adequately address the unique challenges faced by aspiring entrepreneurs, revealing a critical gap in our understanding (Lewrick, Omar, Raeside, & Sailer, 2011). This research aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the interplay between entrepreneurial intentions and procrastination during the crucial action planning phase. By examining this relationship, we can uncover how procrastination specifically hinders entrepreneurial progress, potentially leading to missed opportunities, increased risks, and reduced competitiveness. These insights are vital not only for supporting individual entrepreneurs but also for enhancing entrepreneurship education, incubator programs, and policies aimed at fostering innovation and economic growth.

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

The outcome of this research study will significantly contribute to develop a clearer understanding of the intention–action gap of students in entrepreneurship-based courses at master’s level education institutes of Pakistan. It will be done through highlighting challenges and obstacles for graduates that surface in the evolution phase from being enrolled in entrepreneurship course as participants to becoming independent entrepreneurial players. Furthermore, this thesis will result in eradicating the aspect of procrastination and will be helpful in raising student entrepreneurs’ self-confidence and levels of activity.

## 1.7 Structure of the Thesis

The research comprises of five chapters.

- **Chapter One:** This chapter comprises the Introduction and emphasizes on, research objectives, research questions and significance of the study.
- **Chapter Two:** This chapter mainly focuses on literature review and explaining the concepts.

- **Chapter Three:** In this chapter, the research methodology and data collection techniques are discussed.
- **Chapter Four:** This chapter contains data analysis, findings, and discussions.
- **Chapter Five:** This chapter deals with conclusion, limitations and future implications.

## 2 CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of key concepts and theories related to entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial intentions, and procrastination. It begins by exploring various definitions and models of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intentions, including the Entrepreneurial Event Model, Theory of Planned Behavior, Entrepreneurial Attitude Orientation Scale, and Entrepreneurship Potential Model. The chapter then delves into the concept of procrastination and its relationship with the intention-action gap in entrepreneurial contexts. Factors affecting procrastination, such as time pressure, fear of failure, and entrepreneurship education, are examined. Finally, the chapter introduces Action Phase Theory as a framework for understanding the process of translating entrepreneurial intentions into actions, highlighting the challenges that entrepreneurs, particularly student entrepreneurs, face in bridging the intention-action gap.

### 2.1 Entrepreneurship

According to (Zhang et al., 2018, p.63) entrepreneurship is “the practice of initiating new firms or stimulating developed firms, predominantly new companies commonly in response to identified opportunities”. With the adamant trend of Entrepreneurship rising the ladders in the recent history, we have witnessed the growth both in the Business Industry as well as Academics. Entrepreneurship is experiencing rise in Induction and promotion in universities, in the shape of shape of on-campus Business Incubation Centers as well as Centers for Entrepreneurship.

According to Shapero (1982) and Ajzen (1991), entrepreneurship is a behavior of an individual which mirrors the capacity and motivation of the individual to find an opportunity and pursue it, concerning to make novel economic success or values. Entrepreneurship has an active and passive constituent with tendency to encourage change oneself, but the ability of supporting and welcoming innovations brought by external forces by welcoming alteration, taking responsibilities for one’s actions, negative or positive, to complete what has been started, to acknowledge where to go for setting aims and get them, and have the guts to succeed (Kong, Zhao, & Tsai, 2020). Significant aspects of entrepreneurship can be summarized as acknowledging an individual’s weakness and strengths, exhibiting proactive attitude, creativity, and curiosity, understanding risk, responding to positive alteration and disposition to exhibit startups (Frederick, O’Connor, & Kuratko, 2016). Entrepreneurship needs time, including both considerable planning and a high degree of cognitive processing.

Entrepreneurship has thus been explored from the standpoint of intentions (Soomro & Shah, 2022), Intentions are encouraging considerations for an individual towards execution of an action. Intentional strengths are linked to a person's chance to execute that behavior.

### **2.1.1 Entrepreneurial Intentions**

Entrepreneurial Intention is defined as “the cognizant state of mind that leads action and points attention to entrepreneurial behaviors such as initiating a new business and develop into an entrepreneur” career (Soomro & Shah, 2022). Entrepreneurial intentions do not always guarantee or equal to that of an actual venture activity, but intention is the prerequisite of action (Muhammad Farrukh, 2019).

Intentions of individuals are credited as a component which predicts planned behavior even if the behavior is occasional, challenging to perceive and is embraced after a long-time lag. Formation of a business are the type of actions which are built on intentions and involve a planned behavior (Soomro & Shah, 2022).

Krueger et al. (2000) in his influential model integrated elements from both Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior and Shapero's Entrepreneurial Event model, proposing that perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, and propensity to act are key antecedents of EI. This model has been widely applied and validated across various contexts, offering a robust framework for understanding the formation of entrepreneurial intentions (Krueger, 2017). Fayolle and Gailly (2015) has emphasized the importance of pedagogical approaches in fostering entrepreneurial mindsets and intentions. Notably, Fayolle and Liñán (2014) proposed a research agenda that highlighted the need for more rigorous methodological approaches in EI studies, including the use of longitudinal designs and the consideration of contextual factors.

The formation of Entrepreneurial Intentions (EI) is influenced by a complex interplay of personal, social, and environmental factors, presenting a rich area for scholarly inquiry. Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior has been widely applied to understand EI, identifying personal attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as key antecedents (Liñán and Chen, 2009). However, the relative importance of these factors may vary across cultures and contexts, highlighting the need for nuanced, cross-cultural studies (Engle et al., 2010). Individual characteristics such as risk-taking propensity, need for achievement, and innovativeness have been shown to positively correlate with EI (Zhao et al., 2010), though recent research suggests that the relationship between personality traits and EI may be mediated by other cognitive factors (Karimi et al., 2016).

Education and prior exposure to entrepreneurship, either through personal experiences or role models, also play crucial roles in shaping intentions (Fayolle and Gailly, 2015). Interestingly, the influence of entrepreneurship education on EI is not uniformly positive, with some studies indicating that increased knowledge about the challenges of entrepreneurship may actually decrease intentions in some individuals (Oosterbeek et al., 2010). This paradox underscores the complexity of EI formation and the need for longitudinal studies to better understand these dynamics. The broader cultural and economic context cannot be overlooked, as societal attitudes towards entrepreneurship and prevailing economic conditions significantly effect EI formation (Shinnar et al., 2012). For instance, the concept of 'entrepreneurial ecosystems' has gained traction, emphasizing how regional factors such as access to capital, supportive policies, and networks of mentors can foster a conducive environment for EI development (Spigel, 2017).

Additionally, demographic factors such as gender and age have been found to moderate the relationship between these antecedents and EI (Maes et al., 2014), with recent research exploring intersectionality in entrepreneurship to provide a more nuanced understanding of how multiple identity factors interact to influence EI (Romero and Valdez, 2016). Understanding these multifaceted antecedents is crucial for developing effective strategies to foster entrepreneurship at both individual and policy levels, but it also reveals the need for more sophisticated methodological approaches, including mixed methods and longitudinal designs, to capture the dynamic and context-dependent nature of EI formation.

Several compelling empirical findings imply that entrepreneurship can be taught and positively carry about an encouraging effect on intentions (Muhammad Farrukh, 2019). Intentions are also perhaps the best upheld measures of entrepreneurship (Mwasalwiba, 2010). When conduct is purposeful, intentions-based models have helpful practical applications. A deeper knowledge of how intents are created and how founders' views, perceptions, and reasons condense into the desire to start a firm can assist consultants, advisers, and entrepreneurs themselves (Fayolle & Linan, 2014).

Previous research showcase variables such as perceived desirability and perceived feasibility to have a positive effect on the entrepreneurial intentions of individuals (Haesevoets et al., 2022). These entrepreneurial intentions can be affected by some attitudes such as opinions about a specific subject or object as well as internal or external environment.

The entrepreneurial intentions can be affected by some attitudes such as opinions about a specific subject or object as well as internal or external environment. From the last few decades,

there have been various models suggested which explain entrepreneurship from a psychological standpoint.

## **2.2 Entrepreneurial Intention Models:**

Understanding the dynamics behind entrepreneurial intentions is pivotal in fostering entrepreneurship and driving economic growth. Numerous theoretical frameworks have been proposed to shed light on the complex interplay of factors influencing individuals' intentions to embark on entrepreneurial ventures. Among these models, the Entrepreneurial Event Model, Theory of Planned Behavior, Entrepreneurial Attitude Orientation Scale, and Entrepreneurship Potential Model stand out as prominent frameworks that offer insights into the multifaceted nature of entrepreneurial intentions. This section presents a brief overview of these four models.

The purpose of reviewing these specific models is threefold: firstly, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical foundations underpinning entrepreneurial intentions research; secondly, to critically compare and contrast their approaches in explaining the formation of entrepreneurial intentions; and thirdly, to identify potential gaps or areas of integration that could inform future research and practical applications in entrepreneurship education and policy-making (Fayolle and Liñán, 2014; Krueger, 2017). By examining these diverse yet complementary frameworks, we aim to develop a more nuanced understanding of the cognitive, attitudinal, and contextual factors that shape an individual's decision to pursue entrepreneurship.

### **2.2.1 Entrepreneurial Event Model**

The first model was introduced by Shapero (1982) which is called Entrepreneurial Event Model. Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM) by Shapero and Sokol (1982), is a seminal framework in entrepreneurship research that elucidates the formation of entrepreneurial intentions. This model posits that the decision to initiate a new venture stems from perceived desirability and feasibility, coupled with an individual's propensity to act on opportunities, often triggered by life path changes or displacements (Krueger et al., 2000). According to this model the creation of business can be explained by studying the mutual action between initiatives, abilities, management, relative autonomy, and risk. This study states that the personal intention for starting of a new venture depends on three components: the perception of the desirability, feasibility, and the propensity to act. Later on, further research was carried out by a number of researchers (Krueger, 2000; Peterman, 2003; Audrey, 2002) and this model was tested empirically.

The EEM has been extensively applied in various research contexts, including predicting entrepreneurial intentions across diverse populations (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2014), examining the effect of entrepreneurship education (Peterman and Kennedy, 2003), conducting cross-cultural comparisons (Iakovleva et al., 2011), and investigating gender differences in entrepreneurial perceptions (Díaz-García and Jiménez-Moreno, 2010). It was found that individuals are inclined to participate in entrepreneurial endeavors when they identify opportunities that match their abilities and passions, along with a positive evaluation of the potential benefits and challenges linked to entrepreneurship. The result of a study reveals that the Entrepreneurial Event Model is a slightly superior intentional-based model (Krueger, 2000).

However, this model tends to overlook important individual differences and contextual influences. Despite its widespread use and contributions to the field, studies suggest that EEM insufficiently accounts for external environmental factors (Fayolle and Liñán, 2014) and fails to capture the dynamic nature of entrepreneurial intentions over time (Krueger, 2017). Moreover, the model's assumption of a direct link between displacement events and entrepreneurial intentions may oversimplify the complex decision-making process involved (Lerner et al., 2018). The broad constructs of perceived desirability and feasibility have led to inconsistencies in measurement across studies (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2014), while the 'propensity to act' component often remains underexplored in empirical research (Krueger, 2017). Furthermore, some studies have found that the EEM explains only a moderate amount of variance in entrepreneurial intentions, suggesting the influence of additional factors not captured by the model (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2014). These limitations underscore the need for more comprehensive and dynamic models in entrepreneurship research, capable of accounting for a broader array of factors influencing the entrepreneurial process.

### **2.2.2 Theory of Planned Behavior**

After the lapse of nine years Ajzen (1991) gave the theory of planned behavior based on the proposition that a certain amount of planning is required for any behavior and prediction can be made through the intention of adopting that behavior. Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), marked a significant advancement in understanding human decision-making processes. This theory emerged as a refinement of the earlier Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which Ajzen had developed with Fishbein in 1975. The TPB posits that behavior is not solely spontaneous but often involves a degree of planning, and that future actions can be predicted through an individual's behavioral intentions.



The TPB proposes three key components that contribute to the formation of behavioral intentions: attitudes towards the behavior: This refers to an individual's overall evaluation of the behavior in question, considering both positive and negative outcomes. Second, subjective norms: This component addresses the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior, taking into account the opinions of significant others and societal expectations. Third, perceived behavioral control: This element reflects an individual's perception of their ability to perform the behavior, considering both internal factors (such as skills and knowledge) and external factors (such as resources and opportunities).

Attitudes toward the conduct, subjective norms about the behavior, and perceived control over the behavior have all been demonstrated to accurately predict behavioral intentions. As a result, these intents, when combined with perceived behavioral control, can account for a significant part of behavioral variation (Ajzen, 1985). Attitudes, subjective norms, and apparent behavioral control are all traced back to an underlying foundation of ideas about the conduct in the theory of planned behavior (Ibid).

Ajzen's theory has been widely applied across various domains, including health, environmental behavior, and career choices. In the realm of entrepreneurship and career decision-making, Kolvereid's 1996 study provided empirical support for the TPB's effectiveness in predicting employment status choices.

Kolvereid's research, conducted on 128 Norwegian undergraduate students, aimed to test the theory's applicability in anticipating whether individuals would choose self-employment or organizational employment. The study's findings strongly supported the TPB, demonstrating that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control were significant predictors of employment status intentions.

Interestingly, Kolvereid's research also revealed that demographic characteristics, such as gender, family background, and work experience, indirectly influenced employment status choice. These factors appeared to shape individuals' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, which in turn affected their intentions and ultimate career choices.

Although there is plenty of evidence supporting strong relationships between behavioral beliefs and attitudes toward the conduct, normative views and subjective standards, and control beliefs and behavioral control perceptions, the specific nature of these relationships is still unknown (Ibid). TPB is based on assumption of rational decision-making and tends to not fully capture the emotional, irrational, or unconscious factors that also influence entrepreneurial intentions.

### **2.2.3 Entrepreneurial Attitude Orientation Scale**

Robinson (1991) generated the Entrepreneurial Attitude orientation scale. According to (Shaver & Scott, 1992) attitude of the entrepreneur can be predicted through four sub scales namely personal control, achievement, innovation, and self-esteem and three different reactions: affective, conative and cognitive. The said model has been used by (Koh, 1995) using a set of statistical tools on various factors like psychological and family characteristics associated with entrepreneurial inclination. The outcomes of the study reveal that entrepreneurial orientation is strongly associated with more endurance of uncertainty, great need of achievement, higher tendency to take risks and more innovativeness (Koh, 1995).

Later, (Krueger, 1993) studied the relationship of attitudes with entrepreneurial intentions to allow great flexibility in the assessment of attitudes, exogenous influences and intentions. The study suggests that starting a new venture depends upon the intention of the entrepreneur that can be affected by psychological attitudes or family characteristics.

### **2.2.4 Entrepreneurship Potential Model**

On the basis of the earlier models presented by (Shapero, 1982; Ajzen, 1991), a new model called Entrepreneurship Potential Model was defined by (Krueger N. F., 1994). The Entrepreneurship Potential Model, introduced by Krueger in 1994, represents a significant evolution in our understanding of entrepreneurial behavior and intentions. This model builds upon and integrates key elements from earlier seminal works, particularly Shapero's (1982) Entrepreneurial Event Model and Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior.

Krueger's Entrepreneurship Potential Model synthesized these approaches, incorporating elements from both while also drawing insights from enterprise development literature. The model suggests that entrepreneurial intentions are formed through a complex interplay of personal attitudes, social norms, self-efficacy, and perceived desirability and feasibility of entrepreneurship. The key innovations of Krueger's model include: Integration of cognitive processes: The model emphasizes the role of individual perceptions and cognitive mechanisms in forming entrepreneurial intentions. Second, emphasis on potential: Rather than focusing solely on active entrepreneurs, the model explores the factors that contribute to entrepreneurial potential in individuals. Third, dynamic perspective: The model recognizes that entrepreneurial intentions can change over time and are influenced by various environmental and personal factors.

Crant's (1996) study provided empirical support for aspects of this model, particularly by introducing the concept of proactive personality as a predictor of entrepreneurial intentions.

This research, conducted on a sample of 181 university students, employed regression analysis to examine the relationships between various factors, including the innovative proactive personality scale and entrepreneurial intentions. The study's findings of significant associations between these variables further validated the importance of individual traits in the formation of entrepreneurial intentions.

The value of this approach extends beyond entrepreneurship research. By focusing on entrepreneurs as visible agents of organizational enactment, it offers insights into broader management and organizational behavior topics. Entrepreneurs, as individual decision-makers, provide a more accessible lens through which to study organizational cognition and decision-making processes, which are often more complex and diffuse in larger organizational settings (Krueger, 1993).

All these models have been suggested to explain the entrepreneurial process that starts with antecedents of entrepreneurial intents, the progress of those intentions, and an individual proceeding forward to actions that (possibly) leads to the initiation of a new firm. However, every entrepreneurial intention does not necessarily result into concrete entrepreneurial action to create a new venture (Shirokova et al., 2016). In fact, it is said that intentions once formed can change over time due to circumstantial changes or merely because the individuals tend to procrastinate. Literature suggests that procrastination in the entrepreneurial process is an underexposed factor that needs to be examined and its role in the process of turning the intentions into actions should be studied.

### **2.3 Antecedents of Entrepreneurial Intentions:**

The antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions have been a subject of considerable scholarly inquiry, given their critical role in predicting and understanding entrepreneurial behavior. These antecedents can be broadly categorized into individual-level factors and contextual factors. At the individual level, researchers have identified personality traits such as need for achievement (McClelland, 1961), risk-taking propensity (Zhao et al., 2010), and internal locus of control (Rotter, 1966) as significant predictors of entrepreneurial intentions. Cognitive factors, including self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Chen et al., 1998) and outcome expectations (Krueger et al., 2000), have also been shown to play a crucial role. Interestingly, procrastination has emerged as a relevant antecedent, with studies suggesting that individuals who tend to procrastinate may be less likely to form strong entrepreneurial intentions or act on them (Okhomina, 2010; Wäschle et al., 2014). Demographic variables such as age, gender, and educational background have been examined, albeit with mixed results (Liñán and Fayolle,

2015). Contextual factors, including family background (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003), social networks (De Carolis and Saporito, 2006), and cultural values (Hayton et al., 2002), have been found to exert significant influence on the formation of entrepreneurial intentions. Moreover, institutional factors such as regulatory frameworks, economic conditions, and access to resources have been recognized as important environmental antecedents (Welter and Smallbone, 2011). The interplay between these individual and contextual factors creates a complex web of influences that shape entrepreneurial intentions, underscoring the need for integrative models that capture this multifaceted nature of entrepreneurial intention formation.

## **2.4 Procrastination**

"Procrastination is the act of delaying something that must be done, often because is unpleasant or boring" (Haesevoets et al., 2022, p. 137). This definition highlights the common understanding of procrastination as a delay mechanism, often triggered by the aversive nature of the task at hand. It emphasizes the emotional component of task avoidance, suggesting that the perceived unpleasantness or tedium of a task can be a significant driver of procrastination.

"Procrastination refers to the voluntary delay of an intended course of action despite expecting to be worse off for the delay." (Steel 2007, p. 69). Steel's definition introduces the crucial element of volition in procrastination. It underscores that procrastination is a conscious choice, albeit one that contradicts rational decision-making. This perspective frames procrastination as a self-defeating behavior, where individuals act against their own best interests, highlighting the complex psychological mechanisms at play.

"Procrastination involves the irrational delay of tasks despite knowing the negative consequences associated with such delay." (Ferrari et al., 1995, p. 11). Ferrari and colleagues emphasize the irrational aspect of procrastination, further reinforcing the idea that it is a behavior that defies logical reasoning. This definition suggests that procrastinators are aware of the potential negative outcomes of their delay, yet still engage in the behavior, pointing to potential issues with self-regulation and impulse control.

"Procrastination is characterized by the avoidance of tasks by engaging in less important or more enjoyable activities, resulting in the postponement of important tasks to a later time." (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984, p. 504). It highlights the substitution of important tasks with less crucial or more pleasurable activities, introducing the concept of task prioritization (or lack thereof) in procrastination. This perspective suggests that procrastination might be linked to difficulties in self-control and delayed gratification.

With all these definitions, procrastination can be understood as a behavioral tendency characterized by delaying actions that apparently may yield positive outcomes if not delayed.

For this study, I am using Steel's (2007, p. 92) definition of procrastination, which states that "procrastination refers to the voluntary delay of an intended course of action despite expecting to be worse off for the delay." This definition is particularly suitable because it introduces the crucial element of volition in procrastination, emphasizing that it is a conscious choice. By framing procrastination as a self-defeating behavior that contradicts rational decision-making, Steel's perspective highlights the complex psychological mechanisms involved. This approach allows for a deeper exploration of the intentional aspects of procrastination and the factors contributing to why individuals knowingly engage in actions that are counterproductive. Moreover, it underscores the importance of understanding the interplay between volition, self-regulation, and decision-making processes, which are central to the focus of this study.

The literature on entrepreneurial intention-action gap is somewhat fragmented and less explored. Prior studies have always found a sizable gap between entrepreneurial intentions and subsequent actions and procrastination at times play a role in the process (Gelderen et al., 2017). The community of entrepreneurship academics has been deeply interested in the questions of why, when and how certain people discover and take advantage of chances to produce goods and services, but others do not (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Gelderen et al. (2017) in a study of 422 respondents who indicated some degree of desire to begin actions to start their own business and startups states that 30% took no action, 23% spent less than one hour per week on their start-up activities in the next six months. Furthermore, just 16% of the participants said their startup or venture was completely operation or near almost operational. An aspiring entrepreneur must first decide what action to take and how to go about it before deciding when and where to involve in that action (Haesevoets et al., 2022).

Most current studies focus on action regulation as an explanation for the discrepancy between formulation of entrepreneurial intentions and their subsequent translation into actions beyond motivation and intention (Kautonen, van Gelderen, & Fink, 2015). Implementation intentions are one such strategy that supports goal intention and outlines where, when, and how actions are required to achieving goals (Gollwitzer, 2006). The concept of implementation intentions was introduced by Peter Gollwitzer, who suggested that forming these specific plans can significantly enhance the likelihood of goal attainment by facilitating automatic responses to situational cues. This means that once the critical situation is encountered, the intended behavior is more likely to be triggered without the need for conscious deliberation. Although

having implementation intentions is beneficial for those with poor goal intentions as well, the findings show that people with strong goal intentions gain the most from having implementation ambitions.

In the case of Procrastination, it's interesting to note that there is an intention-action gap instead of an intention to delay (Eerde & Klingsieck, 2018). Intention to delay is a conscious and goal-directed choice to postpone action on a task, influenced by various psychological factors such as task averseness, perfectionism, and lack of motivation (Graff, 2019). Intention-action gap and procrastination share similar attributes, Interventions in terms of procrastination share the same aim, which is to reduce the intention-action gap.

In a recent research article by Soomro & Shah (2022), the phenomenon of procrastination within the context of student entrepreneurship is explored. The study focuses on the intention-behavior gap that often occurs among students who express their intentions to pursue entrepreneurship but fail to take action in a timely manner. It also examines the psychological mechanisms that contribute to procrastination in the context of entrepreneurial intentions, such as self-regulatory processes and temporal discounting. The research suggests strategies and interventions to address procrastination and help students translate their entrepreneurial intentions into actual behaviors. These interventions include enhancing self-efficacy, providing support networks, and modifying the decision-making environment to reduce tendencies of procrastination.

Barba-Sánchez and Atienza-Sahuquillo (2018), conclude that entrepreneurial intention is significantly and directly influenced by entrepreneurial purpose and abilities linked to commitment and planning. The literature has also studied formation of entrepreneurial intention in terms of an organizational setting. Kautonen & Gelderen (2015) suggests that employees with the highest entrepreneurial intentions are those who believe their pay is unjust and who also want varied hours of work, however historic beliefs may stay the major influential force. This perspective emphasizes the possible emergence of many types of purpose prior to a behavior, which may combine subconsciously or deliberately to effect both entrepreneurship and creativity (Kautonen & Gelderen, 2015). Most studies on entrepreneurship intention focuses on entrepreneurship education and individual behavior, there are limited studies on whether it's the entrepreneurship courses that have effects on entrepreneurship intentions or the micro and macroenvironment in different country contexts suggestively effects behavior. There are fewer studies that directly compare the influence of entrepreneurship courses with the effect of the micro and macroenvironment across different country contexts. However, the

effectiveness of entrepreneurship education may vary depending on the country's entrepreneurial ecosystem. In countries with a strong entrepreneurial culture and supportive policies, education might have a more pronounced effect (Martin, McNally, & Kay, 2013).

## **2.5 Factors Effecting Procrastination**

Many people suffer procrastination days, or days when they do not do the tasks they had intended and that is when they do not succeed to put their plans into actions. Amabile & Kramer (2011) suggests that procrastination is frequently perceived negatively due to a mismatch between intentions and actions and often it prevents experiences like moving forward with activities and achieving objectives.

### **2.5.1 Time Pressure**

According to Haesevoets et al. (2022) time pressure is a situational indication that highlights the difference between people's goals and their present states. Furthermore, the research concludes that the time constraint prevents people from procrastinating. Many studies also suggest that some people tend to procrastinate more than others, and also that all days are not equally procrastinating. The study by (Ibid) focuses on effect of Time Pressure on procrastination of people and they conclude that time pressure does avoid procrastination. Furthermore, the study suggests that procrastination can also be reduced by self-report, if participants are informed of the days they procrastinate, this would stimulate participants which will result that they procrastinate less on the following days.

In all contemporary economics, thriving entrepreneurship is a must for a long-term sustainable modern economy. Although the importance of intentions should not be underestimated, it is the action that is essential to a new venture creation (Singh, Bala, & Sharma, 2023). Furthermore, studies have shown that people who transition from idea to action stage show more action and participate to a greater extent in entrepreneurial events than those that remain in the stage of intention (Olotuase, 2018). Procrastination as a factor which may prevent or impede the creation of new ventures. In contrast to a deliberate or strategic delay, procrastination is irrational and frequently be associated with psychological unpleasantness such as guilt.

Literature mostly focuses on procrastination in a professional career and less on its role in entrepreneurship (Ferrari, 2010). Due to the lengthy and intricate process of making a choice and preparing actual measures for starting a venture, it is crucial to comprehend its function in the process of becoming an entrepreneur. According to Singh, Bala and Sharma (2023), people that have the intention to become entrepreneurs have a greater potential for creating new

businesses, however, the question stands for policymakers regarding what measures are needed for them to shift from intention to action. These instruments or measures will greatly help boost the number of new businesses, innovation and create more economic prosperity.

Research indicates that heightened time pressure can paradoxically lead to increased procrastination. Individuals facing tight deadlines may delay starting tasks due to the stress and perceived lack of time, leading to last-minute rushes and lower-quality work (Steel, 2007).

Effective time management strategies, such as breaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps and setting realistic deadlines, can mitigate the negative effect of time pressure on procrastination. These strategies help individuals prioritize tasks and maintain focus under challenging time constraints (Pychyl & Flett, 2012).

### **2.5.2 Fear of failure**

Fear of failure plays another major role in terms of procrastination as well as intention to action, (Suomalainen, 2017) suggests that fear of failure is positively related to procrastination, which results in a higher degree of fear of failure may result in the entrepreneur procrastinating more. Furthermore, the perception of fear of failure is a constraining factor in entrepreneurship is thought to deter, restrain, and hamper entrepreneurial intention (Lewrick, Omar, Raeside, & Sailer, 2011).

In information technology, procrastination is a bias that can lead to project failure. (Eerde & Klingsieck, 2018). Despite the growing use of new and agile techniques, research on procrastination with a focus on Intention and action is not much, rather the focus is mainly on classic projects. In this case, a good knowledge of reasons of procrastination is needed in a project team or division (Diepstraten, 2022).

### **2.5.3 Entrepreneurship Education**

A research study indicated that students who pursue entrepreneurship or have optional entrepreneurship subjects in the course are more likely to pursue entrepreneurial ventures (Marliyah, Novera, Handayani, Abdillah, & Kasidi, 2020). It is also well established by multiple research and studies that students that take entrepreneurship and innovation as their specialization or have optional subjects related to these are more prone to act upon their own business ideas (Rauch & Hulsink, 2015). This also correlates with the findings of a study which states that Entrepreneurship education helps shape one's ideas and norms towards self-employment (Zhang, Duysters, & Cloudt, 2014). It is a great indicator for policy makers in addition university administrations to consider the promotion and importance of entrepreneurship programs. This will also nurture the economic outlooks of Pakistan, who is



at an advantage of having an ambitious young workforce in the millions. However, in the case of students studying entrepreneurship courses, while many students focus and decide on business ventures, they frequently have trouble moving forward once the course is over. Henceforth, developing entrepreneurial intention during a course does not necessarily result in taking up the entrepreneurial activity thereafter (Soomro & Shah, 2022). Students faced significant obstacles or challenges after their course end, which encourage or induced procrastination and delaying habits, study by Soomro & Shah (2022), finds procrastination on an individual level negatively effects the well-being and their personal growth (Kaya, Erkut, & Thierbach, 2019). The study further suggests that procrastination can cause frustration, lessens the performance both in academics as well as new venture creation, hence it creates a gap between intention and action in terms of a new business creation. Haesevoets et al. (2022) suggest that factors that help overcome procrastination, or the factors that helps in intention and action completion, the positive effect at a personal level and time pressure as a situation factor. The majority of small business studies view entrepreneurship as a phenomenon that develops through time, from non-entrepreneurs to beginner, experienced and habitual and finally former entrepreneurs (Singh, Bala, & Sharma, 2023). However, little is known about the transformation of intention and action. People that are seeking to become entrepreneurs are arguably a precise group that is the border between the first stage, intention and the later stage, action. Procrastination mostly occurs for individuals with low levels of positive personal affect and lower levels of time pressure (Haesevoets et al., 2022). Procrastination may be very relevant to individuals who experience low levels of positive affect because they need to firmly rely on situational factors to encourage action initiation.

## **2.6 Relationship between Procrastination and Intention-Action Gap**

Procrastination refers to the tendency to delay or postpone tasks or actions despite knowing that they need to be done, often leading to negative consequences such as stress, anxiety, and reduced performance (Suomalainen, 2017). The Procrastination is the delay in completing a task despite knowing its importance or deadline (Senecal, 1995). Procrastination is a complex phenomenon that can be influenced by various factors, such as personality traits, emotional states, and environmental factors. It can be defined as the delay or avoidance of tasks that need to be accomplished, despite the negative consequences that may result from the delay. Procrastination is a common behavior observed among students, including student entrepreneurs (Steel, 2007). Procrastination can lead to decreased productivity, increased stress, and decreased well-being, which can ultimately hinder the success of student entrepreneurs (Creed & Hood, 2014).

The intention-action gap, on the other hand, refers to the discrepancy between what we intend to do and what we actually end up doing (Kong, Zhao, & Tsai, 2020). This gap between intentions and behavior also means the failure to translate intentions into actions. This gap can manifest in various ways, such as not starting a business, not completing necessary tasks, or not following through on planned actions. In other words, student entrepreneurs may have the intention to start or grow their business, but they fail to take action towards that goal. In the context of student entrepreneurs, procrastination can be a significant contributor to the intention-action gap (Senecal, 1995). Student entrepreneurs may have the intention to take certain actions to advance their business ventures, such as completing market research, creating a business plan, or networking with potential clients. However, they may struggle to follow through with these actions due to procrastination. There is a strong relationship between procrastination and the intention-behavior gap, as individuals who frequently procrastinate tend to experience a wider gap between their intentions and behavior. This gap arises due to various reasons such as lack of motivation, poor self-regulation, and avoidance behaviors (Kong, Zhao, & Tsai, 2020).

There is a notable correlation between procrastination and the intention-behavior gap, particularly pronounced among student entrepreneurs. Individuals engaged in entrepreneurial activities often face formidable challenges in translating their entrepreneurial intentions into concrete actions. Research by Holienka, Gál, and Kovačičová (2017) underscores that procrastination can hinder entrepreneurial intention and action, emphasizing the detrimental effects of delaying critical business decisions and venture development tasks. This phenomenon is exacerbated among student entrepreneurs who juggle academic commitments, financial constraints, and the uncertainties inherent in startup ventures. The fear of failure and perceived self-efficacy also play pivotal roles in moderating the relationship between procrastination and entrepreneurial action (Holiienka, Gál, & Kovačičová, 2017). Moreover, the dynamic nature of entrepreneurial endeavors, marked by ambiguity and risk, amplifies the inclination towards procrastination as a coping mechanism. Despite entrepreneurial aspirations, the gap between intention and action widens as procrastination undermines proactive behavior and timely execution necessary for venture success.

Research has shown that procrastination can be linked to a range of negative outcomes, including lower academic achievement, lower job performance, and reduced overall well-being (Sirois, 2013). Furthermore, the intention-action gap has been found to be a predictor of procrastination behavior, with larger gaps associated with greater levels of procrastination (Milyavskaya, 2015). Van Gelderen et al. (2015) found that student entrepreneurs who

procrastinated more had lower levels of personal values and lower levels of entrepreneurial intentions towards their entrepreneurial goals. The study also found that fear of failure and a lack of self-efficacy were significant predictors of procrastination among student entrepreneurs.

Research on psychological processes revealed that there are various strategies that student entrepreneurs can use to overcome procrastination and bridge the intention-action gap. For example, goal setting, self-regulation, and time management strategies can help individuals to prioritize tasks and stay focused on their goals. In addition, mindfulness practices, such as meditation, can help individuals to manage their emotions and reduce stress, which can also reduce the likelihood of procrastination (Senecal, 1995).

Holienka, Gál, & Kovačičová (2017), explored the intricate dynamics among procrastination, self-efficacy, fear of failure, and entrepreneurial intention among student entrepreneurs in China. Their findings revealed a negative association between procrastination and both entrepreneurial intention and action. Moreover, the study highlighted that fear of failure and self-efficacy played a partial mediating role in the relationship between procrastination and entrepreneurial intention. Despite its detrimental effect on the intention-action gap in student entrepreneurs, research suggests a nuanced perspective on procrastination. Chu and Choi's (2005) investigation, for example, underscored a positive link between procrastination and creativity among college students. They proposed that procrastination could foster creativity by allowing individuals additional time for reflection and idea incubation. Therefore, while procrastination poses challenges to entrepreneurial endeavors by hindering intention and action, it may paradoxically stimulate creative thinking and innovation.

Several studies have also explored the psychological processes that underlie procrastination and the intention-behavior gap. For instance, research suggests that procrastinators tend to have a stronger focus on short-term pleasure and avoid discomfort, which leads them to prioritize immediate gratification over long-term goals (Kong, Zhao, & Tsai, 2020). Similarly, studies have shown that the intention-action gap can be explained by factors such as self-control, self-regulation, and self-efficacy (Gollwitzer, 2006). Literature addressing procrastination suggest that it contribute to the delayed actions in several ways. For example, students may delay acting on their business idea due to fear of failure, lack of confidence, or feeling overwhelmed by the demands of entrepreneurship. Procrastination can also result from students not knowing where to start, feeling unsure about their goals, or lacking a clear plan of action (Kong, Zhao, & Tsai, 2020).

Recent research has explored the relationship between procrastination and the intentions of student entrepreneurs. Lechner (2018) found that procrastination negatively affected the entrepreneurial intentions of university students. Similarly, a study by Bhave (2020) found that procrastination was a significant predictor of entrepreneurial action among student entrepreneurs. Steeghs and Breugst (2023) argued that student entrepreneurs who procrastinate are less likely to take the necessary actions to achieve their goals, leading to a wider intention-action gap. Another study by Steeghs and Breugst (2023) found that the relationship between intention and action among student entrepreneurs is moderated by procrastination. They found that student entrepreneurs who are prone to procrastination are less likely to act on their intentions, even when they have a strong intention to do so.

To overcome the intention-action gap caused by procrastination, several strategies have been proposed, including setting clear goals, breaking tasks into smaller steps, developing a routine, seeking support from mentors or peers, and practicing self-compassion. By adopting these strategies, student entrepreneurs may be better equipped to overcome procrastination and take the necessary actions to achieve their entrepreneurial goals (Bhave, 2020).

In conclusion, procrastination might be a significant contributor to the intention-action gap of entrepreneurs, but the area is still underexplored. Future research can explore the relationship between procrastination and creativity among student entrepreneurs and develop interventions to help student entrepreneurs overcome procrastination and bridge the intention-action gap.

## **2.7 Action Phase Theory**

Literature on the formation of entrepreneurial intention suggest that intention does not always results in action. The concept of the entrepreneurial intention-action gap has been highlighted in previous research. Despite having the intention to start a business, not all individuals follow through with their actions. This gap is a major concern for researchers and practitioners alike. Gollwitzer's (1990, 2012) action phase theory is a comprehensive theory that attempts to explain the intention-action gap by analysing goal setting and self-regulatory processes. The theory comprises of four action phases that individuals must go through to achieve their goals.

This model of the entrepreneurial process consists of four phases: two motivational and two volitional. The first and fourth phases are related to setting and reviewing goals, while the second and third phases involve striving towards and implementing the goals (Gollwitzer, 2014). Each phase presents a different task that individuals need to address, and progression from one phase to the next is not assured. In the first phase also known as pre-decisional phase, individuals need to decide which of their desires they truly want to pursue, and intentions are

formed. In second and third phase also termed as the post-decisional and pre-actional phase, individuals are required to determine the best possible way to achieve their chosen goal and plan concrete actions that facilitate achievement. In the actional phase, the focus is on guaranteeing that the actions undertaken to attain specific goals are successful. In the final phase of this model, individuals assess and review what they have accomplished so far and contemplate future action (Achtziger and Gollwitzer 2008). The final phase of the model may thus be followed by the initial phase, offering this process model an iterative character. Advancement from one phase to the next is not certain. However, each phase needs to be effectively accomplished before the cycle can be concluded (Gollwitzer, 2012).

In the context of student entrepreneurs, who often face academic responsibilities alongside entrepreneurial endeavors, procrastination during the actional phase can delay the implementation of business ideas despite strong intentions. This delay can stem from various factors such as fear of failure, time management challenges, and the allure of immediate rewards from academic tasks. By applying Action Phase Theory, the aim is to explore how procrastination affects each phase of entrepreneurial action, ultimately elucidating strategies to bridge the intention-action gap and foster proactive behavior among student entrepreneurs.

The current study aims to revolve around the pre-action (post decision) and action phases which are volitional in nature as they involve willpower (Gollwitzer, 2014). First, we aim to observe emotions that compels people to delay planned actions and that can consequently place stress on volitional capacity. Additionally, we will look at the volitional capacity as a source of self-control that assists to successfully complete goal-oriented activities. (Gollwitzer, 2006). This study will follow the action phase theory. This model assumes that actions start with intentions (motivation). Therefore, the influence of the task-avoidance emotions such as fear of failure, aversion, and procrastination and also of self-control on action phase are not direct, but such constructs effect the transition from intentions into action.

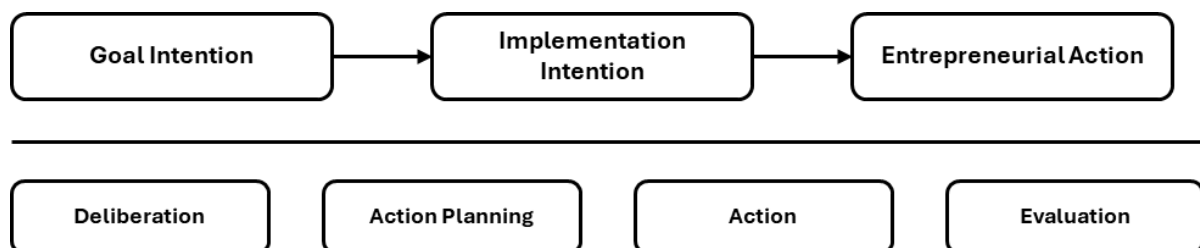


Figure 1: Action Phase Theory

## Summary

Initially this research endeavor began with the question, ‘How can we explain the lack of entrepreneurial actions among students who express a strong desire to pursue entrepreneurial projects, even after completing an entrepreneurship program?’ Researchers have generally focused on the important role of self-employment courses in shaping the entrepreneurial intentions of students as potential entrepreneurs. However, scholars have only rarely investigated how these intentions are transformed into actions. The intention-action gap has been given less attention in the scholarly research (Sheeran & Webb, 2016). While some studies have explored procrastination in relation to intention-action gap, there remains a gap in understanding its role in hindering entrepreneurial action, particularly among students (Eerde & Klingsieck, 2018).

Moreover, the existing literature on students' intention–action gap is limited to quantitative research only that determines the existence of the gap empirically or use theoretically derived moderators to their studies. Furthermore, procrastination is challenging to measure by solely numbers and figures as each entrepreneur has their unique way of doing things. Consequently, the literature demands for more qualitative and explorative nature research to get insights about why students procrastinate entrepreneurial activity once their entrepreneurship program is over. Therefore, to develop a better understanding of the topic qualitative approach has been followed as it allows us (entrepreneurship researchers) to inductively or abductively construct theories in close interaction with contexts, meanings, and processes (Singh, Bala, & Sharma, 2023).

## **3 CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the methodology in detail. Given the focus of this research it is rooted in subjective ontology and interpretivism epistemology with qualitative approach. The chapter initially focuses on explaining the ontological position i.e., subjectivism approach as it involves using qualitative methods, such as interviews, to explore the individual's interpretations and experiences of procrastination within their social and cultural context. Furthermore, this chapter relies on interpretivism as a philosophical paradigm as it focuses on the importance of understanding the individual's subjective experiences and meanings in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the intention-action gap, and to inform interventions that can help close that gap. Besides, the research study interprets the systematic inductive qualitative research technique used to observe why student entrepreneurs procrastinate and why this technique is the most appropriate for this study. Lastly the chapter sheds lights on all the field work strategies which includes sampling techniques, sample, and interview guide.

### **3.1 Research Philosophy and Approach**

#### **3.1.1 Subjectivist Ontology**

The study relies on subjectivist ontology approach since this lens views entrepreneurship as “a constantly unfolding concept, not essentially tied to any specific conclusion (e.g., the creation of a new business enterprise), but to the intentions, actions, and expectations of the entrepreneur” (Berglund, 2007). Subjectivism is an approach to social research that emphasizes the importance of studying human behavior from the perspective of the individual subject. In the context of the intention-action gap and the role of procrastination, subjectivism focuses on exploring the subjective experiences and interpretations that individuals attach to procrastination and its effect on their intentions and actions.

One approach that was used to study procrastination from a subjectivist perspective involved using introspective methods, such as self-reflection or diary studies, to explore the subjective experiences of individuals who have experienced the intention-action gap due to procrastination (Lewrick, Omar, Raeside, & Sailer, 2011). Through these methods, we could explore the individual's inner experiences, including their beliefs and attitudes towards procrastination, the reasons why they procrastinate, and the emotional and cognitive processes that occur when they procrastinate.

### **3.1.2 Interpretivism**

Furthermore, the research study follows interpretivism as a philosophical paradigm as it features intentionality as an important driving factor of behavior besides other internal and external factors (Soomro & Shah, 2022). Interpretivism is an approach to social research that emphasizes the importance of understanding human behavior from the perspective of the individual and the context in which it occurs. Interpretivism rejects the idea that social phenomena can be studied objectively, and instead argues that social reality is socially constructed and subjective (Packard, 2017). This means that interpretive research tends to be more exploratory and focused on understanding the complexity and diversity of social phenomena, rather than testing predetermined hypotheses. The study focuses on the importance of understanding the individual's subjective experiences and meanings in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the intention-action gap, and to inform interventions that can help close that gap. In the context of the intention-action gap and the role of procrastination, interpretivism would focus on exploring the subjective experiences and meanings that individuals attach to procrastination and its effect on their intentions and actions.

When applied to the intention-action gap, interpretivism highlights the importance of exploring the individual's subjective understanding of the reasons behind the gap between their intentions and actions. The intention-action gap refers to the situation where an individual may have a certain intention, but their actions do not align with that intention. An interpretivist approach to studying this gap involves exploring the individual's subjective experiences and beliefs surrounding their intentions and actions.

From an interpretivist perspective, procrastination is not simply a behavior that can be objectively observed and measured, but rather a complex phenomenon that is shaped by a range of factors, including personal beliefs, values, goals, and social and cultural contexts. Therefore, to understand the role of procrastination in the intention-action gap, this study need to take into account the unique experiences and perspectives of individuals who struggle with procrastination (Soomro & Shah, 2022).

Besides, this study explored the subjective experiences of individuals, including their beliefs and attitudes towards procrastination, the strategies they use to cope with procrastination, and the effect that procrastination has on their intentions and actions. In addition to exploring individual experiences, following the interpretivist approach we also considered the broader social and cultural context in which procrastination occurs. For example, one aspect of the study is to examine how societal norms and expectations around productivity and time



management shape students' attitudes towards procrastination, and how cultural values and beliefs influence students' motivation to act on their intentions (Kaya, Erkut, & Thierbach, 2019).

Overall, an interpretivist approach to studying the role of procrastination in the intention-action gap emphasized the importance of understanding the subjective experiences and meanings that individuals attach to procrastination, as well as the broader social and cultural context in which it occurs. This approach helped us gain a more nuanced and holistic understanding of this complex phenomenon, which could ultimately inform the development of more effective interventions and strategies for overcoming procrastination and reducing the intention-action gap (Morris et al., 2017).

### **3.2 Choice of Qualitative Research:**

As the data on procrastination is scarcely available, this research applied a systematic inductive qualitative research method to comprehend student entrepreneurs' intention–action gap. Inductive qualitative research is an approach to research that focuses on understanding phenomena through the collection and analysis of qualitative data. It involves gathering rich, descriptive data directly from participants and allowing patterns, themes, and theories to emerge from the data itself (Ellis, 2016). Inductive qualitative research for exploratory research because little is known about a particular topic, inductive research can be valuable for exploring and generating new insights. It allows to discover patterns and relationships that may not have been previously considered. It enables an open-ended, flexible, and participant-centered approach to investigate complex phenomena. The approach in which the individual factors effect students' entrepreneurial activities have been examined almost exclusively using quantitative techniques (Morris et al., 2017). In response, the developing research on student entrepreneurship demands for a more explorative nature study to find novel relationships between student entrepreneurship and numerous other contextual and individual factors. Prior studies on student entrepreneurship have mostly relied on quantitative empirical techniques (Haesevoets et al., 2022). Student entrepreneurship is considered an underdeveloped research domain by the literature (Soomro & Shah, 2022). This study employed a qualitative research technique to gain an in-depth knowledge of students who struggled with the many realities of moving their business projects forward despite their strong initial entrepreneurial intentions. The existing literature on students' intention–action gap is limited to quantitative research only that determines the existence of the gap empirically or use theoretically derived moderators to their studies (Shirokova, 2016). Furthermore, procrastination is challenging to measure by solely numbers and figures as each entrepreneur has their unique way of doing things.

Consequently, the literature demands for more qualitative and explorative nature research to get insights about why students procrastinate entrepreneurial activity once their entrepreneurship program is over.

### **3.2.1 Phenomenology**

The research design appropriate for the current research is phenomenology as the focus is on subjective experiences of the sample, in the field of student entrepreneurship (Davidsson, 2021). Phenomenology is a philosophical approach that aims to describe and understand human experience. It basically tried to get to the essence of the experience. When applied to the context of student entrepreneurship, it helped us understand the lived experiences of students who are starting their own businesses. Phenomenology encouraged us to focus on the subjective experiences of individuals, rather than objective measurements or statistics. This mean exploring the emotions, motivations, and challenges that students face as they navigate the process of starting a business. Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) is highly relevant in this context because it considers individuals as conscious beings who actively interact with and perceive the world by attributing meaning to objects and experiences (Bell and Bell, 2020). Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) is a qualitative research approach that focuses on exploring individuals' lived experiences and understanding the meaning they attach to those experiences. IPA is a type of phenomenology, which emphasizes understanding subjective experiences and the way individuals make sense of the world around them.

IPA aims to comprehend the participants' subjective realities and explore the essence of "what it is like," focusing more on the interpretation of meaning and processes rather than mere events and their causes (Husin et al., 2020). The core principle of IPA is that people are constantly interpreting the events, objects, and individuals in their lives. In particular, IPA emphasizes the crucial role of participant feedback in shaping the information obtained, leading to the emergence of profound themes and insights. In the realm of entrepreneurship studies, IPA is particularly suited to investigate aspects such as entrepreneurial commitment and performance (Smith et al, 2021). According to Ellis (2016), the optimal sample size is not determined by quantity, but rather by the quality of data, given the intricate nature of individual experiences. The interpretive approach employed in this study focuses on identifying the meaningful terms and expressions that participants use to articulate their personal experiences.

IPA has been used in entrepreneurship research to gain deep insights into the lived experiences of entrepreneurs. It's particularly useful for understanding complex, subjective phenomena like intentions and decision-making processes.

Smith et al. (2021) provided a comprehensive guide to IPA methodology, which has been adapted for various fields, including entrepreneurship. Their work emphasizes the importance of detailed analysis of individual cases before moving to general claims.

In entrepreneurship research, IPA has been operationalized in several ways including: in-depth interviews as researchers conduct semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs or students, focusing on their personal experiences and perceptions; reflective journals as participants may be asked to keep journals documenting their thoughts and experiences related to entrepreneurship; focus groups as small group discussions can provide rich data on shared and divergent experiences and longitudinal studies because following participants over time to track changes in their entrepreneurial intentions and experiences.

IPA has been operationalized in entrepreneurship research by focusing on how individuals make sense of their entrepreneurial journeys, considering their personal and social contexts. This approach allows for a deep understanding of the subjective experiences and meanings that entrepreneurs attach to their actions and decisions (Pihie & Akmaliah, 2009).

In the context of studying students' entrepreneurial intentions, IPA is particularly suitable because it enables researchers to delve into the personal motivations, intentions, and perceptions of student entrepreneurs. Unlike quantitative methods that may overlook the richness of individual experiences, IPA allows for a detailed exploration of how students interpret their entrepreneurial aspirations and the factors influencing their intentions. This approach is valuable in uncovering the complex interplay between personal beliefs, social influences, and contextual factors that shape entrepreneurial intentions among students.

Smith et al., (2021) argue that IPA's focus on individual meaning-making processes provides deep insights into the cognitive and emotional dimensions of entrepreneurship, making it an effective method for understanding the subjective nature of entrepreneurial intentions. By employing IPA, researchers can capture the diverse and dynamic experiences of student entrepreneurs, offering a comprehensive view of the intention-action gap and the underlying reasons behind it.

By using a phenomenological approach, the study gained a deeper understanding of the unique experiences of student entrepreneurs and how they navigate the intersection of academic and entrepreneurial pursuits. The use of this approach will ultimately help us to inform policymakers and support systems to better serve the needs of student entrepreneurs. In addition, phenomenology also helped to uncover the underlying assumptions and biases that

may exist within current systems and structures that effect student entrepreneurship. By exploring the experiences of student entrepreneurs through a phenomenological lens, this research helped us in gaining insights into how to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for student entrepreneurship (Suomalainen, 2017).

### **3.3 Sampling Technique**

“Participant selection in IPA research should reflect the homogeneity of the sample pool to deepen understanding of their lived experiences” (Creswell, 2016, p. 324). Smith et al. (2021) emphasized that “IPA studies are conducted on relatively small sample sizes, and the aim is to find a reasonably homogeneous sample, so that, within the sample, we can examine convergence and divergence in some detail” (p. 325). Given IPA’s focus on detailed, nuanced accounts, a purposive sampling technique is recommended. This approach involves selecting a small, homogeneous sample of student entrepreneurs who are likely to provide rich, relevant data. Participants should be chosen based on specific criteria, such as having demonstrated an interest in entrepreneurship through coursework, participation in entrepreneurial activities, or early-stage business ventures. By using purposive sampling, it can be ensured that the sample is well-suited to provide insights into the particular phenomenon under study, thereby facilitating a thorough understanding of the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions among students. Homogeneity and small sample sizes in IPA studies lead to rich, descriptive analyses. This in view, the current research employed purposive sampling for selection of participants and criterion sampling for ensuring homogeneity.

#### **3.3.1 Purposive sampling and Criterion Sampling**

Criterion sampling is a type of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental or selective sampling, is a non-probability sampling technique commonly used in qualitative research. It involves deliberately selecting participants who possess specific characteristics, experiences, or knowledge relevant to the research objectives (Pihie & Akmaliah, 2009). Purposive sampling is used to identify and target individuals or groups who can provide valuable insights and information related to the research topic. The selection criteria may vary depending on the nature of the study and the specific research questions. Although there are several different types of purposive sampling, criterion sampling is used most in qualitative research. This study will be using criterion sampling method to collect data. Criterion sampling is being used because the participants will be selected based on some predetermined criteria (Haesevoets et al., 2022). This will help us identify and select cases that are information rich.

The primary sample selection criteria devised for this research (based on criterion sampling concept) is bachelor's students who had taken entrepreneurship courses and developed entrepreneurial intentions during the course participation period but did not take any immediate entrepreneurial actions thereafter. All these individuals are bachelor's graduates in entrepreneurship or other fields. Students were selected from the three top business schools of Pakistan who offers specialized entrepreneurship programs and courses. The targeted business schools include National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and Institute of Management Sciences (IMS) that offers specialization in the field of entrepreneurship or entrepreneurship courses at bachelor's level in other fields. The three universities were selected based on their reputation for fostering entrepreneurship and their diverse range of entrepreneurship programs. This diversity ensures a comprehensive understanding of student entrepreneurial intentions across different academic environments. The universities included:

1. **LUMS:** Integrates entrepreneurship into its engineering curriculum.
2. **IMS:** Offers a dedicated entrepreneurship program.
3. **NUST:** Known for its strong business administration program.

The inclusion criteria were formed based on the findings of a study which states that entrepreneurship education helps shape one's ideas and norms towards self-employment (Zhang, Duysters, & Cloudt, 2014).

The interview session began with a few basic introductory questions followed by some on the respondent's qualification and employment status and intentions to commence activity to initiate a business immediately after the entrepreneurship program is over or within 3 years of the degree completion. The 3 years' time frame was chosen because students at this stage are often more settled into their life after the completion of their academic programs and are beginning to consider their career paths more seriously. This time frame provides a balance between having enough academic and extracurricular exposure to entrepreneurship to have formed concrete entrepreneurial intentions.

Individuals who were self-employed or who had already taken concrete actions to start a business (nascent entrepreneurs) were excluded from the study. Individuals without any level of interest or intention of starting a business in the next 3 years were also excluded, because implementation of intentions are only likely to be effective among students who have set a relevant goal (Rakib *et al.*, 2020) .

Thus, the inclusion criteria mainly consider students who had done their bachelors and the sample of participants used in this analysis includes those individuals who had some level of intention to commence a business gestation activity in the within 3 years of degree completion, but who had not yet acted upon that intention. These are individuals who in their 2nd or 3rd year of study and have demonstrated an interest in entrepreneurship through various means such as coursework, participation in entrepreneurial activities, or early-stage business ventures. Participants were selected based on their active involvement in entrepreneurship-related activities. Students from Business Administration, Entrepreneurship, and Engineering programs were selected because these fields frequently emphasize entrepreneurial skills and mindsets. By including students from these specific programs, the study aims to capture a broad spectrum of entrepreneurial intentions and experiences. The selection criteria included individuals who had; Demonstrated Interest in entrepreneurship: students who have shown a clear interest in entrepreneurship, either through their academic choices or extracurricular activities; Participation in entrepreneurial activities: involvement in entrepreneurship clubs, competitions, or start-up projects; Course enrollment: students enrolled in courses or programs specifically focused on entrepreneurship or related subjects.

Questions regarding implementation intentions and a number of other relevant variables were posed to the 25 interviewees who earlier reported an interest in engaging in start-up activity in the following 3 years. The sample size was determined from the literature by studying interpretive phenomenological analysis. The study's sample was given access to the phenomenon being studied and was deliberately kept small due to the idiographic nature of IPA, prioritizing depth over breadth. Analyzing each transcript thoroughly and individually is time-consuming, but it allows for a comprehensive understanding of the participants' perceptions and interpretations.

<b>University</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Years of Study</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Selection Criteria</b>
LUMS	Engineering	5	15	Active participation in entrepreneurial activities
IMS	Entrepreneurship	4	15	Enrolled in entrepreneurship-related courses or projects
NUST	Bachelors Administration	4	10	Demonstrated interest in entrepreneurship.

### **3.3.2 Sampling Size**

The sample size consists of 25 participants considering the amount of time that is required to conduct semi-structured interviews, to collect the amount of insightful information from said interviewees, and analysis of this information for the purpose of research. Invitations to participate in the study were sent to 40 students of top three business schools out of which 25 responded and agreed. The 40 participants were chosen through a purposive sampling technique. This method was employed to ensure that the sample would provide rich, relevant data for the study. The selection process involved reaching out to program coordinators and incubation centers at the three universities to identify suitable candidates who met the selection criteria. To comply with the ethical considerations, the respondents were assured they were contributing to the study anonymously, and the sequence of the questions asked in the interview were also counterbalanced. Pilot testing done for the study indicated that each interview would take around 30 to 45 min to complete.

### **3.3.3 Data Collection**

The study focused on conducting in depth interviews to get more insightful and relevant information from the respondents (Diepstraten, 2022). Semi-structured and in-depth interviews were conducted comprising of open-ended questions to converse with the participants. Semi-structured interviews allowed for flexibility in exploring individual experiences while ensuring that all relevant topics were covered. Detailed interviews provided deeper insights into specific areas of interest that emerged during the semi-structured interviews. This combination ensured a thorough understanding of the students' entrepreneurial intentions, motivations, and the factors influencing their decision-making processes. This led to a somewhat guided conversation between the researcher and participant. The semi-structured interview approach enabled us to analyze the questions of the interaction beforehand (Oluase, 2018). It is considered a reliable approach. Online interviews were also taken in case the participants were not available for face-to-face interviews. Data collection took 2 months. The collection process took place from July 2023 to August 2023. A total number of 25 students were interviewed in detail as a primary source for the empirical data. On average the duration of each interview was approximately 45 mins.

Furthermore, to establish a secure atmosphere, each interview was initiated by explaining the interview context and the option to remain anonymous. There were three major components to the interview guidelines. First, the study encouraged the students to think back on their time in

the course and how they perceived it while focusing on how they came up with their business ideas and entrepreneurial goals. Second, they were asked what steps they had taken to grow their business activity after they finished the course. In particular, the students were especially urged to consider the various influencing elements that played a role in their decision-making and as to why respondents did not launch their ventures and did not take concrete steps immediately after the course completion.

### **3.3.4 Instruments**

Primarily the interviews were conducted face-to-face with the individuals. Interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants. Besides online interviews were also conducted with the individuals who were not able in person. Students were interviewed in-depth, and the interviews were converted in English language.

### **3.3.5 Data Analysis**

The data analysis was done through thematic analysis. This technique is a compelling method for gathering data. One of the most popular and crucial tools used by researchers to sort through and examine the qualitative data they have gathered is thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The objective of this approach is to analyze, identify, and be able to provide information on patterns in data also called themes in data. According to Silverman (2016), thematic analysis approach consists of five steps:

1. Learn about the data
2. Create preliminary codes
3. Look for themes
4. Study the themes that have emerged
5. Modify themes

The interviews were imported to NVIVO to create codes and analyze them. NVivo was utilized in this study to facilitate the rigorous analysis of qualitative data collected from the interviews with student entrepreneurs. The software was chosen for its robust capabilities in organizing, managing, and analyzing large volumes of qualitative data. It allowed for efficient coding of the interview transcripts, enabling the identification of key themes and patterns related to entrepreneurial intentions. By using NVivo, the study ensured a systematic and transparent approach to data analysis, enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings. The software's advanced query functions also supported in-depth exploration of relationships between different themes, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the intention-action gap among student entrepreneurs.



The process involved creating codes that were then put together to produce themes. The three sequential steps of the systematic inductive technique (Gioia et al., 2013) were adhered to. Initially, all of the interviews were coded using the actual interview quotes that were pertinent to the current research. The goal of this procedure was to reduce the most important information from the empirical data while preserving as many of the respondents' original phrases as possible (Charmaz, 2014). 977 initial codes were produced by this technique. Secondly, less important themes were excluded, and focused codes were derived by combining the original codes. At this point, this realization was clear that procrastination was a common result of the difficulties our responders had faced when the course concluded and those various circumstances changed. Finally, drawing comparisons between the existing literature and the empirical data to iteratively build the emergent categories. The emergent categories, including "the obstacles after the entrepreneurship education" and "behavioral reactions of students," initially appeared quite descriptive and broadly classified. During this process, Concepts like embeddedness, procrastination, and entrepreneurial actions were encountered that provided theoretical justifications for what we observed. This research enabled us to comprehend the relationships between the categories by ongoing, iterative studies between newly formed empirical categories and theoretical justifications. Consequently, the descriptive categories were into more theoretically oriented ones, resulting in a final data structure with three aggregated dimensions and ten second-order themes: (1) antecedents for the intention-action gap; (2) procrastination as a behavioral reaction to emerging challenges; and (3) procrastination

outcomes. The data structure can be seen in Figure 1. Based on these results, a process model of the intention-action gap has been created (Figure 2).

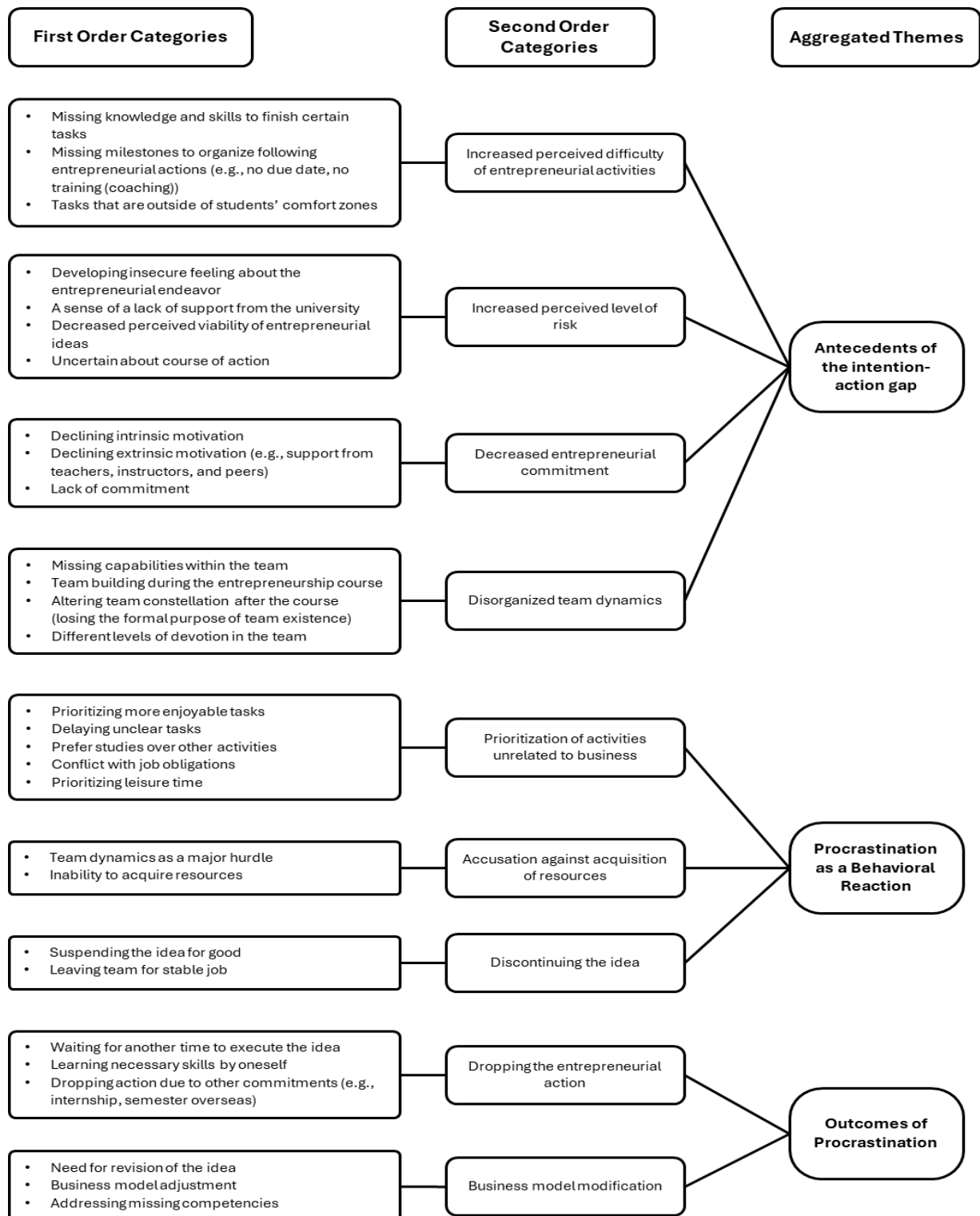
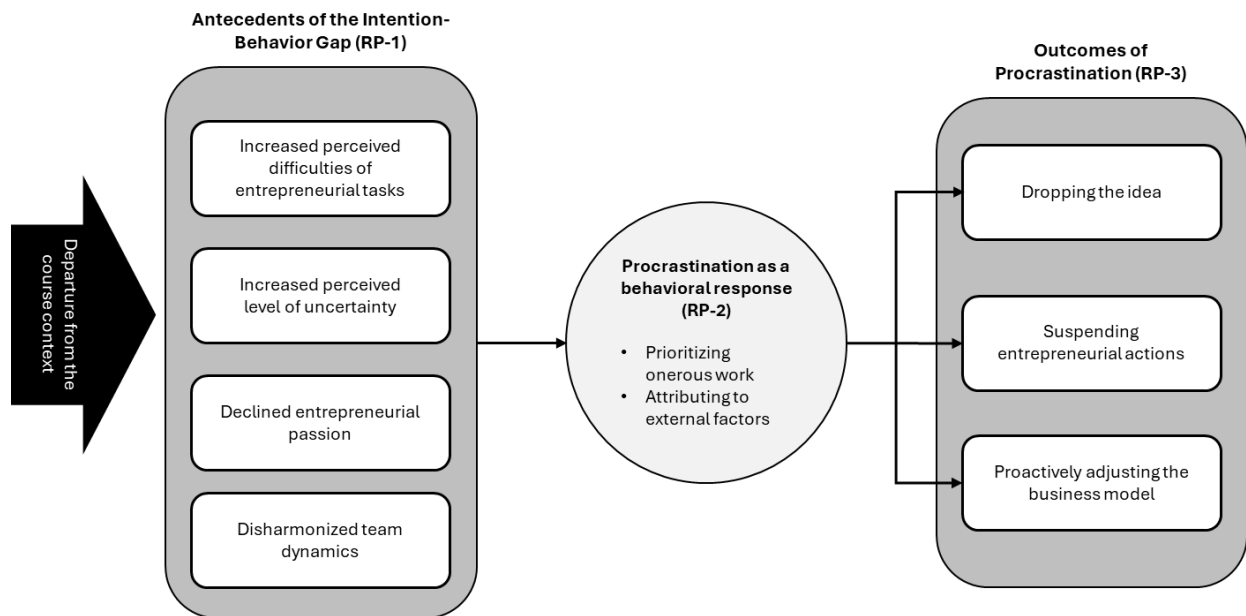


Figure 2: Data Structure



*Figure 3: The process model of the intention-behavior gap in students*

Figure 3 is a condensed, higher-level representation of the more detailed data structure presented in the Figure 2. Here is how the process model of the intention-behavior gap has emerged.

### **3.3.5.1 Antecedents of the Intention-Behavior Gap:**

Figure 3 presents four main antecedents, which are directly derived from the "Second Order Categories" in Figure 2: Increased perceived difficulties of entrepreneurial tasks corresponds to increased perceived difficulty of entrepreneurial activities. Increased perceived level of uncertainty aligns with increased perceived level of risk. Declined entrepreneurial passion" relates to Decreased entrepreneurial commitment. Disharmonized team dynamics is directly taken from disorganized team dynamics.

### **3.3.5.2 Procrastination as a behavioral response:**

In Figure 3, this is presented as a central concept with three components. These emerge from various "Second Order Categories" and "First Order Categories" in Figure 2: Prioritizing onerous work comes from prioritization of activities unrelated to business. Attributing to external factors can be related to accusation against acquisition of resources. The overall concept of procrastination is reinforced by categories like dropping the entrepreneurial action and discontinuing the idea.

### **3.3.5.3 Outcomes of Procrastination:**

This presents three main outcomes, which are derived from the "First Order Categories" under "Outcomes of Procrastination" in Table Figure 2: Dropping the idea corresponds to

discontinuing the idea and suspending the idea for good. Suspending entrepreneurial actions aligns with dropping action due to other commitments and waiting for another time to execute the idea. Proactively adjusting the business model relates to business model modification and need for revision of the idea.

In conclusion, Figure 3 represents a synthesis and abstraction of the more granular data presented in Figure 2. It captures the key themes and relationships identified in the research, providing a more accessible and generalized model of the intention-behavior gap in entrepreneurship and its associated procrastination outcomes. This abstraction allows for a clearer presentation of the main concepts while still being grounded in the detailed data analysis represented in Figure 2.

### **3.4 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics are an integral part of research studies that should be considered while conducting any thesis. Ethical concerns in research are a set of guidelines that guide the methodology and study designs a study can use. These guiding principles include voluntary involvement, informed consent, anonymity, secrecy, risk of harm, and outcomes communication. A set of ethical guidelines must always be considered while collecting data from individuals. Both the topic of investigation and the methodology used for that investigation raise significant ethical considerations. These elements help to maintain the integrity of the study, safeguard participant rights, and improve the validity of the research.

#### **3.4.1 Before Data Collection:**

- **Informed Consent:** The purpose of the study on procrastination and the intention-action gap was clearly explained to the student entrepreneurs. It ensured that they understand how their experiences with procrastination in their entrepreneurial endeavors will be explored.
- **Confidentiality and Anonymity:** Given that the study was dealing with potentially sensitive information about students' academic and entrepreneurial performance, confidentiality and anonymity was ensured by using pseudonyms. It is crucial to take care of because students may be hesitant to admit to procrastination if they fear it could impact their academic or professional reputation.
- **Participant Selection:** Fair selection of student entrepreneurs from various disciplines and entrepreneurship programs was ensured by contacting project coordinators of the respective universities to avoid bias in the sample.

### **3.4.2 During Data Collection:**

- **Respect for Participants:** The fact that discussing procrastination might be uncomfortable for some students it was dealt sensitively and everything was communicated clearly so that they feel comfortable once the interview process begins. Through clear communication it was ensured that they don't feel judged or embarrassed about their habits.
- **Honesty and Transparency:** It was clearly communicated how the information about their procrastination habits and entrepreneurial intentions will be used in my research for a better understanding about this phenomenon.
- **Reflexivity:** The preconceived notions or biasness about why students procrastinate or what makes a successful student entrepreneur was eliminated from the study.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Students were told that they can withdraw if discussions about their procrastination or entrepreneurial challenges become too personal or uncomfortable and that they can participate with their sweet will if they feel comfortable.

### **3.4.3 After Data Collection:**

- **Data Protection:** the interviews were stored in NVivo as it has sensitive information about the students' personal experiences.
- **Data Sharing:** While presenting the data to the relevant people it was ensured all identifying information is removed.
- **Respect for Participants:** The insights gained about procrastination and the intention-action gap from students were used to suggest policies to the policymakers and other relevant stakeholders so that the students can benefit from it.
- **Debriefing:** After the study, it was explained to participants how their insights about procrastination contribute to understanding the intention-action gap in student entrepreneurship. This could also be an opportunity to provide resources on managing procrastination for interested students.

These ethical guidelines were implemented in this research to ensure that the study is conducted responsibly, the identity of the participants is protected, and the study produces valid, ethical results.

## **3.5 Establishing Trustworthiness of Qualitative Data**

Trustworthiness for this qualitative research technique will be achieved by demonstrating whether the findings are dependable, credible, confirmable, and transferable. Qualitative

research has a special ability to offer researchers rich, story-based data that closely reflects human experiences. Just like how we trust a good storyteller, the level of trust we place in qualitative research findings depends on the trust we have in the research process. Building this trust is crucial. Thankfully, qualitative researchers have made efforts to explain how trust in their findings can be established and strengthened. However, it's important to note that ensuring trustworthiness is not an exact science. This discussion presents recommendations from various research experts on how to develop and rely on trust in someone else's research findings, with a focus on academic areas like developmental education and learning assistance. Lincoln and Guba's well-regarded framework from 1985 takes center stage, and insights from other scholars about trustworthiness are also included to provide a comprehensive perspective. In this study, rigor was meticulously maintained throughout the research process by adhering to Lincoln and Guba's framework (1985) of trustworthiness, which includes the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria were systematically applied to enhance the quality and reliability of the research findings:

### **3.5.1 Credibility**

In the context of qualitative research, credibility (Cutcliffe, 1999) refers to the degree of believability or trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1986) of the research findings and interpretations. It reflects the extent to which the study's results accurately represent the phenomenon being investigated and can be considered valid and reliable. Credibility is a key aspect of ensuring the quality and rigor (Yilmaz, 2013) of qualitative research.

### **3.5.2 Transferability**

In the realm of qualitative research, transferability (Kuper et al., 2008) refers to the extent to which the findings and insights generated from a particular study can be applied or generalized to other contexts (Rodon and Sese, 2008) or settings beyond the specific case under investigation. Unlike quantitative research, where generalizability often seeks to apply findings to a broader population, transferability in qualitative research involves the applicability (Anney, 2014) of findings to similar situations or contexts. Transferability recognizes that qualitative research is often contextdependent, and the goal is not necessarily to create universal laws or predictions but to provide rich, context-specific (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) understandings of a phenomenon.

### **3.5.3 Dependability**

This is akin to the reliability (Lincoln and Guba, 1986) of quantitative research. It focuses on establishing the stability and consistency (Kemperaj et al., 2013) of the research, allowing for

confidence in the accuracy and trustworthiness (Anney, 2014) of the results. Ensuring dependability is essential in maintaining the quality and rigor of qualitative research.

#### **3.5.4 Confirmability**

Conformability (Shenton, 2004) refers to the concept of ensuring that the findings and interpretations of the research are rooted in the data collected and not unduly influenced by the researcher's biases, values, or preconceptions (Morse, 2015).

#### **Summary**

This chapter primarily discusses the research methodology for a study on student entrepreneurship and procrastination. It outlines the philosophical approach, employing subjectivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology within a qualitative framework. The research design centers on phenomenology, specifically Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), to explore students' lived experiences. The chapter details the sampling strategy, using purposive and criterion sampling to select 25 participants from three top business schools in Pakistan. Data collection methods, primarily semi-structured in-depth interviews, are described. The data analysis process, utilizing thematic analysis and NVivo software, is explained.

Ethical considerations are addressed, emphasizing the importance of informed consent, confidentiality, and participant welfare. The chapter concludes by discussing measures to ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative data, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

## 4 CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

### **Introduction:**

This chapter presents the key findings from our study on the entrepreneurial journey of students, focusing on the gap between intention and action in venture creation. In the following chapter the focus is to elaborate on each component of our process model, providing direct statements from the interviews and discussing the detailed interpretation for a better understanding of this concept.

A lot has been learned about the informal process of independent learning involved in establishing the notion of becoming an entrepreneur from the interviews. The study verified that there is, in fact, a considerable number of people who had thought about launching a business for years (our sample ranged from 6 to 36 months) but were still in the very early stages. When questioned about specific barriers preventing them from starting entrepreneurial activity, most of them cited a lack of knowledge (general or specific) or quoted very general explanations like "it all needs time" or "I just haven't taken the plunge yet." When questioned what specific actions they had made toward their entrepreneurial journey, nearly all of them said, "haven't taken any actions," or "planning." These descriptions are non-binding therefore easy to withdraw from with little to no commitment. However, some of the students who were interviewed had already taken small steps toward committing to their ideas, such as investing in working prototypes or contacting potential clients to get their input. It's noteworthy that the interviewed students had distinct ideas about what kind of business they wanted to start (business model) and how important they thought business would be in their future lives (many perceived it as their "main job"). It appears that the decision to choose a certain business idea and business structure, as well as the purpose of the business as the primary or secondary source of income, are intrinsically tied to the act of considering starting a business. Despite students making the necessary plans and arrangements, it has been demonstrated by the current study that procrastination contributes to the delay of entrepreneurial actions. This matter remains open to further research whether this trait is only an artifact of the study's sample size or whether there is a systematic phenomenon of people who can envision themselves as entrepreneurs for a long period of time without making any plans to act.

While a few respondents stated that learning was their main action plan, almost all of them stated that they were constantly seeking information. Depending on what sort of information we were looking for, we were able to interview a variety of people. Few students' self-reported study behaviors were centered on prominent personal growth and so-called motivational



literature, which includes "case studies" and "real-life examples of successful corporations." Some people looked for precise guidance (the term "concrete" appeared frequently in the statements) in the areas of product design, marketing, and, most frequently, the formal side of running a small business, such as filing taxes, registering a firm, or locating a right accounting office. In addition to the majority of research that is currently accessible, entrepreneurial action is a complicated, multi-stage construct with difficult-to-draw limits, which is an additional finding drawn from this set of interviews. Numerous research that has been conducted on the relationship between entrepreneurial intention and behavior define the latter as specifically launching a business (Bogatyreva et al., 2019).

The three main findings of the study include: (1) the antecedents of the intention-action gap; (2) procrastination as a behavioral response; and (3) the outcomes of procrastination which are outlined in the process model shown in Figure 2. After the program completion, students are obligated to leave the university context in order to continue working on their startup ideas after the module has ended. This is noteworthy since it places students' entrepreneurial efforts firmly into the university context. The key finding was that during this period of transition, students faced many challenges and obstacles, and they frequently reacted by procrastinating. As a result, some gave up on their startup ideas or delayed taking action, while others were able to modify their entrepreneurial plans.

## 4.1 ANTECEDENTS FOR THE INTENTION–ACTION GAP

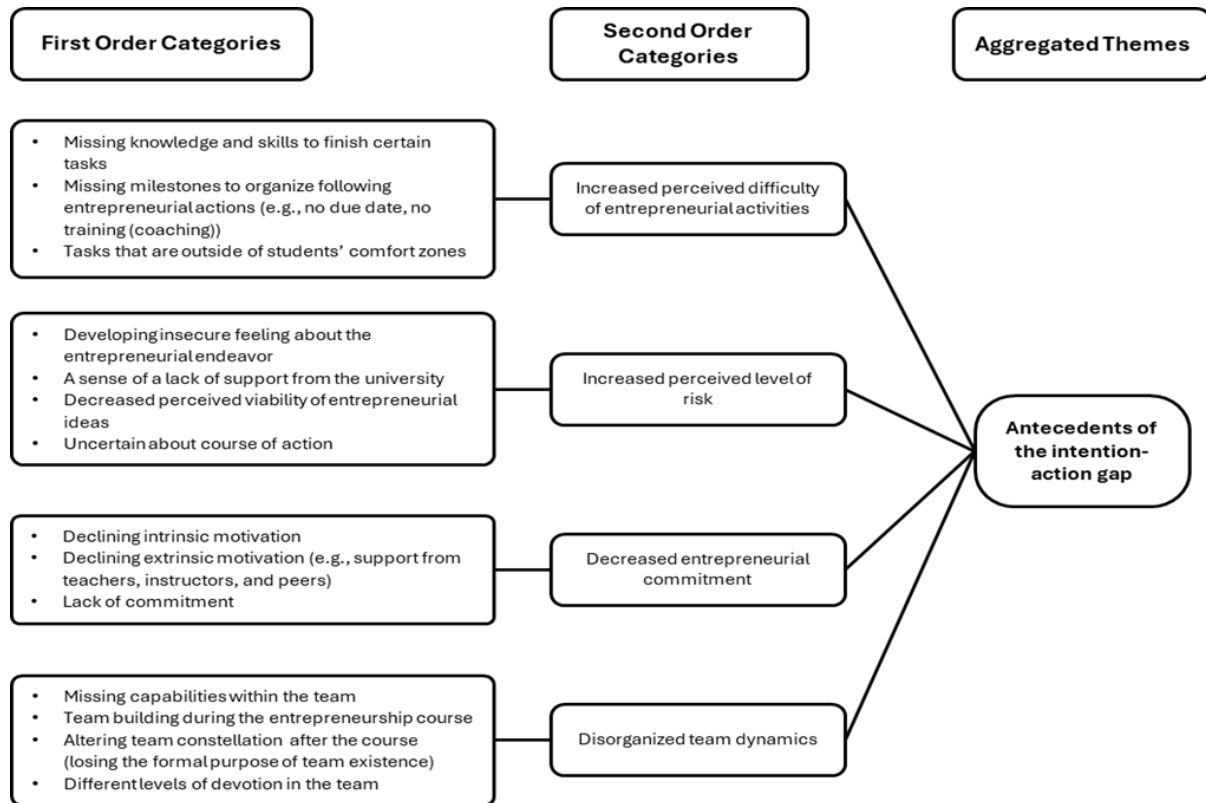


Figure 4: Antecedents for the intention-action gap

The intention-behavior gap in student entrepreneurship is examined in the first aggregated theme. Student entrepreneurs were engaged in multiple settings during the venture development module, including team, personal context, class, and student life. But after the course ended, students were no longer part of the degree context, which had provided a safe haven with regular feedback from instructors and systematic, structured milestone-setting. They underwent a shift from this embeddedness composition after the degree, which affected how they viewed and approached their entrepreneurial action. This study noted disruptive changes triggered by this process in the following domains: (1) entrepreneurial activities; (2) perceived risks; (3) extrinsic entrepreneurial commitment; and (4) team setup.

### 4.1.1 Entrepreneurial Activities

First, the study found that students' perceptions of entrepreneurial tasks were influenced by the transition phase following the program. One of the main challenges faced by the respondents was having to create their own startup. During the course, they only needed to adhere to the course's predefined outline and the benchmarks set by their lecturers:

*“Then you realize: Oh, it's difficult to launch a business now because how do you proceed forward? It is like this; you predicted it during the course, how it could go the other way, but the reality is always totally different.” (R1)*

*“During the degree, we put in a lot of effort and realized that the time allotted was just what we required [...]. The capacity to work dropped after the degree ended. [...] We had to give presentations on a regular basis in the course, which required a lot of preparation. Continuing a new business after the course takes quite a bit of self-discipline, which I believe people have forgotten.” (R8)*

Since students no longer received constant guidance from professors and instructors, they perceived tasks connected to entrepreneurial activity to be more complex. Furthermore, the venture creation program concentrated more on the development of business ideas and the early phases of idea validation. However, as the concept evolved, the tasks required in entrepreneurial actions got more complicated and diversified. As a result, taking the subsequent actions to develop their company concepts outside of the course required students to exercise self-management and discipline, which increased the perceived complexity of tasks.

The empirical data demonstrates that the tasks associated to venture development appeared achievable during the program, but the absence of support subsequently caused students to view the tasks to be more difficult. This point is confirmed by the education science literature, which shows that numerous contextual support variables, such as assistance from lecturers', can significantly influence task viability and performance. It has been observed that a person's capacity to complete a task is dependent on personal self-efficacy, and that challenging situations have an adverse effect on this crucial self-efficacy. Belief in one's own competence in carrying out entrepreneurial activities is a prerequisite before starting concrete entrepreneurial actions.

#### **4.1.2 Perceived Risks**

Second, we discovered that the perceived level of ambiguity surrounding venture creation increased significantly after the educational program ended. After completing the course, students were required to accept responsibility for their entrepreneurial choices and actions as independent entrepreneurial agents:

*“We were suddenly insecure about everything and had no idea where our company was heading. That's why we let it go.” (R21) “I had no idea what next move should be. ‘How do I continue with the idea?’ I asked myself, and I was blank. That, I believe, was the most difficult challenge.” (R2).*

Students felt worried by the shift of their role from passive program students to autonomous entrepreneurs. They struggled to adjust to a new role that required them to set milestones and be totally responsible for their decisions. As a result, there was some uncertainty about the future procedure, the genuine potential of the idea, and if it was financially sustainable. This perceived uncertainty has a negative effect on entrepreneurial decision-making, and the capacity of entrepreneurs to comprehend and react to it is viewed as a determinant of whether a company will succeed or fail.

#### **4.1.3 Extrinsic Entrepreneurial Commitment**

Third, respondents reported a reversal effect of their entrepreneurial intention. Some individuals formed their entrepreneurial passion during their involvement in the program. They found the venture creation process exciting, for example, when they unexpectedly received recognition for their startup idea - whether it was positive feedback from peers and instructors created short-term and possibly superficial entrepreneurial intention, which developed extrinsic motivation in these students to pursue a career in entrepreneurship after completing the course. However, their emotions and motivations for their business faded after the continual positive course feedback stopped:

*“I think you really need someone’s support. We did not have anyone or any sort of help after the course. Someone [...] who believes in you and where you say “okay, alright, I got this”.*  
(R4)

*“During the course, they [teachers and friends] only give you compliments and feedback. When you depart from the university with mere a business idea, then you realize that the support is completely gone. My motivation was reduced, and it kept declining with time.”* (R21)

*“Initially, the very first thing we got from everyone was their great response. We therefore asked ourselves, “Are we really about to pull off anything this big? Could it really be as large as we envision it to be? You know, things usually strike a chord with people on some level. When I think back on that period of time, I believe that was the motivation behind everything”.*  
(R18)

In these instances, the students' motivation to pursue an entrepreneurial career or to further develop their venture concepts came from an extrinsic entrepreneurial drive rather than from an internal one. After the program finished, under the new conditions, this temporary passion quickly subsided, and disappointment followed. According to the research, a key component of both business success and business passion is level of motivation. One can easily distinguish between original or self-driven passion and stolen behaviours by paying attention to

motivation. Since feedback came from outside and external factor in the contexts that were observed, it is noted that motivation was primarily borrowed. As a result, motivation factor was lost when this source of motivation was eliminated. The body of research also indicates that intrinsic motivation can act as a persistent motivator and is more resilient and long-term than extrinsic drive. Conversely, the real entrepreneurial action is seen to be more influenced by extrinsic drive. Thus, the ultimate loss of entrepreneurial motivation resulted from the extrinsic motive being eliminated from their lives as a result of the students leaving the course context.

#### **4.1.4 Team Setup**

Fourth, following the course context, the observed student reorganized their team setup. Here, students worked in groups created specifically for the course to build their startup ideas. As a result, within each team, there were notable differences in the degree of seriousness and commitment for each the idea. In addition to that, the venture creation course was primarily available to Management students, because of which the participants' backgrounds and skill sets were rather uniform. In contrast, the teams' ability to take practical entrepreneurial steps toward realizing their business ideas required them to develop diversity of skills, including those of developers and industry experts. For example, after finishing the course, R18 discovered that she lacked IT skills and networks in the logistics industry, which significantly slowed down the venture development process. In a similar situation, R12 explained his process of trial and error, which led him to swap out team members several times.:

*“We weren't a cohesive team at first; we only got along on a personal level. Lastly, I can say that my team have every skill and competence needed to carry out the business plan. It took quite some time until I met them”.*

In order to implement the business plan, R12 deliberately removed or replaced team members, whereas R2 first tried to stick to his original team structure. But he soon discovered that team members' desire and dedication to the enterprise idea differed at many levels, which made it difficult for them to overcome enduring barriers and go forward with the required actions:

*“I think a few of us lost self-discipline and commitment after the course. They [the other members of team] also had different priorities” (R2).*

After finishing the entrepreneurship course, students feel a shift in the embeddedness composition, which makes their tasks as entrepreneurs more difficult, and the uncertainties associated with the entrepreneurial plans are more intense. At the same time, the temporary

entrepreneurial passion slowly fades, and any alterations to the team structure led to even more instability and unpredictability.

## 4.2 PROCRASTINATION AS A BEHAVIOURAL REACTION TO EMERGING CHALLENGES

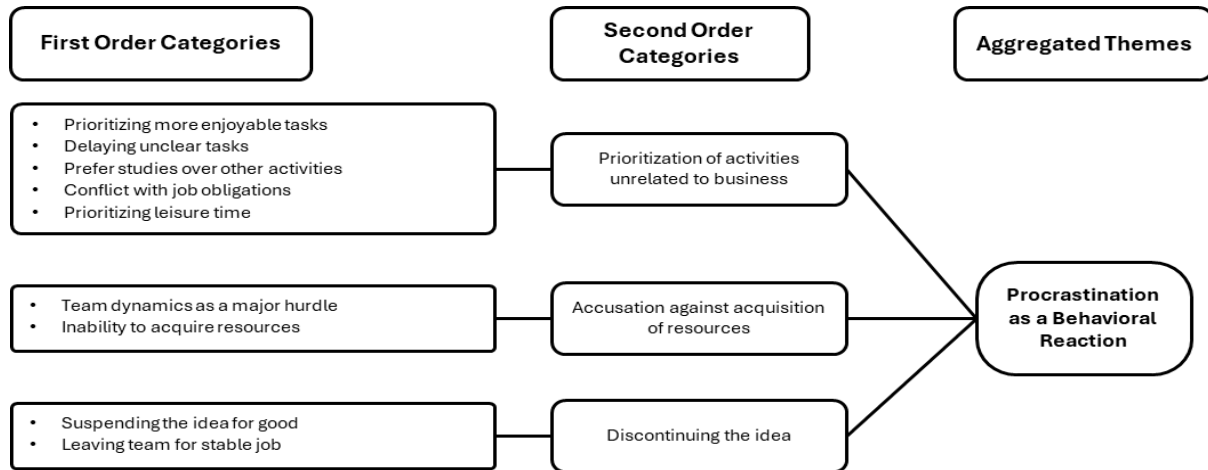


Figure 5: Procrastination as a behavioural reaction to emerging challenges

The second aggregated theme looks at how student entrepreneurs respond to new challenges in their actions. As a response to the evolving context, we discovered procrastination behaviors (i.e., postponing entrepreneurial activities) among our participants. Two justifications for students' procrastinating behavior were found in the data analysis: (1) Setting priorities and (2) accusation against the acquisition of resources.

### 4.2.1 Setting Priorities

First, respondents blamed changing work priorities over time for their inability to take decisive action toward developing their business idea. As a result, venture development was deemed less relevant than other important issues and hence students kept the venture creation process as their second priority:

*“This is just such a big burden and added pressure besides studying and working a job at the same time. I cannot spend hours working on the idea in my free time” (R17).*

When students entered into a new stage of life, that’s when the prioritization of their daily activities also shifted. This was evident in the case of R13, who chose a more stable career path over starting his own business after graduation.:

*“I was doing a job with a company. That was only logical justification. That was kind of realistic and feasible. So, you can get a decent career that you love while also being innovative*

*and moving things ahead. And, obviously, you don't just get money with a job, but you have an ambition that you wanted to reach anyway by studying. And it was only a short distance away within my reach. I had the job offer letter; all I had to do was take it, and the decision was simple". (R13)*

*"There was also a lack of planning in the business activities. It was almost hard to plan. That is why other tasks such as the semester overseas and other university courses were given priority, because I had no idea what was going on or how I was going to carry on with the idea". (R9)*

Clearly, both of these comments strongly indicate that uncertainty had a substantial effect on students' decision-making power on how they prioritized upcoming events.

From a psychological point of view, people procrastinate doing things as a way to control their emotions. The importance placed on emotion regulation impairs self-control, which is required to accomplish the required goals, as seen by the interviewees' inability to go forward with their separate endeavours by taking decisive action. After departing from the course environment, participants put off challenging and unpredictable entrepreneurial responsibilities. At the same time, they preferred activities that were more enjoyable, including working with companies to gain experience. Additionally, a number of participants found motivation to remain occupied by giving preference to their higher education and recreational activities. Students choose easier-to-manage activities to procrastinate tough and challenging tasks. The interviewees' motivation to work on their startup ideas declined as they tended to avoid negative feelings. The transition from idea to action was halted at the same time by their growing uncertainties regarding the composition of their team setting, the competencies they were missing, and the viability of their idea as a whole.

#### **4.2.2 Accusation against the Acquisition of Resources**

Second, a few respondents looked elsewhere for justifications for their inaction even though they were willing to act. For example, some of them explained how it was impossible to carry on working on the startup idea because of the other members of the team as they failed to acquire potential teammates:

*"I think we mainly lacked a little bit of passion and commitment in the end. Because if everyone has no passion anymore, I am no longer in the mood to continue either". (R2)*

*"So, I believe a lot of time has gone by and very little progress has been made since we lacked team competencies, and many ideas have created castles in the air while doing very little in*

*practice. I believed that the team's skills and competencies were lacking to carry out the idea".*  
(R5)

*"Another thing I'll mention is the commitment to work due of the team's casual approach towards the idea".* (R23)

Aside from the team structure, respondents also attempted to pin their inaction on a lack of personal resources as well as access to resources from outside players.

*We did not have enough resources, so I feel like if we could invest more money and resources into marketing, uh, it would be another picture for us. So that was one thing that I felt was lacking for us* (R5)

Similarly, R11 attributed her inaction to an investor:

*"At that time, I could not move forward as I had an investor who was still looking for investment and not initiating as of yet."* (R11)

*"When I tried to apply for those funding, the big challenge was only the incubated startups were eligible for applying to those funding. I wasn't incubated anywhere, so I missed out on angel investor".* (R9)

The findings we obtained on the consequences of procrastination are in line with studies People are frequently happy to accept credit for their accomplishments and articulate their success in terms of their personal competencies. If they don't succeed, though, they often place the transfer the blame onto outside factors—for example, the challenge of learning new skills. As a result, whether or not the results are favorable, entrepreneurs may continue to see themselves positively. For example, R2 avoided taking responsibility for his own actions by blaming his teammates for not being committed, which caused him to put off taking initiative. Additionally, R11 transferred accountability to her investor, an outside major stakeholder. Furthermore, the majority of those surveyed attributed the halting of their entrepreneurial endeavors to either initial procrastination or projecting a sense of laziness during this process. Some claimed responsibility for their procrastination, while others had valid reasons—such as a lack of resources or poor team dynamics—to support their actions, believing there was no other option. However, upon being questioned at the end of their conversation whether they had put certain startup-related duties on hold, the students thought back on their experiences and acknowledged that in the majority of cases, the actions were put on hold due to their procrastination, and in other circumstances, it was the primary cause. The above-mentioned



evidence indicates that procrastination is most definitely a cognitive activity that frequently happens without conscious awareness and can also be implicitly observed in some cases well.

### 4.3 Outcomes of procrastination

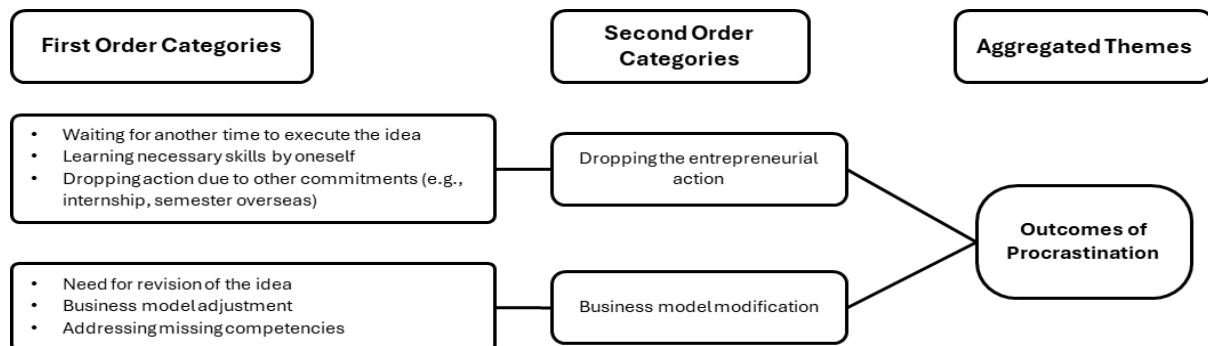


Figure 6: Outcomes of procrastination

The results of procrastination are examined in the third aggregated theme. Three distinct patterns emerged from the outcome of procrastination of the students: (1) abandoning the idea completely; (2) delaying the entrepreneurial action; and (3) modifying the plans for the venture.

#### 4.3.1 Abandoning the Idea Completely

The respondents stopped working on the business proposals as a result of the first two observations. Looking at one case R11 decided to abandon the idea completely due to scalability concerns, ; however, R21, who (initially came up with the original concept and led the team) chose to delay the execution, citing a lack of necessary expertise:

*“I would simply say, I do not think the team was kept together as well as it should have been. That was, I believe, the primary reason. You might have made a lot of changes [...], but that spark was just missing. [...] because I did not want to go on with it if everyone else was losing motivation”. (R21)*

*“IT is my major weakness because I intend to construct a digital business model but am unable to design an app myself. As a result, I must invest in competence. That does not work in the absence of funds. As a result, I opted to further enhance my education. And when I say, okay, I am capable of programming such things myself, [...] I can bring back the idea with its potential and with my capabilities [...], then I will give it a try again. (R19)*

Conversely, R13 and R17, decided to follow other non-entrepreneurial career options:

*“The employment offer was there, and all I had to do was accept it. It was simple for me to make a decision. Because you never know if a startup will succeed or, in case if it does, how successful it will be. So, whether you become wealthy or fall into debt”. (R13)*

The study's findings show that while students' entrepreneurial goals were strong at the ending of the venture creation program, they gradually evolved over time and eventually stopped taking entrepreneurial actions.

#### **4.3.2 Delaying the Entrepreneurial Action**

*During the course I was very confident and did not give much attention to finances and that how am I going to collect and manage it. Then, when the course was over, I started to notice the motivation declined entirely because there was simply no one who actively came up to me to help me with my idea. (R15)*

One noticeable observation was the progressive decline in entrepreneurial ambitions as a result of students' paused attempts at business. On the one hand, the students began to consider the circumstances around their entrepreneurial initiatives from a variety of angles, such as the team structure, the venture's apparent viability, and the larger competitive landscape. Those who were driven primarily by external factors—such as encouragement from instructors or mentors—realized that pursuing the venture endeavor was more difficult than it had first seemed. However, the drastic change in students' function and context, going from being classroom participants of the course to being autonomous entrepreneurs, requiring constant effort, regulation, and passion.

#### **4.3.3 Modifying the Plans for the Venture**

*“No, I am not dropping the idea of starting my venture. You can say it's on halt currently as I am working towards my goal but first I need to save up”. (R13)*

The majority students' entrepreneurial motivation, which had only been momentarily and superficially formed during the program, was diminished by constantly running across roadblocks, which caused them to procrastinate and postpone their business responsibilities. In the end, the level of entrepreneurial ambition was insufficient to handle increasingly difficult and unappealing tasks, like learning new skills.

*“I have set up small milestones that will help me reach there, the job, extra courses, learning from you tube videos and networking is all a part of the bigger plan.” (R21)*

Then these students realized that they couldn't start their own ventures due to a lack of motivation and resources, they began to modify their plans. Many opted to take up jobs to save

money for their future ventures. This strategic pivot allowed them to accumulate the necessary financial resources while gaining valuable work experience and skills that could be beneficial for their entrepreneurial aspirations. By taking this pragmatic approach, they hoped to eventually overcome the initial roadblocks and reignite their entrepreneurial ambitions with a stronger foundation.

### **Summary**

In conclusion this chapter sheds lights on the challenges faced by student entrepreneurs after completing a venture creation program. This chapter highlights how the transition from a structured educational setting to independent entrepreneurship can lead to increased uncertainty, reduced motivation, and procrastination among student entrepreneurs. It emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation and self-discipline in overcoming these challenges and successfully pursuing entrepreneurial endeavors.

## 5 CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the research study on the challenges faced by student entrepreneurs in translating their entrepreneurial intentions into actions. It explores the theoretical contributions to existing literature, practical implications for various stakeholders, and suggestions for future research in the field of student entrepreneurship.

### **Discussion**

The qualitative study's findings appear to support the idea that procrastination provides a fresh, theoretically intriguing perspective on the process of starting a business. The delay caused by procrastination allow entrepreneurs to accumulate more resources (financial, social, or knowledge-based) before launching. This idea connects with resource-based theories of entrepreneurship (Alvarez & Busenitz, 2001). While procrastination is undoubtedly a factor that impedes entrepreneurial efforts, the results have highlighted forces that effect the possibility of transforming from intentions to actions. Gur & Mathias (2021) provide some fascinating insight into this process by examining the significance that social and personal identities have in starting a business and becoming an entrepreneur. Numerous research are linked to the extensive body of literature about the importance of education in starting a business. While the existing body of research usually supports the notion that entrepreneurship is teachable, this can present difficulties in "unusual entrepreneurship" situations, such as businesses backed by immigrants or indigenous people (Burger-Helmchen, 2020).

The results of this study theoretically add to the body of knowledge on student entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education. Initially, this research adds to the growing body of knowledge regarding student entrepreneurship in academia. It is only lately that entrepreneurship academics have begun to pay attention to students as unique entrepreneurial agents, despite the fact that students create many successful firms at higher education institutions (Beyhan and Findik, 2018). Students can take advantage of the resources and infrastructures that universities provide to help their entrepreneurial endeavours because they are integrated within the academic environment (Ayob, 2020). However, only quantitative methods have been used almost exclusively to explore how these contextual factors affect students' entrepreneurial activity (Jansen et al., 2015; Morris et al., 2017). As a result, the emerging scholarly research on student entrepreneurship requires that additional exploratory studies must be conducted to identify unique connections between student entrepreneurship and other contextual and individual characteristics. This study used a qualitative research method to acquire a deeper

understanding of these students who despite their initial entrepreneurial ambitions found it difficult to move their startup initiatives forward. We determined that the completion of entrepreneurship education was a pivotal moment that caused disruptive modifications and a number of complications for venture creation. Our data have led to theorization of a process wherein these difficulties construct psychological barriers and ultimately reduce students' desire to start their own businesses. Consequently, we recommend the following research proposition:

*RPI. Since students' entrepreneurs are required to leave the academic context upon course completion, they undergo significant transformations in their embeddedness composition which leads to the intention-action gap in student entrepreneurs*

To the best of my understanding, this model is the very first to explain why, even after the completion of entrepreneurial program, students are unable to translate their entrepreneurial intent into emerging entrepreneurial activities. In entrepreneurial contexts, embeddedness can play a critical role. For example, entrepreneurs often rely on their networks for resources, advice, and support. High levels of embeddedness can provide significant advantages, such as easier access to funding or knowledge about market opportunities. However, excessive embeddedness might also lead to constraints, such as being locked into certain practices or norms that inhibit innovation or adaptation to new environments. Second, by highlighting the significance of comprehending the intention-action gap, this study also adds to the little knowledge on entrepreneurship education. The most widely used metrics in research to assess the results of entrepreneurship education have been entrepreneurial ambitions (Kozlinska et al., 2020; Loiet al., 2016; Longva and Foss, 2018; Nabi et al., 2017). However, our findings showed that students might give up their entrepreneurial ambition after completing the entrepreneurship degree since they face significant challenges in transitioning from being mere course attendees to independent entrepreneurs. In entrepreneurship education, the venture formation course is becoming more and more mainstream. As a result, students now play a more active role as entrepreneurial agents rather than just passive recipients of educational content (Seikkula-Leino et al., 2010). Even while students participate in the program as quasi-entrepreneurs, it's important to realize that their learning environment in lectures is very different from that of independent business owners. This research has shown how the venture creation course gave students a safe and encouraging environment allowed them to develop their ideas. It also enabled a systematic approach to venture creation, which decreased perceived uncertainty and raised the perceived viability of the business concepts. Thus, this safe space for lectures increased students' aspirations to become entrepreneurs at least

momentarily. On the other hand, the more at ease and confident students are during the program the more severe disruption they undergo post-program. An additional noteworthy observation revealed that several students formulated their entrepreneurial intent mainly due to the encouraging remarks they obtained from instructors, mentors, and local stakeholders throughout the course of the program. It's interesting to note that their disappointment at not getting any supportive help following the course resulted in a decline in their desire to start their own business. Three theoretical implications for the field of entrepreneurship education research are provided by the study's findings. First, academic researchers should critically reevaluate the notion of entrepreneurial intention as an outcome measure of entrepreneurship learning. The second is that taking into account the transition regarding students' roles post their venture development courses as a crucial component of entrepreneurship education. Thirdly, there is a need for further study various forms of entrepreneurial intentions; we found a notable distinction between intentions resulting from extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Our findings highlight the need of taking into account the combined effects of situational and individual factors when studying procrastination. Hence, we then recommend the following study proposition:

*RP2. Procrastination is caused by emerging risk due to contextual disturbances, lack of motivation, and the growing complexity of entrepreneurial activities. As a result, student entrepreneurs prioritize tasks with lower perceived uncertainties labelling external forces as barriers in an effort to rationalize their procrastination.*

Third, the results of this study contribute to scholarly discussion regarding the intention-behavior gap in academia, both with regard to general entrepreneurship and in terms of student entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education. Scholarly conversations about entrepreneurial intents base themselves on the notion that entrepreneurship is purposeful and intentional behavior, and that the establishment of an intention is the first stage in starting a company (Kautonen et al., 2013; Krueger et al., 2000). But in light of the intention-behavior gap, a number of researchers have recently called into question this notion (Van Gelderen et al., 2015; Kautonen et al., 2015). As Kautonen et al. (2015) point out, inaction is actually not unusual among young entrepreneurs outside of academic context. However, this intention-behavior gap has received relatively little attention from scholars (Nabi et al., 2017). Shirokova et al. (2016) have helped close this gap in the literature by identifying gender, age, entrepreneurial family environment, risk avoidance, and the entrepreneurial environment of the university as mediators of the intention–action relationship in student entrepreneurship. likewise, Kautonen et al. (2015) referred to determination or self-control as a potential

moderating influence on the intent–behavior link, arguing that intent formation is mainly motivational, whereas the conversion of intents into action is mostly volitional. The study at hand adds value to this emerging research area by identifying procrastination as a behavioural reaction of student entrepreneurs as a reason for the intention–action gap. Additionally, the results also show how students engage in a complex cognitive process in which they try to attribute (or assign blame to external factors) their decisions to pause their entrepreneurial activities. Based on the above conversations, we formulate the subsequent study proposition:

*RP3. Procrastination following the entrepreneurship course leads to a slow decline in students' entrepreneurial intentions, as students consider perceived project viability and their personal entrepreneurial drive in light of internal as well as external factors like individual entrepreneurial capabilities, expertise within teams, and access to resources.*

## **5.1 Conclusion**

This chapter includes the conclusions that emerged during the research study. This conclusion is established on the purpose of the study regarding examining the role of procrastination and hurdles that student entrepreneurs encounter when it comes to starting their own business. The findings and implications for the encouragement of entrepreneurship are intriguing. Subsequently, the practical implications are presented for the study and suggestions for future research in the subject matter of the study are included.

## **5.2 Practical implications**

The findings and outcomes of the study give significant signals for policymakers in both the education and business sectors in order to develop policies that make it desirable and practical for individuals to establish new enterprises. The study also adds to Pakistan's little research and understanding on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behavior.

### **5.2.1 Implications for entrepreneurship educators**

It is suggested to educators teaching entrepreneurship to provide their assistance to students even after they have finished their course. Postcourse support for instance can facilitate students' progressive transition from being merely participants in venture development courses to independent entrepreneurs. Some examples of this support include creating project milestones, engaging students with regional stakeholders, and offering constant feedback. Most crucial, in order to lessen the shock that students experience from abrupt changes in their surroundings, entrepreneurship educators are recommended to provide their support as soon as the course ends. On the other hand, an abundance of post-course assistance from teachers could cause students to misjudge the viability of their ventures and their own capacity to manage high

levels of uncertainty and volatile competitive settings. Therefore, it is advised that entrepreneurship educators concentrate on helping students become self-sufficient after the degree or training is completed. Moreover, it is imperative that instructors highlight the risks and difficulties associated with the venture formation process in addition to the fascinating aspects of entrepreneurship. As a result, students' perceived uncertainty would be lessened, and their expectations of the forthcoming entrepreneurial processes would be more reasonable if a balanced perspective on entrepreneurship is presented. One approach to achieve this would be to invite student entrepreneurs who kept working on their venture idea (in the form of concrete steps) after course completion to appear as guest lecturer and discuss their experiences along with the difficulties that come with making the transition from being a student to an entrepreneur.

### **5.2.2 Implications for higher education institutions**

It is recommended that higher education institutes support a university entrepreneurial ecosystem as a protective environment (Morris et al., 2017; Theodoraki et al., 2018). According to Theodoraki et al. (2018), "various participants who embrace a common goal of entrepreneurial support within a particular geographic area and who are linked with a specific university" constitute the university entrepreneurial ecosystem (p. 155). According to this study, formal and informal institutional contexts both have an effect on students' entrepreneurial endeavours at higher education institutions, while entrepreneurship education only partially contributes to student entrepreneurship (Ayob, 2020). To achieve an extensive support environment for entrepreneurial students, various startup supporting institutions such as campus business incubation centres and student associations for startups need to be closely connected to one another. In order to facilitate a seamless transition for student entrepreneurs when they leave their course context certain steps should be taken. For example, entrepreneurship instructors can direct students who have strong entrepreneurial ambitions to other university organizational units that can assist them in developing their intentions into practical entrepreneurial actions.

### **5.2.3 Implications for policymakers**

Over the past few years, there has been a growing recognition among policymakers that entrepreneurship education serves as a useful tool for encouraging students to engage in entrepreneurial activities and fostering their entrepreneurial goals. However, our results imply that entrepreneurship education alone might not be adequate to foster students' long-term entrepreneurial aspirations. We suggest that in order to narrow the intention-behavior gap among student entrepreneurs, policymakers should encourage creative educational or



pragmatic approaches. For example, in order to assist students in becoming self-sufficient business owners, legislators might provide funding for projects aimed at creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem on campuses. Additionally, it can be observed that government scholarships are especially beneficial to students as they reduce the initial risk while project leaders get ready to execute tangible entrepreneurial measures, as seen in the example of R9. Graduates should be supported to pursue entrepreneurship as a profession option rather than relying on the government or private sector for job prospects. Policymakers should create regulations that make it feasible for graduates and others to establish a new business, which is an area where Pakistan needs a lot of improvement. According to research (Zhang, Duysters, & Cloodt, 2014) students that go for entrepreneurship studies or courses will probably start a new business. It is past time for the government to implement entrepreneurship-supporting policies and for the Higher Education Commission to show support for pursuing entrepreneurship courses. Perceived desirability is one factor that encourages people to pursue entrepreneurial careers, and prior research has found that entrepreneurship education has a substantial influence on perceived desirability, suggesting that policymakers should consider entrepreneurship courses in academia and foster environment that supports startups.

### **5.3 Limitations and research outlook**

There are numerous limitations to this study which might have an influence on the findings and the conclusion reached. First, this study was conducted with students that emerged from three top universities of Pakistan with different level of entrepreneurship education experience. As such, our results are inherently context-specific and provide only a limited degree of comparison. Although one of the most prevalent approaches in entrepreneurship education involves venture creation, each and every course has a slightly different format, learning, content, and pedagogical approach. Additionally, there are major differences between the business development courses offered by higher education commission to students in business administration as compared those with no prior business experience (Souitaris et al., 2007; Turner and Gianiodis, 2018). Based on the geographical viewpoint, it is obvious that students in Pakistan are positioned in distinct context and situations compared to those in other countries. This study did not address the effect of national circumstances and culture on student entrepreneurship (Olutuase et al., 2020; Shirokova et al., 2018). In order to investigate the significance of contextual elements in student entrepreneurship, it is advised that future researchers carry out several case studies to take contextual differences into account in their analytic or qualitative comparison analysis (cf. Rihoux and Ragin, 2009). Future study should be performed in other contexts and include students as well as other groups as a comparison in

order to obtain more analytical conclusions, according to experts. Future research and studies might repeat this study other nations with different economic and cultural characteristics, which could have a significant effect. Future research may go deeper into the many factors that influence self-employment intentions, as well as evaluating societal norms to obtain a better understanding of the situation. Second, for a number of reasons, selection bias could not be completely eradicated from our study. Entrepreneurial ambitions were linked to entrepreneurship education and past entrepreneurial experience. From a methodological perspective, the personal characteristics of the students and their prior experiences before the venture development course are not given much weight in our study. According to the literature, intention-behavior linkages or the effects of entrepreneurship education may be moderated by personal characteristics like gender (Westhead and Solesvik, 2016; Wilson et al., 2007). Furthermore, prior research has demonstrated the important influence of a student's a priori entrepreneurial ambitions (Bae et al., 2014; Linan et al., 2011), entrepreneurial family history (Hahn et al., 2020; Shirokova et al., 2016), and prior entrepreneurial experience (Fayolle and Gailly, 2015) on the formation of entrepreneurial intentions among students. In light of this, we advise that future studies gather empirical data at the start and ending of the program to measure participants' initial objectives and attitudes toward entrepreneurship and assess how these develop as the program progresses. Studies should also take into account a greater number of respondents and certain attributes of the subjects, such age, gender, or risk aversion. These revelations will contribute to a better understanding of the manner in which students' backgrounds affect how they react to issues related to the intention-action gap. Third, there is another methodological problem with this study because the interviews were done about three years after the venture development course ended, therefore the results were based on the respondents' retrospective opinions. Consequently, a longitudinal component of the venture development process is not taken into account in this study. Multiple interviews conducted often both throughout and after the entrepreneurship program would have yielded more insightful information about the venture development initiatives of the students. In addition, a large number of interviewees have not yet launched their goods or services onto the market and are still refining their product concepts. In the upcoming phases of their business ventures, these young entrepreneurs will undoubtedly face more difficulties; nevertheless, these cannot be included in this study. To better observe the dynamic shift from students to entrepreneurs, we thus recommend that future research be conducted longitudinally, using a series of periodically or bimonthly interviews with the relevant participants. Despite these drawbacks, the study is a significant advancement in the expanding body of knowledge

regarding student entrepreneurship in general and the intention-behavior gap in particular. As the causes and consequences of the intention-behavior gap in student entrepreneurship remain largely unknown, we suggest that future researchers look more closely at what happens to students once they leave the educational setting. According to this study, students are drawn into a dynamic process of defining their identities and roles once the course is over, and the situations in which they were immersed had a big effect on this process. This process has to be further developed in future studies in order to comprehend the environmental and cognitive components of student entrepreneurship.

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## 7 Annexure A.

### Codes

Name	Description	Files	References
(RQ1) Entrepreneurial Education	How many entrepreneurship related courses have you taken? what are the courses?	25	62
Entrepreneurship courses		22	41
Other courses		8	9
Short courses and trainings		7	12
(RQ10) Practical steps	What steps have you taken or plan to take to pursue your goals of starting up a venture?	24	103
Inability to start		16	21
Initial steps		14	30
Brainstorming		1	1
Feasibility analysis		2	3
Idea phase		10	16
Use of social media tools		5	6
Online learning		6	14
Side business		6	8
Work on time, money and experience		15	30
(RQ11) Role of education	How has your educational background prepared you for starting a business?	25	73
Case studies		8	9
Helped in decision making		4	5
Knowledge and clarity		17	29
Long working hours		1	1
Managing resources		10	16
Market knowledge		10	13

Name	Description	Files	References
(RQ12) Initiation of business	Did you start a business after course completion?	23	27
Ended the business		2	3
Failed to start		21	23
Started experimenting		1	1
(RQ13) Reasons of failure	If no, what were the main reasons for not taking immediate action after completing the course?	25	214
COVID		3	5
Education system		2	2
Financial constraints		21	63
Lack of awareness		2	3
Lack of communication		1	1
Lack of ideas		3	3
Lack of market research		1	1
Lack of motivation		7	10
Lack of opportunities		4	5
Lack of policies		1	1
Lack of potential		1	2
Lack of social support		3	3
Lack of team		13	35
Lack of technical skills		5	13
Laziness		5	5
Market competition		5	6
No feedback from workshop		1	1
No professional courses		1	6
Socio-economic factors		13	28
Teaching methodology		5	9
Time management		7	12

Name	Description	Files	References
(RQ14) Knowledge or skill gaps	Were there any knowledge/skill gaps that hindered you from taking immediate action?	24	56
Lack of entrepreneurial expertise		18	25
Skilled and knowledgeable		13	21
Unable to acquire external funding		7	10
(RQ15) Challenges	What were the challenges you have encountered in the process of starting and growing your business after the course completion?	23	65
Excessive risk		11	15
Fear of failure		9	14
Legal issues		4	4
Managing business activities		7	9
Procrastination		15	20
Unique working style		3	3
(RQ16) Confidence to act	To what extent did you feel confident enough to take the action of starting a business after completing the course?	24	47
Job seeking		5	6
Lack of passion		4	7
Learning from mistakes		1	2
Self confidence		23	32
(RQ17) Access to resources	What kind of necessary resources did you have access to or were lacking in order to take immediate action after the course?	20	72
Exposure		4	4
High self efficacy		5	6
Lack of equipments		2	2
Lack of family support		8	20
Lack of networking		4	6



Name	Description	Files	References
Lack of physical space		7	16
Importance of physical space		2	2
Lack of sponsorships		3	3
New regulations		1	2
No support from university		4	5
Personal resources		4	7
Supportive partners		1	1
(RQ18) Competing priorities	What were the competing priorities or other commitments that made it difficult to take immediate action after the course?	23	55
Education		9	12
Job		16	27
Other commitments		11	16
(RQ19) Surety to act	How sure were you to proceed with your business idea after the course completion?	20	32
Easier or better alternatives		8	10
Family support		2	3
Surety level		17	19
(RQ2) Interest in entrepreneurship	How did you first become interested in entrepreneurship?	25	137
Business family		3	5
Entrepreneurial mindset		12	15
Financial freedom		7	8
Guidance from teachers		3	3
New field of study		9	15
Perception of entrepreneurship		10	12
Practical learning		8	10

Name	Description	Files	References
Providing new opportunities		10	12
Sense of ownership		12	19
Social circle		11	18
Social media		4	5
Startup environment		6	9
Studying books and courses		4	6
(RQ20) Entrepreneurship experience	Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience in the course or entrepreneurship in general?	15	22
Easy to study		1	1
Financial resource		6	8
Recommendation for policymakers		10	13
(RQ21) First step in action	What advice would you give to someone who is interested in starting their venture but doesn't know where to start?	25	80
Basic market research		15	16
Communicate idea to relevant people		4	4
Don't settle for job		1	1
Experience startup environment		3	4
Experiment with ideas		5	5
Figure out resources		3	3
Focus on personal capabilities		5	5
Knowledge		3	4
Mentorship		2	2
Motivation		6	7
Networking		5	6
Novel and doable idea		5	7

Name	Description	Files	References
Persistence		2	2
Prefer courses over degree		2	3
Take the plunge		3	3
Team building		6	8
(RQ3) Content of the course	Tell me about the content of the course or what is that you can recall from the courses?	23	56
Business terminology		9	11
Entrepreneurs vs Businessman		8	9
Industry tour		1	2
Startup processes		23	34
(RQ4) Duration of study	Tell me about the duration of the course?	25	32
1-2 Years		14	14
1-5 Months		5	5
4- 7 Days		5	6
4-6 Years		7	7
(RQ5) Expectation from the course	What were your expectations from the course?	23	78
Business strategies		8	10
Easier to study		4	4
Lack of practical knowledge		16	36
Open to learn		9	12
Polishing skills		3	3
Unclear about role of entrepreneur		7	9
Working on projects		1	4
(RQ6) Expectation fulfillment	According to your opinion how were they met and to what extent?	25	100
Basic knowledge		18	27

Name	Description	Files	References
Career in entrepreneurship		2	4
Implementation		8	19
Research based		4	8
Satisfied with the course		13	20
Unclear about the degree		5	7
Unsatisfied with courses		12	15
(RQ7) Valuable learnings	What did you find most valuable about the course?	23	85
Business Challenges		5	9
Entrepreneurial concepts		19	32
No degree required		5	5
Open to explore		2	3
Supportive instructors		4	12
Turn problems into ideas		2	4
Unqiue courses		12	20
(RQ8) Understanding of entrepreneurship	How did the course influence your understanding of entrepreneurship?	19	42
Commercialization		2	2
Systematic process		8	10
Theoretical understanding		13	24
Unavailibility of partners		3	6
(RQ9) Intention formation	How has the course shaped your intention to start your own venture?	20	41
Entrepreneurial intention		16	23
Specialized degree		13	18