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Determinants of the Sustainable Entrepreneurial Engagement of Youth in Developing Country—An Empirical Evidence from Pakistan

Muhammad Nawaz Tunio^{1,2,*}, Iffat Sabir Chaudhry³, Sadia Shaikh⁴, Mushtaque Ali Jariko⁵ and Mohsen Brahmi⁶

¹ Department of Business Administration, Greenwich University, Karachi 75500, Pakistan

² Faculty of Economics, Alpen Adria University, 9020 Klagenfurt, Austria

³ College of Business, Al Ain University, Al Ain 112612, United Arab Emirates; iffat.sabir@aau.ac.ae

⁴ Benazir School of Business, Benazir Bhutto Shaheed University, Karachi 74660, Pakistan; sadiakhurram@live.com

⁵ Institute of Business Administration, University of Sindh, Jamshoro 71000, Pakistan; mali.jariko@usindh.edu.pk

⁶ Faculty of Economics and Management, University of Sfax, Sfax 3018, Tunisia; brahmi.mohsen@gmail.com

* Correspondence: m1tunio@edu.aau.at or drnawaz@greenwich.edu.pk; Tel.: +0092-333-2578025

Abstract: The article identifies the motivating factors behind the career preferences of university graduates who chose to engage in sustainable entrepreneurship. In this research, multi-methods—theoretical investigations and qualitative interviews—have been utilized to determine the factors responsible for promoting sustainable entrepreneurship in a developing region. The sample consisted of university graduates who chose to pursue their careers in entrepreneurial activities in Hyderabad, the sixth largest city of Pakistan located in Sindh Province. While determining why young academics choose entrepreneurship as a career choice, entrepreneurial careers are explored as an ongoing process of biographical sequences in which new ways of thinking and communication, new forms of economic and occupational challenges, and necessities as well as ways of success and failure are permanently claimed or raised. Due to these challenges, the youth are confronted with complex social and economic situation to deal with. The study findings provide guidelines on how sustainable entrepreneurship can be developed, engaged, and sustained in the future in developing and under-developed regions.

Keywords: sustainable entrepreneurship; sustainability-focused business; career; motivation; barrier; process; outcome; developing country; Pakistan



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1. Introduction

Sustainable entrepreneurial activity is how economic opportunities are discovered and utilized to achieve sustainable development for better economic prosperity, social cohesion, and environmental protection for future generations to come [1,2]. Sustainable entrepreneurship emphasizes creating a business that deals with the issues of economy, society, and the planet that contribute to the sustainability and social/environmental gains for others in society [1]. It is a method of conducting business with an innovative idea and dealing with the risk in this process by reducing the use of energy and other natural resources. Innovation and risk factors are important for a sustainable business [2]. Together with innovation, entrepreneurship also facilitates economic development in the region and helps in gaining financial sustainability for the youth because employment opportunities are marginal [3,4]. The successful engagement in sustainable entrepreneurship is influenced by several facilitators as well as inhibitors, which may change over a certain period and across geographical locations. Entrepreneurial motivations also vary in living contexts, experiences gained, and learning undertaken [5]. Several studies have highlighted the

significance of the small enterprises in job-creation, and its impact on the survival and growth of the economy.

Likewise, sustainable-entrepreneurial motivations have also been taken into consideration to determine the driving forces behind the motivation for engaging in sustainable entrepreneurship [6]. Sustainable entrepreneurship can be seen from different aspects depending upon the creative, strategic, and organizing processes [7]. The practice of creative response in commercial activities or business with an intention to contribute to the well-being of the economy, society, and the planet is a sustainable entrepreneurship. The economic changes in capitalist society entail entrepreneurial activity [8]. Entrepreneurial activity can be described as doing new things or doing things in a new way. Sustainable entrepreneurship is dynamic in nature and very natural, therefore, any single definition cannot be applied to define entrepreneurship as there are no criteria that can mention what is enterprise and what is not. Sustainable entrepreneurship is a set of new combinations [9].

It is significant to determine why the youth decide to engage in entrepreneurial activities as their career-choice after receiving their academic degrees, for achieving financial sustainability in their life and what motivates them to become engaged in sustainable entrepreneurial activity, more specifically in developing countries [10]. This research answers the following question: what motivates graduates to start their own businesses after completing their degrees? The findings gained from the study can be useful for the government bodies and the educational institutions who have been striving hard to develop and promote sustainable businesses in the country, as a replacement to meagre job opportunities available in the market [11].

The next section provides a literature review in which the theoretical background is supported with the triple bottom line, entrepreneurial intention, academic and sustainable entrepreneurship. Next, is the research methodology section that discusses the data collection methods and study participants, followed by the results and discussions on the findings. The paper concludes with implications and directions for future studies.

2. Literature Review

The authors conducted an extensive systematic literature review to identify academic entrepreneurship, particularly in developing nations. Various databases were used, including, Web of Science and Google Scholar, as search engines. Key words, including academic, entrepreneurship, developing nations, and Pakistan.

The following literature focuses on three important dimensions of the entrepreneurship, including entrepreneurial intention, academic entrepreneurship, and sustainable entrepreneurship.

2.1. Entrepreneurial Intention

To understand entrepreneurship better, its connection with entrepreneurial intention (EI) formation has been under investigation by the researchers for the last three decades [12,13]. The prior studies have tried to determine the factors that affect entrepreneurial intentions and play a dominant role in its formation. Throughout, focus remained on finding out why some people respond to specific conditions and situations [14].

Entrepreneurship is known for social and economic growth and employment creation. To achieve these outcomes of entrepreneurship, it is essential to understand entrepreneurial intentions and the factors affecting them [15]. In the prior literature, entrepreneurial intention is reported to be affected by both internal as well as external factors. Internal factors such as personality traits, and external factors such as environment and other contextual elements affect a person's intention to engage in entrepreneurship. Further, to make this understanding more robust, entrepreneurial intention is diversified and inspected from multiple domains of psychology, economics, management, education, and technology [16].

Ajzen [17] proposed a model and suggested that intention formation occurs through personal attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control. Personal attitude determines the positive or negative valuation about being an entrepreneur [18]. Subjective

norms determine the social pressure from family, friends, and other social sources that influence a person to pursue an entrepreneurial career. Perceived behavioral control determines the perception of situational competence that leads to the perceived easiness or difficulty in the entrepreneurial engagement [19]. Entrepreneurial intention is important in the formation of the entrepreneurial behavior, and it appears fundamental to the decision making of the human being. Thus, an entrepreneurial process is an intentional process and a certain planned behavior [20]. In this regard, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) also postulates that entrepreneurial intention depicts and predicts entrepreneurial behavior and the follow up actions to carry out the plans. The TPB determines human behavior and shows that the intention paves way for planning and planning paves way for the performing action [21].

Likewise, the Self-determination theory (SDT) also postulates that the human motivation and desire for growth are inherent. The SDT outlines the three core needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness that facilitate the growth of people, highlighting that human beings have a basic motivation for growth and achievement and a tendency to learn. These tendencies are supported by cultural and social contexts [22]. Thus, the theory of human motivation also reflects development and wellness [23,24].

2.2. Academic Entrepreneurship

Academic entrepreneurship is an increasingly recognized new source of knowledge and driving force of movement in the information society. It has a different role and contribution in a regional context and is held better in developed countries compared to developing ones. Primarily due to this, academic entrepreneurship in the context of developing countries has been taken into consideration in the current study.

Universities have evolved beyond traditional teaching and research activities and are trying to contribute to social and economic development. The economic development is not only a new mission and a new approach of the universities, but they are also in a transition phase and are transforming to be entrepreneurial in their actions [25]. Etzkowitz [26] and Clark [27] were the first to explore the concept of the entrepreneurial university. According to Etzkowitz [26], the role of universities is important in economic development, while, according to Clark [27], the entrepreneurial university is a process where the university seeks to innovate the way they manage their business.

Academic entrepreneurship is equipped with the knowledge that is created by academicians such as teachers, students, and researchers through business startups, spin offs, collaborations, patents, and licenses [28]. This shows that the flow of knowledge occurs and emerges from students, teachers, and scientists to the university. Hence, entrepreneurship has received the attention of academics to shape entrepreneurial intention [29]. The intentionality is a state of mind that forms personal attention, generates experience, and sets behavior towards entrepreneurial goals [30]. Thus, young people are driven to entrepreneurship, reflecting a combination of personal factors as well as contextual factors [29].

Academic entrepreneurship consists of a series of activities that include commercialization, collaboration with the industry, and stakeholders. However, commercialization includes entrepreneurship activities, publications, and the development of entrepreneurial graduates [29]. The recognition and transition of entrepreneurship in academics is influenced by several factors [29]. This has influenced knowledge and knowledge communication, with an increased demand for knowledge creation [29]. Therefore, there is increase in demand for graduates with an employability and entrepreneurial mindset and entrepreneurial skills, due to technological, social, and economic changes [29]. Universities provide social benefits and contribute to economic growth by pursuing academic entrepreneurship and related endeavors [31,32].

2.3. Sustainable Entrepreneurship

Sustainable entrepreneurship is recognized for the achievement of a sustainable economy. It paves the way for economic growth, social development, and to attend to environmental goals [33].

Sustainable businesses focus on the engagement of entrepreneurial activities involving processes effective for accomplishing the sustainable value related to social and environmental goals [34]. Here, entrepreneurship is treated as a significant solution to environmental degradation. In this way, entrepreneurship embraces the corporate social responsibility (CSR) to resolve environmental problems [35]. Environmental pollution can be reduced through entrepreneurial activities to support and promote the ecosystem [36].

Sustainable entrepreneurship is supported as a suitable approach that aims to solve social, economic, and environmental issues through innovative approaches. Furthermore, the idea of collaboration furnishes the conceptual overlap between entrepreneurship and sustainability [37]. Entrepreneurship, with respect to sustainable development, is a dynamic phenomenon that connects the 3Ps (people, profit, and planet). It encompasses social, environmental, and economic aspects between entrepreneurial processes, market transformations, and societal developments. Social, environmental, and sustainable entrepreneurship have advanced our understanding of processes of the discovery, creation, and exploitation of sustainability-oriented opportunities. The paradigm of sustainable development is based on the following three dimensions: economics, ecology, and ethics [38], where economics determines the profit, cost saving, economic growth, and research and development; ecology determines the natural resources' use, environmental management, pollution prevention (air, water, land, and waste) [39]; and ethics refers to the well-founded standards of right and wrong. On the other side, the social dimension determines the standard of living, education, community, and equal opportunities [40]. The nexus of the two of each dimension revolves around the concept of sustainability. The economic–social aspects include business ethics, fair trade, and workers right. The environmental–economic aspects include energy efficiency, subsidies, or incentives for the use of nature. The social–environmental aspect includes environmental justice and nature resources, both locally and globally [41]. The notion of the triple bottom line extends knowledge for the creation of goods and services through processes and systems that are free of pollution, conserve energy and associated natural sources, economically viable, safe for the workers, communities, and customers [42].

3. Materials and Methods

In this study, primary data have been collected using the interview method. An interview is a suitable tool for collecting data from the participants by asking them questions to gather information [43]. The study adopted semi-structured interviews to gain hold of the in-depth richness of the responses [44] as it gives the interviewee the chance to elaborate and explain issues in detail [29].

The interviews were conducted by university graduates of four different universities (namely, Sindh University, Mehran University, Isra University, and Sindh Agriculture University) located in the city of Hyderabad in Pakistan, who had recently started entrepreneurial careers within the time frame of three to five years [45]. The sample size of the participants was 20, as in the qualitative research, there is no rule of thumb for the sample size, and this depends on the nature of the research questions and the saturation of the data [46]. All the participants fall in the age bracket of 22 to 30 years. Half of them had a formal education in Business and Economics, while the others obtained their first degrees in the IT, Engineering, Medical, and Humanities fields. To reach the respondents, the snow-ball technique was adopted. Snowball techniques are used to reach the target population through social circles, social contacts, family reference, or with the reference of a friend or relative. In this way, respondents can trust and feel comfortable to share information and the purpose is served [47].

Interviews were conducted online with respect to the existing COVID-19 situation where social interaction and social meet ups were strictly prohibited by the government as well as institutions, and people were also reluctant to meet physically due to the health risk [48]. Online interviews were conducted with the help of meeting platforms, namely, Skype, Zoom, and WhatsApp, based on the participants' preferences [49]. Online interviews were flexible, cost effective, and time saving for both the interviewer and interviewee [49].

After completing the data collection, data interpretation was carried out, in which all interviews were transcribed (Table 1), and the transcription of the interviews was evaluated [50]. After the evaluation, thematic analysis was conducted in which codes were generated from the transcription [51]. After generating codes, categories were formed from the codes and then, final themes were generated from the categories, which are the findings of the study [52].

Table 1. Thematic analysis (Source: Created by author).

	Activity	Outcome	
1	Transcribing	Transcribing of recorded data	
2	Reading Transcription	Familiarizing with the data and streams	
3	Rereading Transcription	Extract the meaning of sentences and words and plan for the thematic analysis	
4	Thematic Analysis	Understanding and organizing the data, generating categories, and codes	
		Generating Codes	Filtering and generating code for the themes
		Generating Themes	Themes created for the findings
		Generating Categories	Categorizing data, picking and choosing the similar and dissimilar themes

4. Results and Discussion

The objective of this study was to find out the motivational drive for sustainable entrepreneurship [53]. Growing up across different environmental dynamics of family, society, and academics, what makes graduates choose the career path of entrepreneurship in Hyderabad (Pakistan)?

Eight themes were generated from the coding and categorization of the transcribed data from the interviews conducted with the university graduates (Table 2). The themes (Figure 1) included business education, entrepreneurship training and awareness through business incubators, monetary benefits, unemployment, family business, career, and self-drive. The findings are discussed in the subsequent sections.

Table 2. Themes (Source: Created by author).

Themes	Categories	No. of Codes
Motivation	Course of entrepreneurship	7
	Business incubation	9
	Entrepreneurship awareness	5
	Self-driven towards entrepreneurship	4
	Career choice	22
	Family background	10
	Independent income	3
	Unemployment reasons	7
Total codes		67

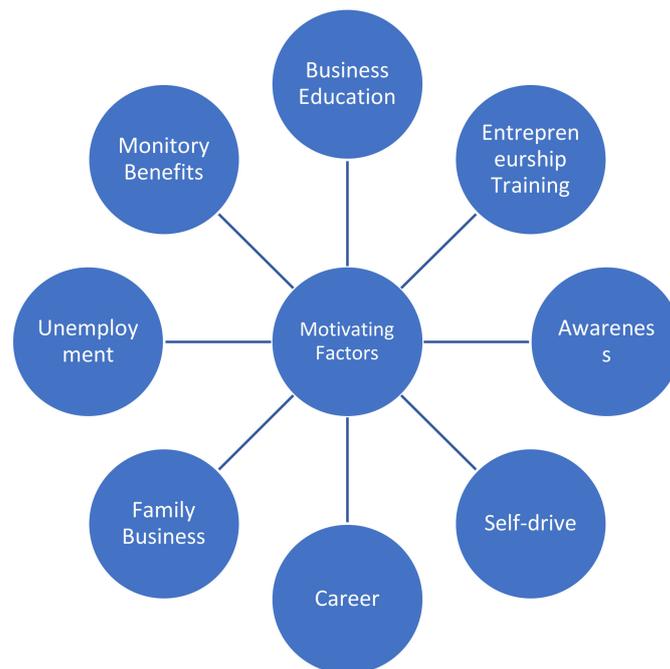


Figure 1. Career Motives for Entrepreneurship (Source: Created by author).

4.1. Course in Entrepreneurship

The first theme of the motivation category is the course in entrepreneurship. This indicates that the participants have attended courses in entrepreneurship, which included short training, courses, workshops, seminars, and courses integrated in degree programs. The graduates who are equipped with entrepreneurial skills in their educational institutions are motivated to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. Universities contribute to the development of society by developing the work-related skills among individuals. Through different programs and skill development activities, universities engage students in learning entrepreneurial skills. Hence, entrepreneurship-focused educational programs provided by the academic institutions are a driving force for the students and graduates to engage themselves in entrepreneurial activities [54]. The academic background of the respondents showed that they belonged to different degree programs and have different qualification levels. Therefore, a few of them never experienced entrepreneurship-based teaching; however, they had the opportunity of participating in the training programs, seminars, and workshops related to entrepreneurship and contextual issues, that inspired to explore careers in self-employment. With reference to this theme, respondents mentioned a variety of their impressions about entrepreneurship. Such as the following:

[R2]: “I had attended training workshops on the entrepreneurship by a non-governmental organization (NGO) where I got the idea about the entrepreneurship and then I decided to start my own business.”

[R6]: “I went through entrepreneurship training so; I have done practically on the ground some of the ventures related to my field-social-related start-ups.”

[R21]: “I have completed an entrepreneurship course under certificate entrepreneurship program, that’s why I was there for one month.”

Based on prior findings, the literature endorses the fact that the entrepreneurship related education and/or trainings/workshops attended by the individuals influenced them to take entrepreneurial initiatives, as this education or training not only boosted their confidence, but also developed the required business-oriented skills [35]. Betáková et al. [36] found that the intervention of educational institutions through entrepreneurial education helps students to develop and master entrepreneurial skills and apply those skills and learning in a practical field. The respondents also mentioned the effectiveness of the entrepreneurship seminar, as follows:

[R9]: "I attended a seminar on entrepreneurship, I learned, and I was convinced of the business. Since then, I started my business and I am happy with that".

[R23]: "I attended a short training about entrepreneurship at the university, I got this idea that I should start my business in my field and in the products I need the most."

[R3]: "I had studied in the course of entrepreneurship about how to find out what you want to do. So, I got this idea that I should work with children as it would be interesting."

Based on the perception of the study participants about the usefulness of the entrepreneurship course/trainings offered to them, it is important that different degree programs be supplemented with an entrepreneurship course, as this can benefit students from all disciplines, even when they are not business students [37]. Upon graduation, entrepreneurship-based teaching and training helped the students in taking entrepreneurship-based career options and starting their own business. Even if an entrepreneurship course is not mandated in the curricula, it should at least be offered as an elective course to ensure that students have the option to study it if they choose. As stated by the participants from non-business field:

[R16]: "I am master's in environmental engineering and my focus is on the biogas technology and biomass technology. I constructed a plant of biogas. In order to run successfully, I needed a support system and thus, I planned to develop an ecosystem."

Belz and Binder [38] endorsed the concept that students realize the importance of entrepreneurship and, thus, they are interested in taking entrepreneurship related courses or training. Furthermore, the findings indicate that most of the participants took an entrepreneurship-related course as part of their formal education and those who did not were trained/informed on entrepreneurship through training, workshops, or seminars. The respondents also belonged to diverse educational disciplines. Despite being from different disciplines and different degree programs, they had the opportunity to participate in academic training, workshops, short courses, and even degrees in the field of entrepreneurship. Participation in these programs influenced the interest of participants in entrepreneurship and take initiatives in entrepreneurial endeavors. As shared:

[R1] said: "During my study I had made my mind to start the business after completing my education/since my graduation, I am busy in my business and my education is my foundation".

[R4]: "After my B. Com, I have started my business of discount card which is based on 16 brands."

[R7]: "I completed a diploma in computer and business management from Islamabad. After completing my education, I moved to Hyderabad for the purpose of business."

[R8]: "I have done MBA and planed a business named 'Multi-Vendor Place'. It is an online business. It is a marketplace where vendors meet their customers such as Amazon, Alibaba and Daraz are doing online business."

The findings supported the outcomes of prior studies that reported the positive impact of entrepreneurship-based education on the entrepreneurship endeavors of the students. Being action-based, entrepreneurship courses focus on experiential learning, which develops the competences and skills required for entrepreneurship [55]. The entrepreneurship course material should not only contain knowledge-based material, but also be inclusive of practical exercises for idea conceptualization and starting a business. It develops students' understanding of the market's competitiveness as well as its mechanisms and main actors [56].

4.2. Business Incubation and Entrepreneurship Awareness

Business incubators (BIs) are the organizations that help start-up companies and entrepreneurs to develop their business by providing them services, such as office space, seed-money for starting their business, training, etc. They are the growth engines for the economic and social prosperity of small-medium enterprises (SMEs). Efficient and effective business incubators, directly and indirectly, participate in the development of entrepreneurial society. Furthermore, business incubators are productive in the commercialization of research and products. Especially those supported by the universities, serve

as an investment vehicle for the development of new businesses [57]. In this study, the theme of business incubation entails that university graduates had the opportunity to incubate their business at the business incubation centers (BIC) run by the universities. The graduates reported that they were advised to submit their business plans and present them before the selection committee of the business incubation center. Business plans with creative business ideas are selected and they are supported by being provided with office space, seed money, technical support, and mentorship for different time periods from three months to six months. After completing the incubation period of their business at the BIC, they are shifted to the market. After shifting in the market, entrepreneurs have to invest in their own office space and resources; however, they keep the availing consultation and mentorship from the team of the BIC [58]. As stated by the participants:

[R15]: “We got support from the business incubation center of university and got seed money for our plan.”

[R18]: “I had worked for six months in the business incubation center initially where I had prepared a business plan, developed its feasibility and then started to work.”

[R6]: “We applied for the incubation for running this venture and we were awarded space as office at campus.”

[R3]: “I had attended a training at IBA and participated in their academic entrepreneurship programs. I receive guidance from team and always available to help me.”

[R5]: “We started from a small step when business incubate was provided. We were given a seed money to work on the business ideas.”

[R9]: “As we are working in the space provided by the university therefore, we have great support where we do not need any external support in this process.”

[R13]: “University provided us space, mentorship and support. We had support from the Head of ORIC department also. Mentor guided us to improve our digital skills and art in our business plan.”

[R12]: “I studied different business sectors and business areas; besides, I had many ideas as well. However, I started business in agriculture field with the name of “Plantation”. Its purpose was to grow plants and sell to different stakeholders.”

[R13]: “Initially we had issue of infrastructure and space but later on ORIC department of the university helped us and provided with what required.”

[R17]: “My idea was incubated at Mehran university for one year and during that period university supported and after one year I shifted from university to market. University platform was very supportive, and it was not possible to do this. I have completed three years to my business.”

[R19]: “I had worked for six months in the incubation center initially, where I had prepared a business plan, developed its feasibility and then started to work. There I received space, infrastructure and mentorship. After six months, I continued doing work outside the incubation center.”

Ratten and Usmanij [59] endorsed the concept that the role of an incubator is that of a broker that works to set networks and affiliations. As nodes for knowledge transfer and diffusion in regional innovation systems, universities serve as hubs that connect actors in the triple helix of government, business, and academia [60]. The incubators supported by the universities provide support to the students and faculty in creating new start-ups [29]. Business incubators are the engine of economic growth in emerging societies and the development of an entrepreneurial society [61]. They do not only contribute as an economic vehicle, but also create job opportunities. BIs contribute to economic recovery and support smart growth [62]. An affiliation of incubators with universities ensures the raising of funds as well as the development of networks. Hence, incubators serve as hubs in connecting and mediating among the stakeholders, where these interactions and linkages accelerate the growth and generate the sources of capital for the nascent entrepreneurs [63].

The study findings revealed that entrepreneurs received information from the faculty of the university, and consultation from the incubation team members, regarding starting a business and implementing a business plan. The university remained the main source

of information during the endeavors, which supported them in their decision to adopt entrepreneurship as their career. In the same way, the concept that nascent entrepreneurs can grow and stretch the boundaries with all sorts of support that is essential for the initial period of the start-up is endorsed by Etzkowitz [64]. New entrepreneurs need guidance on how to start businesses and run them successfully. Therefore, business incubators address the concerns of the new entrepreneurs and support them by providing all the required resources. They nurture the new companies through advising, launching, and monitoring their progress by providing important services, such as training, advising on how to develop business and marketing plans, building management teams, and offering general business services such as accounting, advertising, and legal and financial assistance [65]. Business incubation and business training can assist the entrepreneurs to handle the resources of the enterprise and develop capabilities to employ in detecting business opportunities. Such all-inclusive services to a new business help in pumping life into novel ideas-based start-ups. It is also essential for the entrepreneurs to develop personal attributes such as creativity, initiative, autonomy, self-confidence, and leadership, and focus on technical skills such as oral and written communication and self-organization. Along with this, the basic skills of planning and decision-making are also significant [66].

The study findings also revealed that the ratio of females participating in entrepreneurial endeavors was more (12) and their motivation level for becoming an entrepreneur and starting a venture was also higher compared to their male counterparts.

[R1]: “My father is an engineer and there is nobody doing business in my family. I am the first one. My father encouraged me for this kind of business”.

[R2]: “My all family members are doing jobs in the government sector and I am first in my family to start a business and it is my personal business idea.”

[R3]: “My father supported me morally as well as my life partner trusted me and appreciated my every effort. He supported me morally as well financially. My life partner allowed and supported me to attain the entrepreneurship course from MUET where I got guidance and information about the entrepreneurship process.”

[R5]: “My father is an employee in a SSGC company as a supervisor, and my family is not an educated. I belong to a Baloch tribe and I am a first girl of the family who got educated and doing business despite of being female.”

There might be several reasons behind this motivation, but support from the business incubation center fueled their efforts and helped them in realizing their dreams into reality. To start with, the young entrepreneurs might not be able to create multiple ventures, but they are more adventurous, enthusiastic, and energetic with a higher capacity to deal with the risks, learn, and experience them smartly [67]. The education and training of the entrepreneurs enables them to perform well under the guidance of the business incubation and develop their abilities and skills in developing and managing sector-specific strategy and business execution plans. Business incubation provides nascent entrepreneurs with an environment that develops their adaptability, flexibility, imagination, and knowledge accumulation. Thus, the entrepreneurial awareness and services provided by the IBC become a base for the success of the new entrepreneurs [68].

4.3. Career Choice and Self-Driven towards Entrepreneurship

This theme indicates the career motive of university graduates as a reason for their willingness to become an entrepreneur. This theme considers entrepreneurship as an option for their occupational path [69].

Drawing on the concept of a career in the literature, it reflects on occupational path as a collection of individual choices through their professional life, considering different occupational possibilities, organizations, and forms of employment. Career choices are influenced by the changes in the labor market leading to instability and unpredictability [70]. Such changes call for self-employment to replace marginal career options in the market and come to the front line as a career-choice. Entrepreneurship may also seem precarious as a career-choice, but competencies, intention, and willingness enable entrepreneurs to deal

with the vulnerability and make it a leading choice for their career. Hence, entrepreneurship can be considered as an important occupational path [71].

Self-driven towards entrepreneurship entails that university graduates were personally driven towards entrepreneurship without any external influence. It depicts that they were the first in their families to start a business. Their family members were involved in economic activities other than self-employment. The participants set the precedent in their families by starting their own businesses and stepped-up in career-choices different from that of their family members. Here, the motive of university graduates for entrepreneurship was to choose a different career path than their family members and parents, to ensure that they can feel autonomy and freedom in exceling in the field of their own choice. Little is known about the factors that encourage an individual to choose an entrepreneurial career, especially about female entrepreneurs [72]. The study participants stated the following:

[R1]: "I am happy with this plan and I am doing with my choice, I am feeling easier with my business than any job. Because, in my business, I have command and control to monitor the things and I am free to drive them as I want."

[R2]: "I was also doing job, but I was feeling very bound and dependent on the job. Job was limiting my skills to grow. Therefore, I preferred entrepreneurship where I can contribute and grow."

[R3]: "For me, my freedom matters, and job or employment kills my freedom; I don't like anybody to interrupt my freedom. If I will do job, I will be bound, and I am not bound here."

[R4]: "I personally preferred to do my own business. I am from Hyderabad, Pakistan. I have born, grown-up and educated in this city so it was my dream to do business in my city. My entire family is doing job from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. but I am only first to choose my different career path different than my family. But my family supported and encourage me. I have accumulated my own money to conduct business and contribute to the community. I wanted to introduce a modern trade by applying new approaches."

[R5]: "I want to experience what I can do better. For example, if business does not work, then I will go for the job. But for the six months, I will try to experiment if I can do it or not."

[R6]: "I was also doing a government job and due to certain reasons, I quit that government job and entered into this field due to my passion, my mindset which pushed me towards this field."

[R7]: "Mostly my family members are related to the jobs or government jobs and they prefer to do government jobs. There is no one who is involved in the business, I am the only one who started entrepreneurial activity. I was also doing a government job and due to certain reasons, I quit that government job and entered to this field due to my passion, my mindset which pushed me towards this field."

[R8]: "I belong to a family who never involved in the business because my all family members are doing jobs in the private and government sectors. When I was 18 years old student, I thought that business is better than job".

The findings indicated that after completing university education, the university graduates chose entrepreneurship following their desire and passion. Being inspired, they initiated business activity in the field of their interest. Working independently and experiencing freedom have been highlighted by the entrepreneurs as the prime reasons. Along with the interest of having their own business, university graduates wanted to be a job provider [73]. Being an entrepreneur enabled them to create new jobs and provide employment to other individuals in different roles. The findings also illuminated that one of the study participants had been previously employed; however, due to his interest towards entrepreneurship, he left the job and started his own business, as no one retires from his/her own business. One of the participants emphasized that he wanted to introduce a modern trading method by getting rid of the traditional methods and traditional business; therefore, he introduced a novel business plan. Moreover, one of the participants shared

that entrepreneurship was his dream as he had a passion to pursue a kind of work where he is his own boss [74].

The findings confirmed that the choice of an entrepreneurial career reflects the environment that the entrepreneurs belong to, as career choice depends on environmental stability and hierarchical and social structures. The changing environment has its effects on the way careers are shaped [75]. Entrepreneurial activities depend on the existence of opportunities in the environment and the willingness of the person to take the risk with new ideas. A career perspective is important for the entrepreneurs in the context of an unstable labor market. This entails the importance of entrepreneurship as an important occupational path. Entrepreneurs create their own careers by acting outside the boundaries and restrictions that bound them in formal jobs [76].

4.4. Family Background

Entrepreneurship is a lifestyle decision that follows cultural, social, and family values in business activities [77]. It shows that people want to be entrepreneurs to balance their personal interests with business pursuits [78]. The prior literature reveals growing interest in the understanding of the contextual influences on entrepreneurial research, including social, family, and cultural impacts [79]. In the current period, there is an increase in demand to research questions regarding how family, cultural, and social changes are adopted in business practices by the entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship can be expressed as a novel recombination of products, services, or processes. However, from a cultural perspective, entrepreneurship can be defined as “the carrying out of a novel recombination that results in something new and appreciated in the cultural sphere” [80]. This approach focuses on the novelty in business activities by integrating cultural perspective in the business activities [81]. Specifically, storytelling plays a focal role in entrepreneurial endeavors. Meaning, culture enables the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols in a business, which adds narrative to a specific theme. Culture can be used to refer to the identity and the stories about market opportunities.

Therefore, this theme reflects the culture of their family as a motivating factor for the university graduates to become entrepreneurs. A study participant revealed that she was encouraged by her father to carry on with the family business. Due to the family business, the entrepreneurs had a strong inclination towards managing their own business instead of joining any job. Since their childhood, they have been observing the business stories, behavior, attitude, culture, and business-oriented economic activities. Due to this, they did not need any external or internal influences to choose entrepreneurship, as they were born in a business-oriented environment. As the participants mentioned:

[R4]: “I belong to a business family, my father is a business family, he is running a shop polythene bags in Tower market, Hyderabad.”

[R5]: “My father’s business is totally different, it has no any relation to my business, but somehow it was motivation that my father was not under any boss, so he does not have to answer to anyone. This was a motivation that we should do something ourselves.”

[R6]: “Hindu community in Pakistan belongs to business by majority, thus, my father, my uncle, cousins have business. So, I had mindset of business and I was personally inclined to business.”

When a female graduate, who did not belong to a business family, married a man who was already in business, she became involved in it as well. As mentioned by [R9]: “I am first from my family to start business. As I belong to landlord family.”

However, few respondents mentioned that they were inspired by their social circles and friends to start a business immediately after completing their university education.

[R6]: “I got support from my family and friends, even my community and business fellows. They supported me in opening this business financially as well as morally.”

Entrepreneurs who belonged to a business family had an advantage in starting a business because of the experience and support of their family during the initial phases or any critical conditions of the business. These entrepreneurs have support if any con-

flict or uncertainty pops-up while conducting the business. Entrepreneurs with a family business and history have better chances of succeeding in business and running their enterprises smoothly [82]. Hisrich [83] reinforced the concept that the individuals acquire entrepreneurial skills due to the family businesses, as it facilitates intergenerational succession. The family business offers a valuable learning environment equivalent to learning from any formal education programs. The family business prepares individuals with practical training from the experienced family members, who are a valuable source of information for those who are new in the market. On the other hand, as mentioned by R5, family business may not attract the individuals to start business in the same product/services line; rather, entrepreneurs might choose a different line of business [84]. Their education and training also enable them to act as knowledge brokers and support the development of the family business by adopting new entrepreneurial practices.

4.5. Financial Motives

The extant research supports the concept that financial motives are an important driver of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs may start their business to generate income from it. The earnings from entrepreneurial activities are considered as a means for economic survival. The independent and unfixed income of the entrepreneurs may be driven by the strong desire for financial success and becoming rich [85]. Entrepreneurship, compared to other occupations—either paid or non-paid—has become an interesting occupational pattern supporting careers and the desire for self-fulfillment [86,87]. Part-time entrepreneurship is also advantageous as it entails the flexibility of being self-employed but leaves time for family commitments, a day job, or education. It is also a means to generate additional income, to take a hobby to the next level, or to exploit a small market niche [73].

[R4]: “At this age, every boy or girl wants to be financially stable and do not want to be burden their parents to fulfil their wants like credit cards, iPhone, car, etc.”

[R20]: “If one is not financially stable; he cannot progress in his life. So, my workers who are working with me are receiving a good amount of money”

[R14]: “My own earning by starting my own start-up.”

The findings reflect the financial motives of the respondents that drove them towards entrepreneurship. Additionally, a respondent mentioned that he jumped into entrepreneurship because he wanted unlimited profits and benefits. Another entrepreneur revealed that he wanted earning to not be bounded by time or pay scale, as they are in other jobs. Hence, gaining financial stability is an important factor for generating the interest of the entrepreneurs in becoming self-employed [88].

4.6. Unemployment

The literature suggests that entrepreneurial activities come into existence due to unemployment, where they start from a small scale and grow into large-size firms. Small businesses contribute positively to economic performance by reducing unemployment and creating self-employment [89]. The link between unemployment and self-employment is not new. Deteriorated economic conditions and limited or unavailable sources of income lead to self-employment, a viable alternative in case of unemployment. The choice of an individual to start their own business helps them in becoming self-employed [90]. The concept that increasing unemployment creates the way for start-up activity because the opportunity cost of starting a business is not very high is endorsed. Entrepreneurial talent can find an opportunity and can start a business with novel ideas and a novel approach. In this situation, entrepreneurial activities thrive the economic system of the individual's household as well as the local region [91].

[R1]: “One who cannot get job should not be disappointed because entrepreneurship is much better than job. Entrepreneur is a person who seeks opportunities and evaluates it.”

[R3]: “I want to share that people are with mindset for the formal job are difficult to be convinced for the entrepreneurship, it will take time but entrepreneurship is a right way for youth to work and make their future.”

[R5]: “After completing my education, I applied for the different jobs, but somewhere relevant experience was required and somewhere there was nepotism and political influence on the recruitment and selection process. As I belong to the lower-middle class family and I had no political reference, neither I had experience to meet the job requirements. Therefore, I could not secure job anywhere.”

[R7]: “I am unable to get the job, so I am doing this all.”

[R9]: “We are not leaving ourselves unemployed”.

The above given findings indicate that unemployment was an important motive for a few of the university graduates to pursue entrepreneurship. They were jobless and looking for employment opportunities. They had no means of obtaining formal jobs; therefore, they started their own business. One of the respondents shared that she was unemployed and was looking for work, whereas another respondent shared that he was working but had a very low income and there was no chance of growth in the career, and it was due to this that he left the job and started his own business to maintain a sound income flow as well as growth opportunities [92]. It is imperative to highlight that few respondents showed their interest in formal employment as their first choice of career and looked for the opportunities for long time after completing their university education but, when they failed, they started their own business instead. The finding is consistent with Bowen and Hisrich's [74] study, which reported that when the unemployment of people of different ages evolves into long-term unemployment, they are dragged towards entrepreneurship by necessity. Unemployment and mostly the unemployed youth are an increasing problem in developing countries compared to developed countries [93].

In essence, the university graduates who have leapt into the ocean of entrepreneurship shared their experience that they have taken the inspiration for becoming entrepreneurs from different sources. Primarily, entrepreneurship education carries a significant positive influence on the interest of the graduates to become entrepreneurs, leading them to think outside the box [94]. The second important driving force is the business incubation centers and the entrepreneurship awareness created by these BICs, which facilitates the graduates to enter into the unknown world of the entrepreneurship [78]. Few universities in the region of Hyderabad have established business incubation centers to support and promote entrepreneurial activities on the premises of the universities, for a limited period. These opportunities are provided on a merit-basis to graduates from across the disciplines [95]. Business incubators invite creative business plans and ideas from graduates, select potential business ideas, and accommodate them into their premises. Selected candidates are provided with seed money, office space, technical support, and entrepreneurial mentorship from business experts [71]. The findings confirm that BICs were very lucrative for supporting graduates from different academic backgrounds to become engaged in self-employment [96]. They provided an altered environment for the new entrepreneurs where they could work and thrive on their business plans under specialized mentorship and move into the market once they were ready to be on their own [97]. Those with no formal entrepreneurship training and education were trained and developed to perform well in the market and become sustainable entrepreneurs, contributing towards the well-being of oneself, one's family, society, and the environment. Academic entrepreneurship provided a strong support for the university graduates in creating employment opportunities for themselves and others when the market had none and choosing entrepreneurship as their sustainable careers. Along with teaching and research roles at universities, entrepreneurial roles have become imperative for providing new career paths for university graduates, faculty, and alumni [98].

5. Conclusions and Implications

For the sustainable entrepreneurship in the region, the role of universities that educate, train, and prepare graduates to become masters of their own careers, is vital. Despite the several challenges and hurdles in the entrepreneurial process, the educated youths' inspiration to be self-reliant and independent is highly valuable for their unmatched

endeavors into sustainable entrepreneurship in developing regions. In developing country like Pakistan, it is imperative to develop sustainable entrepreneurial pathways and inform the educated masses on how they can achieve financial sustainability and growth by being their own bosses and running their own businesses and how sustainability-focused businesses help society and the planet to be the safest place for future generations.

This study has contributed to the literature by producing knowledge about the regional context and the use of the sustainable entrepreneurship for creating means of employment. Next, this study provides implications for the practitioners. The government institutions, universities, and developmental sector should consider the worth of sustainable entrepreneurship and support young entrepreneurs in developing the skills required for becoming entrepreneurs. Additionally, universities and government bodies must focus on developing more BICs in the least developed regions of the country to facilitate the development of entrepreneurship where unemployment is higher among the youth. The study is a reflection of the entrepreneurial initiatives taken in a specific region of the country. For future studies, it would be interesting to expand this research to the main hubs of commercial activity—Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad—to determine how universities are contributing to sustainable entrepreneurship in most developed regions of the country through their academic entrepreneurship initiatives.

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