

## Determinants of Entrepreneurial Intention among Female Students in HEIs in Developing Countries: Evidence from Dhofar Region of Oman

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### Abstract

The main objective of this study is to investigate how the entrepreneurial intention of female students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Dhofar region of Oman is influenced by their prior entrepreneurial experience, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurship education. The data was collected using a survey method, distributing a structured questionnaire to 340 undergraduate female students in three HEIs in Oman at the beginning of the first semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. Multiple regression analysis and ANOVA tests were conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 24). The findings from the regression analysis demonstrate a statistically significant impact of previous entrepreneurial experience, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention. This study provides insights into how the previous entrepreneurial experience, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurship education of female students contribute to their aspirations of becoming entrepreneurs. The results suggest that leaders in the Ministry of Higher Education and universities should consider the entrepreneurial intentions of female students when developing intervention programs aimed at enhancing students' business orientation. Additionally, this study contributes to the existing literature on the entrepreneurship environment in Oman.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial experience; self-efficacy; entrepreneurship education; female students; Entrepreneurial intention, Oman.

### 1. Introduction

In recent decades, entrepreneurial activity has garnered significant global interest due to its profound impact on the economies of numerous countries. This sector has attracted attention due to its ability to generate innovative products and services that enhance overall societal well-being and contribute to economic development. Women's entrepreneurship, in particular, has emerged as a prominent global trend. Its significance lies in the fact that support for women entrepreneurs has far-reaching implications for social and economic progress. According to Barringer and Ireland (2010), women's entrepreneurship has been steadily increasing in the United States and European countries. The literature reports a 20% rise in the number of women-owned businesses in the US over the past decade. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are recognized as catalysts for economic growth and development in developing nations as they contribute to job creation and the reduction of unemployment. Women across the world have demonstrated remarkable success in managing small enterprises (OCCI, 2006).

Shapero and Sokol (1982) developed a model highlighting the impact of life changes and human behavior on entrepreneurial attitudes. Similarly, Ajzen (1991) introduced the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which emphasizes the connection between beliefs, behavior, and entrepreneurial intention. According to TPB, individuals' beliefs and attitudes towards a specific behavior, such as entrepreneurship, can significantly influence their aspiration to become entrepreneurs in the future.

Earlier and current research studies showed that there are important factors affecting the decision of people to become an entrepreneur or search for a job. As reported by (Dyke et al., 1992), there is a strong relationship between people's previous business experience and their orientation toward entrepreneurship.

The Sultanate of Oman has been proactive in supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) since 1995. In 2013, the government introduced institutional and legislative measures to provide practical and targeted support for SME growth. The establishment of the public authority for the development of SMEs through Royal Decree No. 36 of 2013 served as a foundational step in implementing these policies. More recently, the government has formulated specific strategies to diversify the economy beyond oil, which had previously been the primary source of dependence. The government's focus is on promoting the mobilization of resources within the private sector, with a particular emphasis on "Omanization" and motivating Omani citizens to support and establish their own private projects (McElwee and Al Riyami, 2003).

Various initiatives have been undertaken to foster entrepreneurial education and training in Oman. This includes organizing workshops and seminars, as well as incorporating entrepreneurial courses into the curriculum of higher education institutions across different disciplines. Entrepreneurship education and training are being implemented in all Arab countries to encourage innovation and creativity as drivers of development. Oman has demonstrated a significant commitment to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education, with various national-level initiatives in research, funding allocation, curriculum development, teacher training, and collaborations with non-governmental organizations (UNESCO, 2010).

In recent years, the process-based approach to examining entrepreneurial intentions has gained prominence (Carte et al., 2003). However, there is a limited amount of research focusing on female entrepreneurs in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, as the economy in these regions is heavily reliant on the oil sector and expatriate workers (Dechant & Al Lamky, 2005). Oman serves as an example, where only a few studies have been conducted to explore and evaluate the factors, such as self-efficacy, prior experience, and entrepreneurship education, that might influence the intention of female students to engage in business activities.

With regard to the Omani studies that dealt with entrepreneurship, we note that they focus on measuring students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship. The majority of these previous studies, such as the study of Al Maamari (2018), Al Kaf (2014), Abu Zahari & Segupan (2012), Al Barashdiya (2021), Ministry of Social Development (2020), and Ghouse et al. (2021), examined the entrepreneurial intention and its development, as well as their relationship to some variables such as entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial exposure, and entrepreneurial experiences.

Among these diversified studies, only one study investigated female students (Ghouse et al. (2021). Therefore, our study sought to investigate what the literature on entrepreneurial intention in Oman had not investigated thoroughly, leaving a gap that should be covered.

The emphasis on studying female students is justified by the findings of previous research. Studies have indicated that female students in entrepreneurial education (EE) programs are less likely to express high levels of entrepreneurial intention compared to their male counterparts (Westhead & Solesvik, 2016). In other words, the benefits of EE are not equally experienced by female and male students. Recognizing this disparity, the Council of the European Union (2014) suggests the need to enhance EE and pay special attention to underrepresented groups, including women, to promote their engagement (Westhead & Solesvik, 2016). In the context of Oman, it has also been observed that entrepreneurship may not be the preferred choice for young Omani women, despite the government's financial support in this area (Al Musa, Hadil, 2022).

The government's initiatives to promote entrepreneurship education and training have been acknowledged as commendable; however, there is limited understanding regarding the effectiveness of these programs. Although efforts have been made to improve the educational system and foster entrepreneurial skills, the assessment of their actual influence on students' preparedness for the job market and future prospects remains weak. Evaluating the impact of these initiatives is challenging due to their relatively recent implementation, making it difficult to determine their true effectiveness (Al Ghassani, 2010).

The main objectives of the present study are to investigate the attitudes that influence the entrepreneurial intentions of female students enrolled in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Dhofar region.

In this particular context, it is essential to investigate whether these factors can contribute to an increase in the career intentions of female students to pursue entrepreneurship or aid them in assessing their suitability for entrepreneurial endeavors. Gaining knowledge about the impact of these factors is highly significant for policymakers and academics within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Oman.

This research focuses on undergraduate female students from various colleges and specializations, excluding those in the foundation program. The aim is to examine how self-efficacy, previous experience, and entrepreneurship education influence female students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) within the context of the Sultanate of Oman. Additionally, the study seeks to determine the relative significance of these factors in motivating female students towards entrepreneurial aspirations.

## **2. Literature Review**

Entrepreneurship is a term that encompasses various definitions in the literature. According to Krueger et al. (2000), it can be described as a mindset focused on identifying and pursuing opportunities without fear of risks. Hodgetts and Kuratko (2007) define entrepreneurship as the ability to creatively operate a business while taking calculated risks to achieve both financial and social objectives. Scott (2007) synthesized previous research and defined entrepreneurship as the activity of discovering, evaluating, and exploiting opportunities to introduce new goods, services, organizational methods, markets, processes, and raw materials through organized efforts that were previously nonexistent.

There are many factors have the potential to influence the entrepreneurial intentions of female students. As stated by (Seth, et al.2017) “apart from individual qualities, there are numerous factors which play a role in boosting the entrepreneurial education (EE). The authors selected three factors namely, previous entrepreneurial experience, self-efficacy and entrepreneurship education as they are use repeatedly used in entrepreneurial literature (Krueger & Dickson, 1993; Kosei, 2014; Linan and Fernández, 2011; Qiao and Hua, 2019; Ardichvili et al., 2003; Kolvereid & Moen, 1997; Ekpo & Edet, 2011) as being having an influential role on entrepreneurial intention of the female students.

### **2.1 Previous entrepreneurial experience**

As indicated by multiple prior studies, including Ardichvili et al. (2003), there is a notable and statistically significant relationship between previous entrepreneurial experience and entrepreneurial intentions. Kosei (2014) conducted an extensive survey involving 187 university students to investigate the connection between prior experience and career intentions. The findings reveal a positive impact of entrepreneurial experience on entrepreneurial intentions.

Fatoki (2014) conducted an empirical investigation to determine whether there is a significant difference in entrepreneurial intention between students with prior work experience and those without. The study specifically focused on final-year undergraduate students in the Department of Business Management at a South African university. The findings revealed that business students exhibited a high level of entrepreneurial intention. Furthermore, students with previous work experience demonstrated a slightly higher level of entrepreneurial intention compared to those without prior work experience, although the difference was not statistically significant. Additionally, Dyer (1992) concluded that individuals lacking family support may face discouragement, leading to difficulties in pursuing new ventures.

### **2.2 Entrepreneurial self-efficacy**

Perceived self-efficacy has been recognized as a central concept in entrepreneurship (Boyd & Vozikis, 1994). Several authors, such as Bandura (1994), have provided definitions of self-efficacy. Bandura (1994) defines self-efficacy as an individual's belief in their capabilities to achieve a certain level of performance or desired outcomes that have an impact on their life situations. Krueger and Dickson (1993) have reported that perceived self-efficacy is positively associated with the intention to start one's own business and explore new

opportunities. In addition, (Linan and Fernández ,2011) stated that individual perceptions, especially self-efficacy, are also reported, which are the most important precedents for entrepreneurial intentions.

Bandura (1994) defines self-efficacy as an individual's belief in their ability to successfully achieve desired outcomes. Self-efficacy acts as a mediator between individual perceptions and the promotion of entrepreneurial intention. In a study conducted by Qiao and Hua (2019), a large survey was utilized to examine the correlation between college students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy, career adaptability, and entrepreneurial intention. The findings demonstrated a significant and positive impact of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on both entrepreneurial intention and career adaptability among college students.

### **2.3 Entrepreneurial education**

Entrepreneurial education is essential for developing the skills of students to encourage them for starting their own business and to successfully guide the business during its initial phase, then to the maturity stage, and to minimize the risk associated with entrepreneurship thought.

According to Postigo and Tomborini (2004), entrepreneurship education is believed to have a positive influence on individuals' orientation towards entrepreneurship by equipping them with the necessary tools to start their own businesses. Previous research studies have shown a significant correlation between entrepreneurship education and career intentions. For instance, Kolvereid and Moen (1997) found that students majoring in entrepreneurship have a higher intention to become entrepreneurs and engage in business ventures. Wilson et al. (2007) discovered that entrepreneurship education can increase students' interest in pursuing entrepreneurship as a career. Ekpoh and Edet (2011) examined the effect of entrepreneurship education on the career intentions of 500 students from two Nigerian universities, revealing that exposure to entrepreneurship education influences high school students' career aspirations. Sandholtz (1990) conducted research on MBA students from distinguished business schools in the United States, finding that 44% of the respondents desired to be entrepreneurs, while 34% preferred regular employment. Kuttim et al. (2014) supported the notion that education, in general, has a positive impact on entrepreneurship. Conversely, Jwara and Hoque (2018) investigated the relationship between higher education and entrepreneurial intention in Natal, and their findings indicated a connection between university education and entrepreneurial intention.

### **2.4 Entrepreneurial intention**

Exploring the factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions among entrepreneurs is a vital topic in entrepreneurship research. In broad terms, intention can be described as "a mental state that guides an individual's focus towards a specific objective or course of action to accomplish something" (Vesalainen and Pihkala, 1999). Additionally, entrepreneurial intention has been defined by Kruger and Carsrud (1993, 1995) as "the determination to engage in the behaviors required to establish a business venture."

The entrepreneurial intention has been extensively studied by researchers and scholars, with various theoretical frameworks and factors proposed to explain its formation. Shapero's Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM) suggests that the integration of skills, management, autonomy, and risk factors can lead individuals to venture into business development. Additionally, the desire to initiate an enterprise is influenced by perceived venture desirability and feasibility.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), developed by Ajzen in 1991, focuses on individual intention to explain and predict human behavior, including entrepreneurial behavior. However, a study by Khalifa & Dhiyf (2016) examining the impact of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention in the UAE context using the TPB found that entrepreneurial education did not significantly affect entrepreneurial intention. The study also revealed that the entrepreneurial intention among UAE students was generally low.

In another study conducted by Ibrahim et al. (2017) in Oman, the impact of entrepreneurship education on graduate students' attitudes towards becoming an entrepreneur was examined. The findings showed a positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention among the participants.

Based on the aforementioned literature, an important question arises regarding the factors that influence entrepreneurial intention among female students. The objective of this paper is to investigate the key factors that shape the entrepreneurial intention of female students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Dhofar region of Oman. Ghouse et al. (2021) explored the impact of gender and previous experience on the entrepreneurship attitudes of Omani university students and found that entrepreneurship attitudes played a positive role in the formation of entrepreneurial intentions.

Furthermore, Camelo-Ordaz et al. (2016) examined the mediating role of perceptual factors in the relationship between gender and entrepreneurial intention among non-entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs. The study revealed that perceptual factors fully mediated the relationship between gender and entrepreneurial intention among non-entrepreneurs. However, this mediating effect disappeared when individuals became entrepreneurs.

These studies contribute to understanding the factors that influence entrepreneurial intention among female students and shed light on the role of gender, perceptual factors, and previous experience in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions.

### **3.4 Conceptual frame Works and Research Hypothesis**

This research is a detailed survey on factors affecting entrepreneurial intention among female student in HEIs in Dhofar Region, Oman. Many previous studies such as (Ardichvili et al., 2003) stated that there is a relationship between entrepreneurship education and past experience in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intentions only if they change their attitudes and perceptions such as a perceived desire for self-employment and entrepreneurial abilities". Al-Jubari et al. (2018) studied the attitude and intention in four universities in Malaysia. The results confirmed that majority of students have interest to become entrepreneurs after graduation. According to previous research, personal career and intentions begin to take shape in their undergraduate studies (Wilson et al., 2007). In addition, education is an important factor that distinguishes entrepreneurs from those searching for regular job. Developing and promoting entrepreneurial preference earlier depends on the basic education system in the school (Lee et al. ,2006).

Based on the above previous research discussed, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested:

**H1:** There is a significant impact of female student's previous entrepreneurial experience on their entrepreneurial intention.

**H2:** There is a significant impact of female student's entrepreneurial self-efficacy on their entrepreneurial intention.

**H3:** There is a significant impact of female student's entrepreneurial education on their entrepreneurial intention.

## **4.Data and Methodology**

### **4.1 Research Method**

Our research used a quantitative method, along with the analytical and descriptive survey method for data collection.

### **4.2 Population and Sampling**

The population of the study consisted of female students in HEIs in Dhofar governorate who are registered as regular students. The foundation students were excluded as some of the research dimensions are not applicable

to them. The total population is estimated to be around 5400 female students. The sample size of 340 female students was selected from all HEIs in Dhofar region namely, Dhofar University, College of Applied Science and Salalah Technical College.

#### 4.3 Data Collection Method

Researchers analyzed the scale data using SPSS 22.0 statistical software. Frequency analysis, the t-test, and ANOVA tests were used to compare the groups and determine whether there were differences between them.

| Summary of methodology |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Tool                   | Self-structured questionnaire shown in Table 1 |
| Sampling method        | Random sampling,                               |
| Sample size            | Sample size 340,                               |
| Measures               | Factors impacting Entrepreneurship intention   |
| Analytical method      | Survey   |
| Statistical test used  | Regression analysis                            |

### 5. Empirical Results

#### 5.1 Sample Demographic Information

In this section, descriptive statistical analysis with regression analysis were used to analyze the data to find out whether there is a relational impact between independent variables (entrepreneurial self-efficiency and entrepreneurial education) and dependent variable entrepreneurship intention.

Table1 Demographic Information

| Variable |                             | %    |
|----------|-----------------------------|------|
| Age      | Below 20                    | 13.8 |
|          | From 20-21                  | 34.7 |
|          | From 22-23                  | 23.9 |
|          | From 24-25                  | 11.2 |
|          | More than 25                | 7.4  |
| HEI      | Dhofar University           | 66.5 |
|          | College of Applied Sciences | 19.7 |
|          | Technical College           | 13.8 |
| Total    |                             | 100  |

Table 1 shows that (34.7%) respondents are within the age group between 20-21 years, about 24 % are between 22-23 years and (11.8%) of the respondents are below 20 years. Also, the majority of respondents (66.5%) are

from Dhofar University, (19.7%) are from College of Applied Sciences and (13.8%) are from Technical College. The majority of respondents are from Dhofar University because the number of students enrolled in the university is high compared with the other HEIs in the region.

## 5.2 Model Specification

The multiple regressions were used to test the hypothesis of the study, multiple regression equation was formed as follows.

$$EI = \alpha + \beta_1 PEE + \beta_2 SF + \beta_3 EE + \varepsilon (1)$$

Where:

EI = Entrepreneurial intention

PEE= Previous entrepreneurial experience

SE= Self-efficacy

EE= Entrepreneurial education

$\varepsilon$ = Error term

## 5.3 Test for Normality

This study uses Skewness/Kurtosis tests for Normality. The results are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Skewness/Kurtosis tests for Normality

| Variable | Obs | Pr(Skewness) | Pr(Kurtosis) | adj chi2(2) | Prob>chi2 |
|----------|-----|--------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| PEE      | 340 | 0.585        | 0.177        | 3.32        | 0.510     |
| SF       | 340 | 0.015        | 0.165        | 5.87        | 0.382     |
| EE       | 340 | 0.139        | 0.148        | 2.15        | 0.332     |
| EI       | 340 | 0.265        | 0.134        | 1.04        | 0.605     |

According to the results of table 2, the level of significance for all variables is greater than 0.05 which indicates that the data is normally presented and the test detects that the data is not departures from normality. Therefore, the study can conduct further tests and use the parameter tests such as regression.

## 5.4 Test for Consistency

The study employed Cronbach's Alpha to assess the internal consistency of the responses provided by the participants. Cronbach's Alpha is a statistical measure that indicates how closely related a set of items are to each other as a group, providing a measure of reliability. The results of the Cronbach's Alpha analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha test

| Variables | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-----------|------------------|
| PEE       | 0.884            |
| SF        | 0.900            |
| EE        | 0.900            |
| EI        | 0.802            |
| Total     | 0.901            |

## 5.5 Descriptive Statistics

The study uses the mean and standard deviation as descriptive statistics and table 4 shows the results.

Table 4: Means and standard deviations of the study variables

| Variable                            | Code | N   | Mean | SD    | The level of agreement |
|-------------------------------------|------|-----|------|-------|------------------------|
| Previous entrepreneurial experience | PEE  | 340 | 3.4  | .9    | Medium                 |
| Self-efficacy                       | SE   | 340 | 3.4  | 1.0   | Medium                 |
| Entrepreneurial education           | EE   | 340 | 3.5  | 1.174 | High                   |
| Entrepreneurial intention           | EI   | 340 | 3.5  | .8    | High                   |

Table 4 shows that the female students surveyed have a medium and high level of the three variables. The arithmetic mean of the three variables collectively is 3.43 which is considered as high level. The entrepreneurial education was the highest variable with a mean of (3.5) followed by the female previous entrepreneurial experience and entrepreneurial self-efficiency with a mean of (3.4) for both variables, while the mean of the five point Likert scale for entrepreneurial intention was remarkably high which shows that female students in the sample possess entrepreneurial intention with a mean of (3.5).

### 5.6 Correlation and multicollinearity

Table 5: Correlation matrix

|     | PEE     | SF      | SE     | EI    |
|-----|---------|---------|--------|-------|
| PEE | 1.000   |         |        |       |
| SF  | 0.590** | 1.000   |        |       |
| SE  | 0.596** | 0.541** | 1.000  |       |
| EI  | 0.870** | 0.830** | 0.80** | 1.000 |

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows the correlations among all independent and dependent variables used in the model. It is indicated that all the independent variables (previous entrepreneurial experience, self-efficacy and entrepreneurial education) are correlated significantly at 0.01 level, with a correlation coefficient less than 0.60, that means these variables would not cause multicollinearity problems. At the same time, all the independent variables (previous entrepreneurial experience, self-efficacy and entrepreneurial education) are correlated significantly at 0.01 level with the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intention).

### 5.7 Regression Analysis

The following tables show the impact of independent variables on Entrepreneurial education as follows:

Table 6: Model summary

| Model | R      | R -Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|--------|-----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | 0.870a | 0.757     | 0.756             | 0.38726                    |

a. Predictors: (Constant), PEE

Table 6 presents the analysis of the proposed model, specifically examining the correlation coefficients between the three independent variables (PEE, SF, and EE) and the dependent variable (EI), which is the entrepreneurial intention. The results indicate a strong positive relationship, with a correlation coefficient of 0.870, suggesting a significant model. Furthermore, the adjusted coefficient of determination is reported as 0.756, indicating that the leading factors, represented by the independent variables, account for approximately 75.6% of the variation observed in entrepreneurial intention. This suggests that the model provides a substantial explanation for the changes in entrepreneurial intention.



Table 7 shows the result of ANOVA

Table 7: ANOVA

| Model      | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F        | Sig.   |
|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|----------|--------|
| Regression | 158.025        | 1   | 158.025     | 1053.711 | 0.000b |
| Residual   | 50.690         | 338 | 0.150       |          |        |
| Total      | 208.715        | 339 |             |          |        |

a. Dependent Variable: EI

b. Predictors: (Constant), PEE, SF, EE

The results in Table 7 indicate that the (f) value for the regression analysis is 1053.711, and it is statistically significant at a level of 0.000, which is lower than the predetermined level of significance (0.05). This finding suggests that the influence of entrepreneurial factors on entrepreneurial intention is statistically significant. Therefore, we can conclude that the independent variables have a significant effect on entrepreneurial intent. This means that the characteristics of entrepreneurship measured in the study can be used to predict the entrepreneurial intent of the female college students who participated in the survey. These variables hold potential for identifying and understanding the factors that contribute to entrepreneurial intentions among female students.

Table 8 indicates the coefficients of the model.

Table 8: Coefficients

| Model |            | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized coefficients | t-value | Sig.  |
|-------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|---------|-------|
|       |            | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      | 10.409  | 0.000 |
| 1     | (Constant) | 0.847                       | 0.081      |                           |         |       |
|       | PEE        | 0.756                       | 0.023      | 0.870                     | 32.461  | 0.000 |
|       | SF         | 0.710                       | 0.026      | 0.830                     | 27.307  | 0.00  |
|       | EE         | 0.686                       | 0.024      | 0.840                     | 28.469  | 0.000 |

a. Dependent Variable: EI

Table 8 shows that the value of (t) for all three independent variables (PEE (31.461), FS (27.307) and EE (28.469) and they have positive and significant effect on EI at (0.000), which is lower than the statistical significance level (0.05). These results confirm a robust association between the predictor variables and the outcome variable in the model, indicating their suitability for assessing the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusions

According to existing literature, it has been observed that female entrepreneurs play a significant role in economic growth and job creation, as evidenced by the increasing number of women starting their own businesses in both developed and developing countries over the past two decades. The government of Oman has also shown a growing interest in supporting female entrepreneurs in establishing their own enterprises. This research aims to examine the influence of previous entrepreneurial experience, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial

education on the entrepreneurial preferences of female students. The study sample consists of 340 female students enrolled in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Dhofar region. The findings indicate that the availability of previous entrepreneurial experience and self-efficacy among female students was moderate, while the level of entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention was high. Regression analysis results demonstrate a statistically significant impact of previous entrepreneurial experience, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, the study's hypotheses have been confirmed. These findings highlight the importance of these factors in supporting female students in developing their entrepreneurial intentions and influencing their career paths.

## 7. Implications and Limitations of the study

This study shed lights on the factors affecting female students in HEIs in Dhofar region of Oman. The study presented the importance of entrepreneurial intention for female students in HEIs, therefore, when designing any type of intervention programs to improve business orientation of students, the leaders in the Mistry of Higher Education and the universities should be aware about the intention of female student to establish their own business after graduation. This can be through developing syllabus of entrepreneurship courses, disseminate culture for entrepreneurship and provide them with appropriate training. The findings of the study can also support the environment in higher education institutions regarding the context of teaching, research, and training geared toward entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the findings may contribute to enhancing efforts towards investing in a form of education wherein studies and their extensions are aligned around entrepreneurship training. This is because it has the potential to promote student entrepreneurship inclination. These findings are also relevant to policymakers and regulators interested in boosting entrepreneurial skills among students and, as a result, lowering the unemployment rate. Finally, based on gender roles, this research contributes to the academic discussion on entrepreneurial intents, education, and training by providing a thorough examination of the factors that influence the intentions of Omani female students to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors.

In addition, this study adds to the literature on entrepreneurial intention of female in Oman, GGC and Middle East region since the existing literature is still limited. The study was conducted in Dhofar region and future studies can cover female students in HEIs in other regions. In addition, other factors that may be impacting the female student's entrepreneurial intention can be examined.

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