

Factors affecting entrepreneurial intentions among Kuwaitis

Wajeeh Elali

College of Business and Finance, Ahlia University, Manama, Bahrain, and

Badriah Al-Yacoub

Bader Jassim Al-Yacoub Law Firm, Kuwait

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine the key influential factors that affect the entrepreneurial intentions of Kuwaiti nationals.

Design/methodology/approach – This study was carried out by a survey method, using a questionnaire that targeted all Kuwaiti nationals over 18 who had the possibility of becoming entrepreneurs. The respondents' perceptions of six antecedents that could influence entrepreneurial intentions were analyzed and assessed using correlation and regression statistics.

Findings – The findings of this study clearly show that social networking, risk tolerance, the need for achievement as well as self-efficacy play a significant role in the entrepreneurial intentions of Kuwaiti nationals. The study also found that the need for achievement was the most important factor that affects whether or not these young Kuwaitis would wish to have their own business. It was also ascertained that both opportunity recognition and the accessibility of resources do not have any significant influence over their entrepreneurial intentions.

Research limitations/implications – Although this study used a framework that was consistent with previous research studies, it did not include certain factors, which might also impact entrepreneurial intentions. Moreover, the quantitative approach used in this study may tend to obscure the relationship between variables, which could inevitably lead to biased results. However, the results obtained from this study may provide further insight into the subject area and prove beneficial to policymakers, researchers, and educators.

Originality/value – Empirical studies that investigate the factors that influence the entrepreneurial intentions among the people of the Middle East and GCC countries are considerably scarce. This study thus serves to augment the currently limited literature on the entrepreneurial intentions among people in developing Middle East countries, particularly that of Kuwaitis.

Keywords Kuwait, Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Entrepreneurial intention

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Historically, Kuwait has been a land of entrepreneurs who used to work as traders and owners of small businesses, but with the discovery of oil, their life style has changed greatly. The country has since become one of the wealthiest nations in the world. Moreover, Kuwait has a fast growing population due to the increasing numbers of expatriates who have been attracted to work in a highly paid and tax free economy. The lucrative marketplace in Kuwait has also enticed many working professionals from different cultures with varied competencies. This has exposed national Kuwaitis to different types of peoples and their work experience. This exposure to a multi-cultural environment has not only generated a spirit of creation, innovation, and competitiveness among Kuwaiti nationals, but has also fostered their entrepreneurial intentions (Ali and Al-Kazemi, 2007). Given the great influence that entrepreneurship has on the growth of any country, the Kuwaiti government has taken great strides to heighten and advance



activities that could lead to their own people becoming entrepreneurs. These activities help not only to diversify the economy, but also to create sufficient job opportunities which encourage Kuwaiti nationals to establish small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Studies have shown that SMEs and entrepreneurship continue to be a key source of economic growth and innovation in advanced industrialized countries, as well as in emerging and developing economies (e.g. Acs *et al.*, 2013; Ortega-Argilés *et al.*, 2009; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). The relevance of entrepreneurship stems from its direct consequences on economic growth, the creation of jobs, and on the development and prosperity of nations worldwide (Carree and Thurik, 2010; van Stel *et al.*, 2005; Naude, 2013; Wennekers and Thurik, 1999; Acs, 2006). This is due to the fact that entrepreneurs act as catalysts of economic activity for the entire economy (Bygrave and Miniti, 2000). As aptly stated by OECD experts, entrepreneurs are regarded as:

Agents of change and growth in a market economy and they can act to accelerate the generation, dissemination, and application of innovative ideas. In doing so, they not only ensure that efficient use is made of resources, but (they) also expand the boundaries of economic activity. Entrepreneurs not only seek out and identify potentially profitable economic opportunities, but are also willing to take risks to see if their hunches are right. While not all entrepreneurs succeed, a country with a lot of entrepreneurial activity is likely to be constantly generating new or improved products and services (OECD, 1998, p. 12).

Despite the efforts of MENA and the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, the empirical research that has been done to investigate the factors that influence the entrepreneurial intentions among people of the Middle East and the GCC region is negligible. Recently, a number of researchers including Saleh and Salhie (2014), Almobaieek and Manolova (2012), and Sayed and Ben Slimane (2014) did investigate the causes of entrepreneurial propensity in the Middle East region. However, generally speaking, the studies on entrepreneurial intentions in this part of the world still remain in short supply.

The aim of this study is thus to partially fill this gap by empirically examining and analyzing the key factors that could influence the entrepreneurial intentions among Kuwaiti nationals. To fulfill this objective, we have proposed a structural model of entrepreneurial intent based upon the existing literature that integrates both individual characteristics and contextual variables (e.g. Luthje and Franke, 2003; Fini *et al.*, 2009; Zhang and Yang, 2006). Hence, in the design of this model, the entrepreneurial intention is treated as a function of six different variables, that is, social networking, recognizing business opportunities, having access to different resources, as well as personality characteristics. In this study, we argue that all these factors are likely to have a positive bearing on a Kuwaiti individual's decision to venture into business. To accomplish this goal, this study proposes the following research questions:

- RQ1. What influence does social networking have on the entrepreneurial intentions among Kuwaitis?
- RQ2. Does being able to recognize potential business opportunities influence these intentions?
- RQ3. Does having access to different resources influence their entrepreneurial intentions?
- RQ4. Do personality characteristics influence one to become an entrepreneur?

These research questions are explored in a field study with a sample of 244 nascent Kuwaiti nationals.

The structure of this paper is as follows. After the introduction, the second section briefly explores the entrepreneurship intention literature. Third section presents the conceptual model adopted and the proposed hypotheses. The methodology is discussed in fourth section, while fifth section describes the empirical analysis and discusses the findings obtained in the data analysis. Sixth section highlights the main conclusions and recommendations.

Literature review

Entrepreneurial intention refers to one's intent to start a new business venture and to consciously plan to do so at some point in the future (Thompson, 2009; Bird, 1988). The existing literature suggests that setting up a new business venture is influenced by personal circumstances, such as parental background and educational level, by individual cognitions of new business opportunities, and by broader economic and environmental factors at both individual and national institutional levels (Thompson, 2009). Over the last three decades, a considerable body of research has addressed the concept of entrepreneurial intentions. However, little agreement exists on which approach is the most comprehensive as each focusses on a different area and various characteristics (Sandhu *et al.*, 2011). Early research in the entrepreneurship field was focussed on the existence of certain personality traits such as the need for achievement, risk taking ability, innovation orientation, need for autonomy, good communication, and decision-making skills that could distinguish those who would become entrepreneurs from those who would not (McClelland, 1987; Cox and Jennings, 1995). Later on, other studies were conducted that highlighted the importance of different demographic variables such as age, gender, education, work experience, role models, religion, etc. (Robinson *et al.*, 1991). These approaches contributed to describe the phenomena, however, many scholars (e.g. Ajzen, 1991; Shapero and Sokol, 1982) have criticized them not only for their methodological and conceptual limitations, but also for their low explanatory capacity.

Intentions have also been highlighted in the literature as a predictor of one's becoming an entrepreneur (Bird, 1988; Krueger *et al.*, 2000). Among intention-based models, one of the most widely used and validated is the Theory of Planned Behavior (hereafter TPB), which conceptualizes the strength of intention as an immediate antecedent of behavior (Ajzen, 1991, 2011). The predictive ability of the TPB model has been robustly tested and proven by a number of studies such as that of Kolvereid (1996), Krueger *et al.* (2000), and Kautonen *et al.* (2012), to mention only a few. Unlike other models, TPB provides a general and coherent framework by which to understand and predict the entrepreneurial intention of a person by focussing not only on personal factors, but also on social factors (Krueger *et al.*, 2000).

According to the TPB model, an intention toward entrepreneurial behavior is determined by three key antecedents. The first is the personal attitude toward the behavior. This refers to the degree to which an individual has a positive or negative assessment of being an entrepreneur. The second predictor of intention is the subjective norms, or the perceived social pressure to perform the behavior. This refers to the expectations of an individual's family, colleagues, and friends regarding the desirability of becoming an entrepreneur. The third antecedent of intention is the perceived self-efficacy, which refers to the perceived easiness or difficulty of one's becoming an entrepreneur. The more favorable the attitude and the subjective norms with respect to the behavior and the greater the individual's self-trust and control capabilities, the stronger the intention will be to form the behavior – in this

case, to start a business. The TPB model has been used in practical applications as well as in basic research (Krueger and Carsrud, 1993). Previous studies do find that the above three antecedents explain almost 45 percent of the variation in a person's intentions of becoming an entrepreneur or not (Linan and Chen, 2009; Kolvereid, 1996).

Another common model used is Shapero and Sokol's (1982) model of the Entrepreneurial Event (hereafter EE), which is similar to Ajzen's (1991) model. In fact, several entrepreneurship researchers found a strong relationship between TPB and EE as they are both largely homologous to one another (e.g. Krueger *et al.*, 2000). The EE model also consists of three factors that determine intentions, which are perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, and the propensity to act upon opportunities. Perceived desirability refers to the attractiveness related to the task of starting up a business and becoming an entrepreneur. Perceived feasibility, on the other hand, refers to the degree to which an individual feels that he/she is capable of starting a new venture (e.g. resources availability or one's entrepreneur skills). The propensity to act refers to the individual's willingness to act on decisions (i.e. to actually start up a new business). The theoretical perspective of the EE model was empirically validated by Krueger (1993) and both TPB and EE models prove that intentions are the single best predictor of any planned behavior, including becoming an entrepreneur.

Finally, it should be noted that some researchers in the past few years have challenged the existing views of entrepreneurial intentions by proposing new models. For example, Elfving *et al.* (2009) pointed out that these current entrepreneurial intention models have often been linear and static and put forth a contextual model of entrepreneurial intentions to avoid such limitations. Contextual variables include a large number of factors that might influence the intention to engage in entrepreneurship activities (Luthje and Franke, 2003; Robinson *et al.*, 1991; Bird, 1988). Among these factors are: a propensity for risk taking, the locus of control, environmental support, and contextual barriers. According to Luthje and Franke (2003), all four factors are expected to reveal a causal effect that would lead to entrepreneurial behavior. Thus, these factors can help determine whether individuals will be encouraged to opt for entrepreneurship or not.

Structural model and hypotheses

The conceptual framework of the current study is illustrated in Figure 1. According to this model, it is theorized that the intention to become an entrepreneur is a function of six different variables: social network, opportunity recognition, accessibility to resources, and personality characteristics which include risk tolerance, perception of self-efficacy, and the need for achievement.

The social network

The social network within the entrepreneurial context refers to the various people or entities that are in close relationship to the budding entrepreneur, who would thus provide the necessary support and assistance to boost the entrepreneurial enterprise. One's social network can include family members, relatives, friends, colleagues, other businesses, governmental entities, or other trade associations. Having a good social network can play a very important part in the establishment and success of an entrepreneurial venture. An entrepreneur's family members can play a significant role by engaging in social activities that would connect the entrepreneur to important

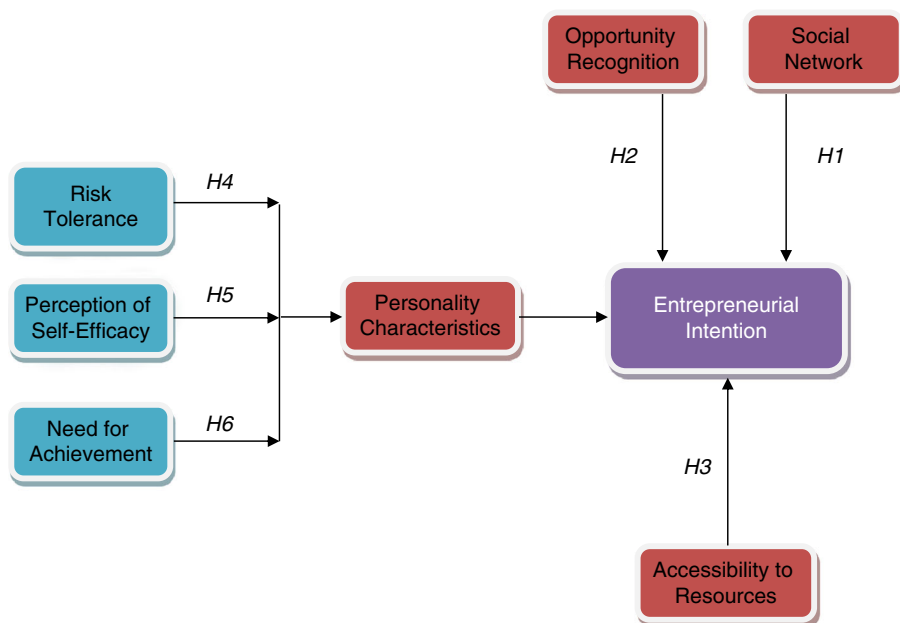


Figure 1.
The research model
and hypotheses

people and entities in society. In this way, the entrepreneur can establish strong ties with the community (Anderson *et al.*, 2005). Rajman (2001) investigated the impact of social networking on a person's entrepreneurial intentions, and found that individuals, who have a close network of other entrepreneurs such as entrepreneur relatives or friends, are more favorably inclined to have intentions of starting their own entrepreneurial venture.

According to Neergaard *et al.* (2005), entrepreneurs who have an active social network and who effectively interact with various personal and business contacts can obtain a great deal of valuable information and useful feedback about their businesses. This knowledge enables entrepreneurs to continuously improve their businesses, which gives them better chances of growth and development. Klyver (2007) also investigated the influences of an entrepreneurial social network on the various entrepreneurial processes to identify the degree of involvement and support of family members at various phases of the business. Klyver also found that the degrees of involvement of family members differ according to the various entrepreneurial stages. The strongest involvement comes at the first stage when the entrepreneur makes the decision whether or not to start an entrepreneurial venture.

Furthermore, Taatila (2010) explained that successful entrepreneurs have fascinating and charismatic characteristics that allow them to socialize and establish strong connections with other people, which in turn enable them to establish a good network. These entrepreneurs have a high capacity for convincing others of their views and opinions. This again makes them establish a strong ally of supporters, who as well, can further help the entrepreneurs achieve their goals and succeed in their endeavors.

Based on the above discussion, we posit the following hypothesis:

H1. Individuals with a dynamic and diversified social network are more likely to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Opportunity recognition

Being able to recognize a good business opportunity is one of the most commonly cited features of whether one has intentions of being an entrepreneur. Many enterprises have been established because of a new economic opportunity or because of one's desire to introduce new products, services, or ideas to the marketplace (McCline *et al.*, 2000). According to Baron (2004), entrepreneurs can identify potential business opportunities by scanning the surrounding environment, sorting, and categorizing the available information and analyzing alternative opportunities. Subsequently, Zhang and Yang (2006) argued that a person's intention to start an entrepreneurial venture can be adversely affected by one's inability to identify potential business opportunities. The same authors further added that a person's intention to become an entrepreneur is also affected by the existing opportunity cost which means the availability of other existing alternatives that generate a certain level of income. The higher the opportunity cost, the lower a person's intentions to become an entrepreneur.

Being able to recognize business opportunities, thus, has a very significant impact on a person's entrepreneurial intentions. When potential entrepreneurs find the market favorable, and they have several adequate business opportunities, they show a high tendency to start up a new businesses venture. On the other hand, people show a low propensity to become entrepreneurs when the market does not have sufficient opportunities and where various barriers deter them from entering the market (Turker and Selcuk, 2009).

Taatila (2010) further explained that being able to recognize and identify business opportunities are significant abilities that differentiate entrepreneurs from other more traditional individuals who prefer to have a regular salaried job rather than to start their own private business. Taatila also added that entrepreneurs are proactive by nature so can sense potential opportunities and can conjure up a comprehensive picture of what an existing business opportunity would look like in the future if it was successfully carried out.

Drawing on the above review, we put forward the following hypothesis:

- H2.* Individuals with great ability to recognize business opportunities are more likely to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Accessibility to resources

Having plenty of accessible business resources facilitates the processes of establishing an entrepreneurial enterprise and developing it at later stages. Several types of resources are necessary in order to establish and grow a business. These include financial resources, human resources, technological resources as well as social networking resources (Pickernell *et al.*, 2011). These different types of resources are all important to support entrepreneurial growth. However, human resources have a greater importance as it can prove to be a source of competitive advantage, which can help the entrepreneurial venture sustain its growth. Successful entrepreneurs must work to attract and retain qualified employees who can help them achieve their objectives (Barney, 2001).

Jones and English (2004) acknowledge that entrepreneurs need to assess their financial and personal resources before engaging in an entrepreneurial venture. Successful entrepreneurs manage to allocate their resources efficiently and to conduct feasibility studies by using viable marketing strategies. Subsequently, Hanlon and Saunders (2007) explained further that an entrepreneur's abilities to assemble and

secure various resources may be influenced by having a strong network made up of friends, family members, and business connections. These entities can all help the entrepreneurs secure the resources that are essential for the establishment and development of the business.

Based on the above discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3. Individuals with high accessibility to resources are more likely to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Personality characteristics

Turker and Selcuk (2009) have pointed out that personality characteristics have a great influence over a person's decision to engage in their own business rather than stay in a traditional job. The same authors have also highlighted that the effects of personality characteristics cannot be isolated from the other important factors which can affect one's entrepreneurial intentions. These other pertinent factors are economic conditions, cultural surroundings, social aspects, as well as environmental and technological factors. Personality characteristics can affect the way people acknowledge different opportunities, and how they analyze and evaluate the market. These personality differences go far to explain why people differ in their entrepreneurial intentions (Kobia and Sikalieh, 2010).

Several varied personality characteristics exist that can have an impact on one's entrepreneurial intentions and differ from person to person. These factors are risk tolerance, self-confidence and perception of self-efficacy, the locus of control, a need for achievement, stress tolerance, and a fear of failure (Bonnett and Furnham, 1991; Turker and Selcuk, 2009; Sandhu *et al.*, 2011). For the purpose of this current study, we will only focus on the following three characteristics:

- (1) risk tolerance;
- (2) the perception of self-efficacy; and
- (3) the need for achievement.

Risk tolerance. Engaging in entrepreneurial activities involves a relatively higher risk than if one works at a traditional salaried job. The ability and willingness to take on and then tolerate a considerable level of risk is the most distinguishing characteristic of entrepreneurs (Hamidi *et al.*, 2008). Subsequently, Katsikis and Kyrgidou (2009) highlighted that risk and uncertainty are always associated with entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs perceive that the profits they make are the reward for taking the risk as well as the compensation for tolerating the high levels of risk and uncertainty involved in relatively risky business ventures.

Taatila (2010) explained that entrepreneurs are considered risk takers, as they have a high tendency to take risk. This tendency enables them to consider a specific business venture as a potential opportunity while other non-entrepreneurs would perceive the same venture as a very risky endeavor. This tendency of entrepreneurs to engage in risky ventures forces them to make important entrepreneurial decisions and to engage in challenging entrepreneurial activities even with a shortage and limitation of available information. According to Luthje and Franke (2003), as well, the propensity of a person to take and tolerate risk has a significant impact on an individual's entrepreneurial intentions. Similarly, several other studies have highlighted that individuals who have a higher risk tolerance have greater and more serious intentions of becoming entrepreneurs (e.g. Segal *et al.*, 2005; Ertuna and Gurel, 2011).

Based on the above review, we put forward the following hypothesis:

- H4. Individuals with high risk tolerance are more likely to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Perception of self-efficacy. The perception of self-efficacy describes an individual's self-estimate of their actual capabilities and competencies that would enable or disenable them from taking an entrepreneurial role or activity. Individuals, who have high beliefs in their own capabilities and who have positive perceptions of self-efficacy, thus have stronger intentions of starting their own entrepreneurial ventures (Hamidi *et al.*, 2008). Previously, Baron (2004) defined self-efficacy as the perception and belief in one's capabilities to not only collect and utilize the necessary resources, but also in one's ability to practice the required skills and competencies that would achieve the desired levels of performance and achievement. Drnovsek *et al.* (2010) as well explained that entrepreneurial self-efficacy describes an entrepreneur's perceptions of their own self-confidence as well as their ability to master all the required entrepreneurial activities, which would make them able to deal effectively and efficiently with all the parties involved in an entrepreneurial venture.

People who are confident about their skills and capabilities tend to perceive specific situations as good business opportunities, while others with less self-confidence and lower perceptions of self-efficacy see the same specific situation as a risky venture. The reason is that people with high self-efficacy consider themselves as very competent and capable of solving any problem so they believe they can overcome any difficulties or challenges in their entrepreneurial activity (Kobia and Sikalieh, 2010). According to Zampetakis *et al.* (2011), individuals with high perceptions of self-efficacy are more capable of making the right decisions during difficult times. As these individuals believe in their skills and capabilities, they only see a problem as a challenge to be overcome. This leads them to make the right decisions and to deal with most business challenges effectively. Drnovsek *et al.* (2010) further explained that an individual's perceptions of self-efficacy include the belief that one possesses the necessary capabilities not only to achieve the ultimate desired level of outcomes, but also to complete the ongoing day by day activities.

Several studies have highlighted the importance of self-efficacy and its significant influence on one's intentions to start up a new business. The perception of self-efficacy is thus crucial to the success and growth of any entrepreneurial enterprise (Krueger *et al.*, 2000; Markman *et al.*, 2002; Pillis and Reardon, 2007). Further to this, Taatila (2010) argued that learning and training can increase an individual's perceptions of self-efficacy, if they develop and improve their skills and competencies. The same author also added that involving the individuals in an actual entrepreneurial environment where they can practice real tasks and activities can improve their knowledge, experience, and competencies, which, accordingly, would thus improve their perceptions of self-efficacy.

Drawing on the above discussion, we put forward the following hypothesis:

- H5. Individuals with high perceptions of self-efficacy for starting and growing a new business are more likely to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Need for achievement. The need for achievement has also commonly been cited as one of the most important personality characteristics that influence one's entrepreneurial

intention. This need is considered a dominant predictor that has a great impact on the success of entrepreneurial ventures (Pillis and Reardon, 2007). The perception of achievement describes a person's motive to accomplish something in a better way than what was previously accomplished by others. This achievement motive is developed when a person compares their current accomplishments to their desired level of achievement. An individual with the need for achievement undergoes several processes of planning and organizing and seeks excellence in every detail (Hansemark, 1998).

Ertuna and Gurel (2011) conducted a study about entrepreneurial intention among university students in Turkey, and found that students with a high need for achievement had high intentions of starting up their own business. Katsikis and Kyrgidou (2009) referred to social entrepreneurship where individuals engage in entrepreneurial ventures as a means to achieve noticeable and considerable positive social change. This need for achievement drove them to be creative and innovative when establishing new businesses.

Based on the above review, we posit the following hypothesis:

- H6.* Individuals with a high need for achievement are more likely to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Methodology

This present study was carried out by a survey method, using a questionnaire that targeted all Kuwaiti nationals over 18 who were capable of becoming entrepreneurs thus owning their own business. A softcopy of the questionnaire was created through an online survey website called: www.freeonlinesurveys.com. The questionnaire was distributed by different methods in order to reach the largest number of Kuwaitis and to cover most of the various segments and areas across the country. The questionnaire was reviewed by experts in the field and consists of two sections that measured the elements under study. Section one consists of seven items with the aim of collecting general information about the Kuwaitis participating in the survey. Section two contains 28 items and was aimed at collecting information about the various factors that influence the entrepreneurial intentions of Kuwaitis. These items were adopted and modified from the works of Sandhu *et al.* (2011), Tang (2008), and Shaw (2004). A five-point Likert scale was used whereby "1" denotes Strongly Disagree and scale "5" Strongly Agree.

After several reminders, 258 questionnaires were returned. Some were partially completed or missing data which resulted in a usable sample of only 244 (i.e. $n = 244$). This guaranteed a reasonable data quality in terms of representation. The gender composition of the sample was 77.05 percent male ($n = 188$) who were between the ages of 30-39. Approximately 85 percent of the respondents were employed and 42 percent had five to nine years of work experience. In total, 73 percent were graduates and 30 percent had a monthly income between KWD 500 and KWD 1,000.

Data analysis and findings

The collected data were statistically analyzed using SPSS version 19. Entrepreneurial intention was employed as the dependent variable and measured by an index of four items that asked whether the respondents had seriously considered or intended to start up a new business and become entrepreneurs, while the six determinants of entrepreneurial intention (i.e. social network, opportunity recognition, accessibility to resources, risk tolerance, need for achievement, and self-efficacy) were the independent or predictor variables.

Reliability analysis

The reliability and the internal consistencies of the variables were tested with Cronbach's α coefficients. According to Sekaran (2003), Cronbach's α is a measure of internal consistency that specifies the degree to which items are positively correlated as a group. The closer Cronbach's α is to one, the higher the internal consistency. Table I provides an overview of the Cronbach's α coefficients. It can be seen that all variables are above 0.70 which thus, indicates a good internal consistency.

Correlation analysis

The Pearson correlation was also used to examine the strength of the relationships between the variables in this study. Table II reports the correlation analysis which shows the strength and direction of the correlation between every pair of variables. From the table, it can be seen that all six determinants of entrepreneurial intention are positively related. Thus, the higher the values of the determinants the greater the

Variable	Items	Cronbach's α values
Social network	4	0.929
Opportunity recognition	4	0.952
Accessibility to resources	4	0.942
Risk tolerance	4	0.965
Need for achievement	4	0.961
Self-efficacy	4	0.962
Entrepreneurship intention	4	0.957
Overall reliability	28	0.981

Table I.
Reliability analysis

		Social network	Opportunity recognition	Accessibility to resources	Risk tolerance	Need for achievement	Self-efficacy	Entrepreneurship intention
Social network	Pearson correlation 1 Sig. (2-tailed)							
Opportunity recognition	Pearson correlation 0.813** Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000	1						
Accessibility to resources	Pearson correlation 0.943** Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000	0.800**	1					
Risk tolerance	Pearson correlation 0.667** Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000	0.652**	0.651**	1				
Need for achievement	Pearson correlation 0.683** Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000	0.583**	0.665**	0.572**	1			
Self-efficacy	Pearson correlation 0.777** Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000	0.863**	0.788**	0.674**	0.613**	1		
Entrepreneurship intention	Pearson correlation 0.754** Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000	0.676***	0.724**	0.713**	0.791**	0.741**	1	

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

Table II.
Correlation matrix

entrepreneurial intention. Among these relations, the need for achievement ($r = 0.791$, $p < 0.01$) followed by social network ($r = 0.754$, $p < 0.01$) and self-efficacy ($r = 0.741$, $p < 0.01$) have the highest correlation with entrepreneurship intention. This then reflects the importance of these three variables.

Regression analysis

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify the significance and predictability of the independent variables (i.e. social network, opportunity recognition, accessibility to resources, and personality characteristics) on the outcome of the dependent variable. This analysis can also be used to identify the contribution of each independent variable on the outcome of the dependent variable. Table III summarizes the overall findings of our model. The R^2 for the regression model was 0.774 indicating strong support for the overall model.

Table IV shows the regression ANOVA table. The reported sig. value = 0.000 which is less than 0.05, means that the independent variables can significantly predict the outcome of the dependent variable.

Table V shows the regression coefficients. From this table, we can identify and examine the significance and the contribution of each independent variable on the outcome of the dependent variable. It can also be seen that only four independent

Table III.
Model summary

Model	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	SE of the estimate
1	0.880 ^a	0.774	0.768	0.47296

Notes: ^aPredictors: (Constant), self-efficacy, need for achievement, risk tolerance, accessibility to resources, opportunity recognition, social network

Table IV.
ANOVA^a

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Regression	181.212	6	30.202	135.015	0.000 ^b
Residual	53.015	237	0.224		
Total	234.227	243			

Notes: ^aDependent variable: entrepreneurship intention; ^bpredictors: (Constant), self-efficacy, need for achievement, risk tolerance, accessibility to resources, opportunity recognition, social network

Table V.
Coefficients^a

	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		<i>t</i>	Sig.
	β	SE	β			
(Constant)	-0.072	0.148			-0.489	0.625
Social network	0.289	0.099	0.290		2.908	0.004
Opportunity recognition	-0.124	0.073	-0.116		-1.693	0.092
Accessibility to resources	-0.134	0.101	-0.128		-1.329	0.185
Risk tolerance	0.217	0.042	0.232		5.197	0.000
Need for achievement	0.472	0.048	0.431		9.854	0.000
Self-efficacy	0.308	0.070	0.296		4.421	0.000

Note: ^aDependent variable: entrepreneurship intention

variables were found to have a significant influence on the entrepreneurship intention. These variables are: social network (sig. = 0.004 which is less than 0.05), risk tolerance (sig. = 0.000 which is less than 0.05), need for achievement (sig. = 0.000 which is less than 0.05), and self-efficacy (sig. = 0.000 which is less than 0.05). It can also be seen that the need for achievement reported the largest beta value ($\beta = 0.431$), which means that it plays the most significant role in predicting the outcome of the dependent variable (entrepreneurship intention). This finding shows that the need for achievement was the dominant factor among all the studied variables.

Discussion and hypotheses testing

This study is intended to assess the key influential factors that affect the entrepreneurial intentions of Kuwaiti nationals. With regard to proposed factors, and as can be seen from Table II, this study found that having a dynamic social network, significantly, and positively correlated with entrepreneurial intention. The results of the regression analysis confirm the significant influence that social network has on entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = 0.290$; $t = 2.908$; $p = 0.004$). This means that Kuwaiti individuals who have a strong accessible and diversified social network such as with family, relatives, friends or strong business connections can have a higher entrepreneurial intention. The support they get from these connections empowers them to start their own business as they can tap into it when necessary. Therefore, *H1* is accepted.

Moreover, as can be seen from Table II, a significant positive correlation between opportunity recognition and entrepreneurial intention was found. This means that the higher the ability of Kuwaiti individuals to recognize business opportunities, the higher their entrepreneurial intentions. However, the results of the regression analysis showed that opportunity recognition does not have any significant influence on entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = -0.116$; $t = -1.693$; $p = 0.092$). These findings show that, while opportunity recognition has a positive correlation with entrepreneurial intention; it does not have a significant influence on the individual's intentions to become an entrepreneur. Hence, *H2* is rejected.

Likewise, the results of the data analysis showed that accessibility to resources has a significant positive correlation with entrepreneurial intention. This means that the greater the individual's abilities are to access the needed resources, the higher their entrepreneurial intentions. However, even though, accessibility to resources may be positively correlated with entrepreneurial intention; the results of the regression analysis did not confirm that accessibility to resources played a significant role in entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = -0.128$; $t = -1.329$; $p = 0.185$). Thus, *H3* is rejected.

Furthermore, the theoretical framework for this study presented three personality characteristics as possible factors that can affect Kuwaitis' entrepreneurial intentions. These personality characteristics are: risk tolerance, the need for achievement, and self-efficacy. The results of the data analysis showed that these characteristics have a significant positive correlation with entrepreneurial intentions. The results of the regression analysis were similar to the results of the correlation analysis, as it was found that the three characteristics have a significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = 0.232$; $t = 5.197$; $p = 0.000$); ($\beta = 0.431$; $t = 9.854$; $p = 0.000$); ($\beta = 0.296$; $t = 4.421$; $p = 0.000$). In fact, the need for achievement was found to have the greatest effect ($\beta = 0.431$) on Kuwaitis' entrepreneurial intentions. This means that individuals who are motivated to achieve success in life are more receptive to becoming entrepreneurs. These findings confirm that all the personality

characteristics (risk tolerance, need for achievement, and self-efficacy) have a significant influence on Kuwaitis' entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, *H4*, *H5*, and *H6* are accepted.

Conclusion, limitations, and suggestions for further research

This study was only targeted at Kuwaiti nationals to measure their readiness and intention to open their own businesses. A sample of 244 national Kuwaitis was collected by conducting a survey about the variables that could affect their entrepreneurial intentions. After collecting the data, a statistical analysis was carried out. The results indicated that all three personality characteristics (risk tolerance, perception of self-efficacy, and the need for achievement), along with social network have a significant influence on Kuwaitis' entrepreneurial intentions. These results thus confirm the findings of previous studies in terms of the significant relationship between entrepreneurial intention and the above mentioned antecedents. In this study, it was also found that both opportunity recognition and accessibility to resources do not have a significant influence on entrepreneurial intention.

However, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, this study is the first of its kind to investigate the entrepreneurial intentions of Kuwaiti nationals. This research study furthers our understanding of what motivates a Kuwaiti individual to become an entrepreneur. Needless to say, a thorough understanding of both the factors that influence entrepreneurial inclination and the barriers that could dissuade one from opening a business is necessary in order for Kuwaiti authorities to put in place the effective policies that would promote and sustain economic growth and development.

Although this study used a theoretical framework consistent with previous research studies; this present research did not involve certain other factors, which might also impact their entrepreneurial intentions. These factors could be cultural influences, entrepreneurial education, government policies on venture creation, economic and environmental conditions, as well as demographic dimensions. It is thus recommended that further research be conducted to investigate the tendency toward entrepreneurship intentions in Kuwait, which might well reveal all the essential factors that affect this phenomenon. Another limitation of this study is the sample size, which possibly restricted the validity of the results obtained. It is important to always have a large number of prospective entrepreneurs to improve the robustness of findings. Moreover, the research findings here are based on a quantitative methodology, which tends to limit and obscure a true causal association between variables so it inevitably leads to biased results (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001).

Therefore, this research area necessitates and would greatly benefit from a more sophisticated analysis as well as from other qualitative approaches, which could circumvent these limitations. Hence, a more comprehensive and an in depth study is still needed which could offer further insight into the entrepreneurial intentions of Kuwaitis.

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About the authors

Dr Wajeeh Elali is a Professor of Finance at the College of Business and Finance, Ahlia University, Bahrain. He recently joined the Ahlia University after more than a decade teaching graduate and undergraduate courses at the McGill University, Canada. He has also taught various corporate finance and business economics courses at the Northeastern University (USA) and the Concordia University (Canada). From 1981 to 1982 he was a Visiting Scholar at Harvard Business School. His work has been published in various refereed journals such as the *Thunderbird International Business Review* (USA), the *International Journal of Business Governance and Ethics* (UK), the *International Journal of Commerce & Management* (USA), and *Economia Internazionale* (Italy). His current research focusses on corporate governance, business valuation, and entrepreneurship. Throughout his career, he has received a number of awards for excellence in teaching and research. Dr Wajeeh Elali is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: wajeehelali@hotmail.com

Badriah Al-Yacoub is a Business and Legal Consultant at Bader Jassim Al-Yacoub Law firm, Kuwait. She holds an MBA degree and a Master of Law and is currently working on her PhD thesis in the field of women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship. Throughout her career, she has collaborated with business partners from across the Middle East and GCC countries. She has also handled negotiations and been involved in various arbitration cases.