



## **ENTREPRENEURIAL CAREER MALES vs FEMALES, WHO HAS STRONGER INTENTIONS?**

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### **Abstract**

In addition to providing solutions to the issues of unemployment and poverty, self-employment aids in striking a balance between local and regional growth. Any country, but especially Pakistan, can fundamentally shift its industrial and economic climate thanks to the phenomena of self-employment. Before developing effective measures to promote self-employment, it is crucial to comprehend what motivates and determines the entrepreneurial intentions of Pakistani university graduate students. Following a thorough review of the literature, the proposed study aims to achieve the objectives to investigate the influence, importance, and robustness of TPB elements on the entrepreneurial intentions (EI) of university graduate students in the context of Pakistan's public sector universities (PSUs) and higher education institutions (HEIs). Data from 668 students studying in BS programs in 31 various departments, schools, centers, and institutes at QAU Islamabad, Pakistan, were gathered using a redesigned and expanded questionnaire based on the Entrepreneurship Intention Questionnaire (EIQ). The students came from all regions of Pakistan. Entrepreneurial intentions are shaped by both internal and external forces, with internal variables taking on a greater weight. After obtaining some experience, the respondents want to launch their own businesses. Male respondents are more inclined to pursue entrepreneurship than female respondents, which

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | suggests a significant cultural influence. The study emphasizes the need for parents, society, and educational institutions to have a role in inspiring and supporting graduates to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career path. |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 1. Background of the Study

According to data from the Labor Force Survey for the years 2020–2021 provided by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), Government of Pakistan (GOP), Ministry of Planning and Development & Special Initiatives (MPDSI), the total labor force for the years 2020–2021 is 71.76 million. Out of this 71.76 million-person labor force, 67.25 million were employed, leaving 4.51 million unemployed in Pakistan (see table 1). One of the main problems facing the nation, along with numerous other problems, is the high rate of unemployment, which is even increasing as a result of the effects of the recent floods.

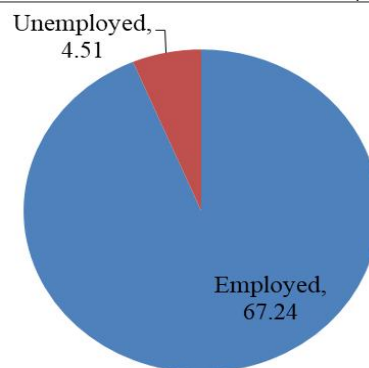
**Table 1: Employment Statistics for the Year 2020-2021**

| Status     | In Millions |
|------------|-------------|
| Employed   | 67.24       |
| Unemployed | 4.51        |

(Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics)

With such a high population which is still growing around a 1.91% rate and is expected to continue for the next couple of decades, with a deficit economy the unemployment number is continuously increasing and has become one of the biggest concerns of the present times for Pakistan. Figure 1 further explains the breakdown of the employed and unemployed population of Pakistan during the years 2020-2021 in detail.

**Figure 1: Labor Force Statistics (2020-21)**



(Source: Author's Derivation)

However, if we look at the population, age and gender wise percentages (%) of Pakistan for year 2020-2021 provided by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, we can see that out of total population, 67% is under the age of 30 whereas 28% of this is from the age bracket of under 10. The population in terms of gender gives an impression of evenly balanced (See table 2)<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 2: Population, Age and Gender Wise Percentage (%) of Population (2020-21)**

<sup>1</sup>The data has been extracted from Chapter 12: Population, Labour Force and Employment of Pakistan Economic Survey (2020-2021). The web reference of this chapter is [https://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter\\_22/PES12-POPULATION.pdf](https://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_22/PES12-POPULATION.pdf)

| Age Groups   | Male (%)     | Female (%)   | Total (%)  |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Below 4      | 7.09         | 6.68         | 13.77      |
| 5 - 9        | 7.56         | 6.82         | 14.38      |
| 10 - 14      | 6.22         | 5.61         | 11.83      |
| 14 - 19      | 5.35         | 4.8          | 10.15      |
| 20 - 24      | 4.23         | 4.39         | 8.62       |
| 25 - 29      | 3.54         | 4.03         | 7.57       |
| 30 - 34      | 3.06         | 3.43         | 6.49       |
| 35 - 39      | 3.01         | 3.1          | 6.11       |
| 40 - 44      | 2.49         | 2.45         | 4.94       |
| 45 - 49      | 2.14         | 2.12         | 4.26       |
| 50 - 54      | 1.74         | 1.65         | 3.39       |
| 55 - 59      | 1.43         | 1.38         | 2.81       |
| 60 - 64      | 1.24         | 1.07         | 2.31       |
| 64 and above | 1.93         | 1.44         | 3.37       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>51.03</b> | <b>48.97</b> | <b>100</b> |

(Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics)

To address the issue of unemployment and to promote entrepreneurship for self-employment and New Venture Creation (NVC) through SME's, which are considered as an effective source of generating employment (Batool & Zulfqar, 2011), the following initiatives were taken by GOP:

- Small & Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA) in 1998;
- Small & Medium Enterprise (SME) Bank Ltd in 2002;
- SME Business Support Fund (BSF) in 2005;
- Kamyab Jawan Program in 2019; and
- Prime Minister Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme (PMYBALS) in 2023.

The performance of these institutions can be gauged from the facts that (i) SME Bank has been in loss for the last decade as per 2021 Annual Reports of the SME bank, it has incurred a loss of Rs.1,051 million in the year ended Dec,2021; (ii) SMEDA has failed to create an environment for SME development and they were used to promote the politically charged youth loan program by the last government; and, (iii) the website of Business Support Fund (BSF) is inactive, there is no information on the Ministry of Finance website about BSF. (iv) Young people were encouraged and were supposed to launch around 10,000 new start-ups by the year 2022-23 to provide more jobs opportunities. An estimated 68,873 employment opportunities were supposed to be created under this program. However, after the change of government in April 2022, SBP stopped the Kamyab Jawan Disbursements; (v) PMYBALS has recently been launched and is presently in the introductory phase and there is no clarity about the future of this program because the present government is expected to complete its term in August 2023. Thus, the specialized institutions established by the government to promote entrepreneurship for self-employment and NVC through SME Development have not delivered the desired results because of inconsistency in the policy decisions with change in political governments.

### 1.1 Scope of the Study and Research Objectives

This study includes students from all regions of Pakistan. The respondents from the selected sample include students pursuing above BS degree programs (31 different disciplines) at QAU, Islamabad. The following are the study's primary objectives:

- To study about the impact, significance and robustness of elements of TPB on EI of the university graduate students with a moderating impact of gender of the students.
- To recommend areas of improvement or a model in PSUs and HEIs for self-employment through entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship as education has become an integral part of the modern education system. According to Haque (2007), if the field of entrepreneurial education is to grow and become a major component for the development of Pakistan then the government is required to take serious measures to restrict rent-seeking, it also should promote innovation and nurture businesses. It is high time to adapt and fully utilize the field of entrepreneurial education in existing teaching structures and incorporate into the educational system. The present and expected technology and industrial progression especially after COVID-19 has posed crucial concerns and issues for the whole world and education sector in specific.

One of the main objectives of university education actually is that students graduating from those institutes should not always become jobseekers but also provide jobs by creating new ventures (Schulte, 2004). The main aim of the current study is to develop a model from entrepreneurship at the PSUs and HEIs in Pakistan that will facilitate new venture creation for self-employment in order to address the challenge of unemployment. From the initial finding, it has been observed that among the TPB components Professional Attraction (PA) and Perceived Behavior Control (PBC) are the strong components having positive relationship with entrepreneurial intentions (EI) of the university graduate students. Following the introduction and background of the study in section one, section two includes the brief literature review and research methodology is given in section three. After that result, analysis and discussions are given in section four while in section five the conclusion is given.

## **2. Literature Review**

An increasing body of research views entrepreneurship as requiring passion, which has a big impact on how businesses are formed and how they will develop in the future (Huyghe et al., 2016; Cardon et al. 2005; Smilor 1997). It's the passion which enables an entrepreneurs to cope with the limitations they face, overcome challenges and failures, put in an extraordinary effort to get the new business going, and do all what is important and necessary to work hard to get their business done (Cardon and Kirk 2015; Cardon et al. 2005). It has been argued by different researchers that, adding to the other qualities like need for achievement (Karimi et al. 2017; Rauch & Frese, 2007), entrepreneurial enthusiasm is an important personal trait that can inspire entrepreneurial endeavors (Cardon et al., 2009; Robert et al., 2009).

Entrepreneurship not only develops new businesses by tapping opportunities in the economy through innovation but also to create employment as well. Since the beginning of the new millennium, entrepreneurship has become an important part of the economic growth of any country. For more than a century, many great thinkers and scholars from different fields had been talking about entrepreneurship (Marire, Mafini, & Dhurup, 2017). Technological advancements and continuous innovation that impact the lives of people around the globe have made entrepreneurship a major player. Julius (2016) called entrepreneurship the lifeblood of the world economy and it is also considered as one of the most studied topics worldwide in recent years (Dinc & Hadzic, 2018). Entrepreneurship promotes the development of new business, self-employment, improvement of existing enterprises and socio-economic development which can also be used as a career option (Yildiz, 2018).

While significant progress has been made in understanding the landscape and power of entrepreneurship and the role of entrepreneurs, among majority of the countries around the world, entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in fostering economic expansion, the development of new jobs, the advancement of technology, etc. (Yu, T., et. al., 2021). The relevance of how entrepreneurship contributes to job creation, greater national productivity, international competitiveness, quality of life development, and the accomplishment of community goals has been acknowledged by a global chorus of individual experts and international publications (Jena, 2020). One of the important questions that have yet to be

answered is how and to what extent university graduate students possess an entrepreneurial behavior, especially to pursue a career in terms of starting an innovative business of their own. Our study, along with others, aims to fill this knowledge gap by building on the theoretical work that has already been done on general entrepreneurial passions.

The entrepreneurial intention of a university student is "an individual who is consciously aware and convinced that they have intentions to build a new enterprise and is planning to do so" (Nabi et al., 2010). This explanation implies that entrepreneurship stems from conscious organized behavior (Liñán, 2008), so it is very essential to know the course of action and its related motivations. A lot of researchers previously have attempted to describe why a few individuals, not others, take the path of becoming entrepreneurs (Autio et al., 2001; Segal et al., 2005; Chou et al., 2017; Padilla-Angulo, 2019). In the literature, empirical evaluation of entrepreneurial purpose is gaining popularity (Esfandiar et al., 2019; Zhao et al., 2005; Autio et al., 2001).

An individual's propensity to engage in entrepreneurial behavior, actions, self-employment, or starting a new firm is referred to as their entrepreneurial intention (Dohse & Walter, 2010, 2012; Engle et al., 2010). A person's belief in entrepreneurship is viewed as their entrepreneurial aim (Thompson, 2009). Entrepreneurial intentions have an impact on entrepreneurial conduct (Markman, Balkin, & Baron, 2002). A person's decision to launch his own business rather than take a job for someone else is referred to as having entrepreneurial intention (Ojiaku et al., 2018). Entrepreneurial intention is defined by Liñán, Nabi, and Krueger (2013) as a person's awareness and conviction on an intellectual level that they will one day launch a new business. The most frequent indicator of entrepreneurial conduct is entrepreneurial intention (Prodan & Drnovsek, 2010). The commitment to carry out a crucial step in the entrepreneurial process is known as an entrepreneurial intention (Mat Salleh Ayub, Fabeil, Buncha, Alias and Rahim, 2017). Assessing entrepreneurial intention aids in determining a person's propensity to launch a firm. Numerous academics have attempted to employ various theories to go into the subject and investigate entrepreneurial intention.

According to Ajzen (1991), entrepreneurial intent is the dependent variable, whereas professional attraction, subjective or social norms, and perceived behavioral control toward expected conduct are the three independent variables or antecedents., where:

- Professional attraction, also referred to as attraction to behavior, describes how someone perceives and interprets behavior.
- Subjective or social norms refer to a person's receptivity to social pressure to engage in a specific behavior.
- Perceived behavior control refers to a person's perception of their ability to engage in a particular behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Gender and entrepreneurial intentions are related closely as Wasylow et al. (2006) looked at background education and noted that most boys study technology and experimental science, which opens up the possibility of self-employment, whereas girls prefer to study in social sciences and health related professions that has more chances of working as an employee rather than self-employment. According to Cañizares and García (2010), female students are less likely to establish a business because they are afraid of failing. When it comes to characteristics linked to increased inclination to establish a business, there are gender differences. While male students place more weight on traits like a desire for new challenge or a willingness to accept little risks, female students equate initiative and originality with entrepreneurship. Therefore, Cañizares and García (2010) advise that while developing programs aimed at boosting entrepreneurship at higher educational institutions, gender disparities in entrepreneurial culture and views be considered.

Training that is different from the abilities generally associated with male-dominated entrepreneurship may be necessary to stimulate women's entrepreneurial inclinations

(Sivarajah & Achchuthan, 2013). Consistent with feminist views (Henry & Marlow, 2014; Calás et al., 2009), which is because of the perceived social norms and gender roles that eventually effect a person's attitudes and later behavioral intentions. As mentioned above, small businesses often come into existence with an individual's own capital or funds raised by an individual owner. However, research shows that females find it difficult to arrange human resource, social capital and networks, and access to financial and monetary resources (Marlow & Patton, 2005; Becker-Blease & Sohl, 2007; Santos et al., 2016). Females also exposed to high pressures both on the professional and personal fronts (Byrne et al., 2019). Therefore, there may be differences between genders in the meaning building process, as different explanations of social standards and forces affect entrepreneurial intention, as mentioned above. In other words, the social constraints and barriers female usually face may lead them to interpret differently from what they can accomplish and what they think they can engage in, based on empirical and cognitive calculations.

There exists a lot of empirical evidence through different studies which proves that female and male entrepreneurship differs both in business structures (Kelley et al., 2017) and in terms of personal goals and the thinking processes (Minniti, 2009). This gender-based entrepreneurial mindset asymmetry is important to discuss here because of their contributions for the social development of society (Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2019; OECD, 2016) on one side and on the other side this disproportionate style in the aforementioned entrepreneurial activities is also endorsed to the gender stereotypes in male dominating society (Klapper & Parker, 2011; Balachandra et al., 2017). This leads to controversy and is supported by valid evidence regarding the different effects of this factor on different genders' perceptions of entrepreneurship which meant that these factors influence their approach and are also important for understanding and distinction. However, no important study from the whole Pakistani environment has yet looked into how gender affects entrepreneurial intentions. In this study, we have addressed this phenomenon in detail and fill up the research gap by finding the impact on gender type on entrepreneurial intention among Pakistani university graduate students.

Keeping in view the background information on the topic, research objectives and the problems statements following research questions will be answered in this study:

RQ1: Is the TPB model sufficient on its own to analyze graduate students' plans to start their own businesses at QAU?

RQ2: Is the TPB model reliable and suitable to analyze entrepreneurial intentions given the complexity of measurement? Are the female university graduate students are intended more towards entrepreneurship or not?

### **3. Research Methodology**

The dependent variable employed, and the main subject of this study is the entrepreneurial intention (EI) of university graduate students. There are many studies which investigated the effect of EI on graduate students at university and their willingness to start a business (Sang & Lin, 2019, Halim et al., 2019; Anwar, G., & Abdullah, N. N. 2021; Douglas, E. J., Shepherd, D. A., & Venugopal, V. 2021; Barba-Sánchez, V., Mitre-Aranda, M., & del Brío-González, J. 2022). However, this study has measured the entrepreneurial intentions of Quaid-i-Azam university graduate students in relation to their gender. EI of graduate students at university are measured through a structured/adapted questionnaire on a 7 points Likert scale.

According to Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which is also the basis of the current study, professional attraction (PA), social norms (SN), and perceived behavior control (PBC) all have a major role in graduate students' entrepreneurial intentions (EI). The fundamental notion that many researchers utilize to assess how these three TPB components

affect the EI of university graduate students. We have used gender of the university graduate students as a moderating variable as it will affect the proposed relationship.

The respondents are given a sequence of statements to react to in order to collect data. A 7-point Likert scale was employed to gauge responses to the statements and questions. The university offers lateral BS 2 year programs and 4-year BS programs for graduate students. The three faculties at Quaid-i-Azam University are the faculties of social sciences, natural sciences, and biological sciences. However, we have divided the data into males and females for the sake of data analysis. There were 806 university students that responded. About 11% of respondents responded. 668 genuine responses from university graduate students were selected as the study's valid sample after the responses had been reviewed.

### 3.1 Hypotheses Formulation

This set of study hypotheses examines how gender affects the relationship of independent and dependent variables and the related outcome.

H1: The relationship between the TBP and EI components among graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University is unaffected by gender.

H1.1: Graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University's PA and EI relationship is not moderated by gender.

H1.2: Graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University's SN and EI relationship is not moderated by gender.

H1.3: Graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University's PBC and EI relationship is not moderated by gender.

## 4. Results and Discussions

The internal reliability is also calculated by using Cronbach's alpha; however, it yields less reliable results than CR. The scale's validity and reliability estimates employed in this study are evaluated using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient. Cronbach Alpha values for SN are 0.853, PBC is 0.922, PA is 0.918 and EI is 0.955. According to Cronbach Alpha, all these values are significantly higher than the minimum thresholds needed for validity and reliability (see table 3).

**Table 3: Summary of Reliability and Validity Stats of the Entrepreneurial Intentions Scale and Its Sub-Scales**

| Construct and Code | No. of Items | Coefficient of Reliability (Cronbach Alpha) |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------|
| P A                | 7            | 0.918                                       |
| S N                | 6            | 0.853                                       |
| P B C              | 12           | 0.922                                       |
| E I                | 6            | 0.955                                       |

The Cronbach's alpha might be considered a less precise reliability evaluation tool when compared to a composite reliability measure. Nunnally & Bernstein (1994) and Joseph et al. (2019) both recommended that a minimum acceptable value for Cronbach's Alpha be 0.70. According to table 3, every estimated value used in this investigation is higher than the advised limit.

### 4.1 Multi-Collinearity

As demonstrated by table 4, which illustrates divergent validity through extracted average variance, CR, and off-diagonal values are the correlations of latent variables and the supplied diagonals are the square root of AVE estimations, there is no issue with multi-collinearity in this construct.

**Table 4: Divergent Validity: AVE and Squared AVE Values Comparison with Construct Correlations**

| Factors | AVE   | CR    | PA           | SN           | PBC          | EI           |
|---------|-------|-------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| PA      | 0.674 | 0.935 | <b>0.821</b> |              |              |              |
| SN      | 0.573 | 0.889 | 0.467        | <b>0.757</b> |              |              |
| PBC     | 0.538 | 0.933 | 0.622        | 0.411        | <b>0.733</b> |              |
| EI      | 0.817 | 0.964 | 0.686        | 0.304        | 0.688        | <b>0.904</b> |

(Note: AVE=Average Variance Extracted; CR=Composite Reliability)

(The off-diagonal values are the correlations between latent variables and the diagonal are the square root of AVE)

(Source: Results from CFA path diagram, SmartPLS)

To determine the measurement model's CV, CR and AVE were both used. AVE levels can be classified into three groups: extremely good (above 0.7), acceptable (between 0.7 and 0.5), and unacceptable (below 0.5). According to Hair Jr et al. (2016), the data is regarded to have CV if the CR and AVE are >0.7 and >0.5 as well as CR > AVE. The constructs listed in table 4's AVE and CR values satisfy that requirement. Because the CR value for each notion is greater than the AVE value, convergent validity conditions were satisfied.

Hypothesis 1 discussed the effect of respondent's gender on Quaid-i-Azam university graduate students' EI. The path coefficients of PA, PBC, and SN in respect to the relationships between entrepreneurial intentions (EI) in the model can be seen in the table below before the results of the testing for hypothesis are presented:

**Table 5: The Path Coefficients having Moderating Impact of Gender**

| Gender            | PA-EI    | PBC-EI   | SN-EI     |
|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Complete<br>N=668 | 0.448*** | 0.452*** | -0.085*** |
| Male<br>N=352     | 0.478*** | 0.404*** | -0.058 ns |
| Female<br>N=316   | 0.431*** | 0.460*** | -0.071 ns |

(Source: Moderation analysis output SmartPLS)

(Note: One star (\*) denotes results are acceptable at 10 percent significant level, Two stars (\*\*) denote results are acceptable at 5 percent significant level, Three Stars (\*\*\*) denote results are acceptable at 1 percent significant level.)

The above table 5 shows the relationship of independent variables on dependent variables when it is moderated by the gender. The table shows that the overall relationship PA and PBC to EI of the university graduate students of QAU is significant and positive, whereas in case of SN to EI it is negative for the university graduate students of QAU. The relationship of male students is positive for PA and PB to EI of the university graduate students of QAU while it is negative for SN and also both are significant. In case of male students, the relationship of PA and PBC to EI of the university graduate students of QAU is positive and significant while for SN to EI of the university graduate students of QAU it is negative and insignificant.

#### **Hypothesis 1.1 (H1.1)**

H<sub>0</sub>: Graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University's PA and EI relationship is not moderated by gender.

H<sub>a</sub>: Graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University's PA and EI relationship is moderated by gender.

**Table 6: Testing of hypothesis 1.1**

| Tag | Hypothesis | Male | Female | Diff | Std | t | p-value | Result |
|-----|------------|------|--------|------|-----|---|---------|--------|
|-----|------------|------|--------|------|-----|---|---------|--------|

|               |       |                |                |       | <i>Error</i> | <i>value</i> |       |                                                          |
|---------------|-------|----------------|----------------|-------|--------------|--------------|-------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>H3.3.1</b> | PA→EI | 0.478<br>0.048 | 0.431<br>0.054 | 0.047 | 0.004        | 11.909***    | 0.000 | <b>H<sub>0</sub> rejected<br/>H<sub>a</sub> supports</b> |

(Source: Moderation analysis output SmartPLS)

(Note: One star (\*) denotes results are acceptable at 10 percent significant level, Two stars (\*\*) denote results are acceptable at 5 percent significant level, Three Stars (\*\*\*) denote results are acceptable at 1 percent significant level.)

The influence of gender moderation on the PA→EI relationship of university graduate students at QAU is depicted in table 6 above. Moderation is deemed significant in this connection because it has a mean difference ( 0.047 ), t - value ( 11.909 > 1.96 ), P - value ( 0.000 < 0.05 ) and are meeting the minimum required levels of acceptance. Thus, it is assumed that gender impacted the PA→EI of the Quaid-i-Azam university graduate students. As the B-value for men is 0.478 and for women is 0.431, it can be deduced that men responders have more favorable attitudes about the graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University than do women.

#### **Hypothesis 1.2 (H1.2)**

H<sub>0</sub>: Graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University's SN and EI relationship is not moderated by gender.

H<sub>a</sub>: Graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University's SN and EI relationship is moderated by gender.

**Table 7: Testing of hypothesis 1.2**

| <i>Tag</i>    | <i>Hypothesis</i> | Male            | <i>Female</i>   | <i>Diff</i> | <i>Std Error</i> | <i>t value</i> | <i>p-value</i> | <i>Result</i>                                             |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>H3.3.2</b> | SN→EI             | -0.058<br>0.044 | -0.071<br>0.039 | 0.013       | 0.003            | 4.022          | 0.000          | <b>H<sub>0</sub> rejected<br/>H<sub>a</sub> supported</b> |

(Source: Moderation analysis output SmartPLS)

(Note: One star (\*) denotes results are acceptable at 10 percent significant level, Two stars (\*\*) denote results are acceptable at 5 percent significant level, Three Stars (\*\*\*) denote results are acceptable at 1 percent significant level.)

The influence of gender moderation on the SN→EI relationship of university graduate students at QAU is depicted in table 7 above. Moderation is deemed significant in this connection because it has a mean difference ( 0.013 ), t - value ( 4.022 > 1.96 ), P - value ( 0.000 < 0.05 ) and are meeting the minimum required levels of acceptance. Thus, it is assumed that gender effect the relationship of PA→EI of the university graduate students of QAU. As B-value for male is -0.058 and for female is -0.071, it is concluded that female students show stronger attitude towards EI of Quaid-i-Azam university graduate students as compared to the male students.

#### **Hypothesis 1.3 (H1.3)**

H<sub>0</sub>: Graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University's PBC and EI relationship is not moderated by gender.

H<sub>a</sub>: Graduate students at Quaid-i-Azam University's PBC and EI relationship is moderated by gender.

**Table 8: Testing of hypothesis 1.3**

| <i>Tag</i>    | <i>Hypothesis</i> | Male           | <i>Female</i> | <i>Diff</i> | <i>Std Error</i> | <i>t value</i> | <i>p-value</i> | <i>Result</i>                                             |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>H3.3.3</b> | PBC→EI            | 0.404<br>0.052 | 0.46<br>0.049 | 0.056       | 0.004            | 14.280***      | 0.000          | <b>H<sub>0</sub> rejected<br/>H<sub>a</sub> supported</b> |

(Source: Moderation analysis output SmartPLS)

(Note: One star (\*) denotes results are acceptable at 10 percent significant level, Two stars (\*\*) denote results are acceptable at 5 percent significant level, Three Stars (\*\*\*) denote results are acceptable at 1 percent significant level.)

The influence of gender moderation on the PBC → EI relationship of university graduate students at QAU is depicted in table 8 above. Moderation is deemed significant in this connection because it has a mean difference (0.130), t-value ( $34.992 > 1.96$ ), P-value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ) and are meeting the minimum required levels of acceptance. Thus, it is assumed that gender impacts the PBC → EI of the university graduate students of QAU relationship. As the B-value for male students is 0.404 and for female students is 0.46, it can be deduced that female respondents had a more positive attitude about the EI of graduate students at the Quaid-i-Azam institution than male respondents do.

## 5. Conclusion

The results of the current research study, as they were discovered through data analysis of survey results, are given in accordance with the study's goals. To research the entrepreneurial intentions (EI) of the university graduate students of QAU, which included students from all regions of Pakistan, the study used the TPB model, which incorporates both internal and external elements. The findings showed that the theoretical framework utilized in the study was reliable for analyzing graduate students' emotional intelligence (EI). The findings of the study demonstrated that all of the independent factors, including professional attraction (PA), social norms (SN), and perceived behavior control (PBC), have a significant role in predicting graduate students' entrepreneurial aspirations (EI). Although the study indicated that social norms (SN) have a significant negative impact on entrepreneurial ambitions (EI). As a result of the large GoF (values  $> 0.36$  are considered to be Go Large), the TPB model was shown to be reliable for estimating EI of the target population. It was discovered that the  $R^2$  value was 0.597 and the  $Q^2$  value was 0.484. This demonstrated the model's applicability to the study's focus on the EI of QAU graduate students. The data show that females often lead males in terms of PBC towards EI (males = 0.404, females = 0.460), although males have stronger EI in terms of PA (male = 0.478, female = 0.431). Male students are more drawn to business than female pupils. According to studies, even though a significant portion of Pakistanis (67%) say they desire to establish their own business, only a small portion (5%) actually do so and are successful. Academic institutions can utilize the same technique to pinpoint specific skills and capacities in their pupils and provide coaching accordingly. Policymakers who play a significant role in regulating the expansion of entrepreneurial ecosystems, which is necessary for the success of ventures, can use the model. To maximize the spread of ideas, academic institutions must take steps to assure ongoing exposure to every stage of beginning a business. Given that there is a gender gap in the entrepreneurial intentions of QAU university graduates, academic institutions need to pay closer attention to these particular needs of university graduates when creating academic models for initiatives that will increase innovation. An investigation on the formation of intentions across time. Future studies may cover institutions that only serve women and men as well as other disciplines.

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