

The effect of entrepreneurial education into students perceived entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions – Case MIBE

Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology LUT

Master's thesis in International Business and Entrepreneurship

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this thesis is to understand the effect that entrepreneurial education on a university master's degree level has on students perceived attitudes towards entrepreneurship, their perceived entrepreneurial abilities, and entrepreneurial intentions. This study is conducted as qualitative research, using a case-study method with a narrative approach. The aim behind choosing a narrative method is to dive deep into students' own perception of their attitudes, intentions and abilities and how entrepreneurial education has affected those. Qualitative approach is suitable on producing new insights on a subject that has been widely researched in a quantitative manner.

The results of this study indicate that the perception of the effect on entrepreneurial education varies between students that have had entrepreneurial intentions prior to the educational program and those who have had none. Students with some entrepreneurial intentions in the beginning perceived the most increase in their abilities, attitudes and intentions, whereas students with no entrepreneurial intention prior did perceive a change in attitude, but less increase in abilities. Students with prior knowledge and intentions towards entrepreneurship got validation on their perceived abilities and intentions but did not experience an attitude change.

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Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena on ymmärtää yliopiston maisteritasoisen yrittäjyyskoulutuksen vaikutus opiskelijoiden koettuihin asenteisiin yrittäjyyttä kohtaan, koettuihin yrittäjyyskyvykkyyksiin ja yrittäjyysintentionioihin. Tutkimus on toteutettu kvalitatiivisena tapaustutkimuksena ja siinä on käytetty narratiivista lähestymistapaa. Narratiivisen menetelmän valinnan tavoitteena on paneutua syvälle opiskelijoiden omaan käsitykseen heidän asenteistaan, intentionioistaan ja kyvyistään, sekä siitä, miten yrittäjyyskoulutus on vaikuttanut niihin. Laadullinen tutkimusote soveltuu tuottamaan uusia näkemyksiä aiheesta, jota on tutkittu laajasti määrällisin menetelmin.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että käsitys yrittäjyyskasvatuksesta vaihtelee niiden opiskelijoiden välillä, joilla on yrittäjyyskokemusta ennen koulutusta, ja niiden, joilla ei ole. Eniten kykyjensä, asenteidensa ja intentionioidensa lisääntymistä kokivat ne opiskelijat, joilla oli ennen koulutusta hieman yrittäjyysintentionioita, kun taas opiskelijat, joilla ei aikaisemmin ollut yrittäjyysintentioniota havaitsivat asenteen muutoksen, mutta vähemmän kykyjen kasvua. Opiskelijat, joilla oli aiempaa tietämystä ja aikomuksia yrittäjyyteen, saivat vahvistusta havaituille kyvyilleen ja aikomuksilleen, mutta eivät kokeneet asennemuutosta.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is a well-discussed matter and broadly accepted to be useful to society, by creating economic growth. Entrepreneurs seek profits by innovations and thus further economic growth in a wider perspective. (Munoz & Otamendi, 2014) Historically, the absence of entrepreneurship has been critical for some industries. Studies have shown that not only the quantity of entrepreneurs in the society, but the quality of entrepreneurship has a big impact on economic growth. Innovative entrepreneurship seems to be particularly important. (Stephan & Uhlaner, 2010)

Still, though entrepreneurs and new innovations were established to be the engine that keeps the economy going, researchers keep on looking for a way to pin down the “great entrepreneur” (Brännback & Carsrud, 2011). Most of all, researchers are seeking a recipe on how to make an entrepreneur, the perfect combination of personality and contextual factors that molds this almost “too good to be true” -character. (Brännback & Carsrud, 2011; Kacperczyk, 2011) Despite the efforts, no clear recipe of the ingredients of an entrepreneur has been concluded. (Brännback & Carsrud, 2011)

To explain the drivers of entrepreneurship, scholars have drawn extra focus on the formation of entrepreneurial intentions. According to Krueger (2009), the formation of entrepreneurial intentions happens through perceived desirability (attitudes) and perceived feasibility (self-efficacy) and is affected by multiple factors, both internal and external. All in all, attitudes towards a behavior are seen as the most certain way to predict intentions, in this case, towards entrepreneurship (Souitaris, Zerbinati, Al-Laham 2004, Krueger, Reilly, Carsrud 2000).

As the interest on the drivers of entrepreneurship has increased, so has the interest towards entrepreneurship education. Institutions of higher education seem to have a big impact on increasing entrepreneurial intentions and success of new ventures (David, John, & Gerald, 1980). However, though entrepreneurship education has a high value among policy-makers, the amount of evidence of its helpfulness in new venture creation is relatively small (von Graevenitz, Harhoff, & Weber, 2010). Still, scholars argue that education has a positive correlation in the amount of entrepreneurial activities in the society, with the quality of entrepreneurship and the propensity to innovation on a firm (Matlay, 2006; Olivari, 2016). Education does not only provide entrepreneurs with knowledge and skills, but networks

(Olivari, 2016). Entrepreneurial education is seen as a driver of entrepreneurship, but the subject still lacks empirical evidence.

This thesis makes the best effort possible to examine the effect of entrepreneurial education into students' attitudes and thus into entrepreneurial intention. Using a narrative case-study approach this thesis will focus on examining students from a particular entrepreneurship program, the master's program of International Business and Entrepreneurship in Lappeenranta University of Technology.

1.1 Purpose of the study and research questions

The purpose of this study is to examine and explain the effect of entrepreneurial education into one's perceived entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions.

The objective of this study is to examine what is the role of entrepreneurial education in forming entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes towards entrepreneurship. To achieve an answer to this research problem a qualitative narrative case-study will be conducted. The primary research question is:

(1) What kind of narratives do university level entrepreneurship students construct on the effects of entrepreneurial education in their perceived entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions?

For a more profound answer to the problem, I have conducted two additional research questions to support:

(2) What factors do university level entrepreneurship students narrate to being significant in the development of entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions?

(3) What different pathways to and outcomes of entrepreneurial education university level entrepreneurship students produce in their narratives?

Some scholars argue that entrepreneurial education in higher education institutes will help the process of learned entrepreneurial attitudes and through that to perceived self-efficacy, provide general entrepreneurial competence and install entrepreneurial mind-set. These attitudes and

competency can be developed into entrepreneurial intentions and later, actions. (Esfandiar et al., 2019; Ismail, Sawang, & Zolin, 2018; Turkina & Thai, 2013) If entrepreneurial education is truly able to mold the attitudes towards entrepreneurship, it can be seen as the most certain way to also affect the formation of entrepreneurial intentions. (Souitaris, Zerbinati, Al-Laham 2007, Krueger et. al. 2000) The complexity of the entrepreneurship phenomenon makes it difficult to explore the entrepreneurial intention and attitude plainly with quantitative study, while focusing on one or two variables may fail to provide in-depth insight on the subject (Gartner 2010). Though entrepreneurial education has been widely studied, many of the empirical studies are conducted as quantitative research. A narrative approach is taken while it gives the opportunity to a more in-depth understanding of the student's thoughts, attitudes and intentions towards entrepreneurship and towards the educational program itself.

To understand what kind of impact entrepreneurial education a driver of entrepreneurship has as, this study aims to conduct pathways of student narratives of how they have ended up within entrepreneurial education to begin with and how does their journey continue in and after the program.

The main contributions of this study are to provide more in-depth research on entrepreneurial education and its role as a driver of entrepreneurship. This research also contributes to the further development of entrepreneurial education, while it aims to provide information on the factors that students have found significant in molding their entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes. Because this research is conducted as a narrative case-study of Lappeenranta University of Technology master's program of International Business and Entrepreneurship, this particular study program is provided with in-depth feedback and information that can be helpful in developing the program further. This can be seen as a great positive contribution for LUT, while the program is relatively new and there is not a lot of previous data collected from the students yet.

1.2 Defining general concepts

1.2.1 Entrepreneurship education

Entrepreneur education means a type of education that is focused on building the knowledge and competences around the subject of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship education can help

students understand the entrepreneurial mindset, innovation and business creation process and the whole phenomenon of entrepreneurship in the way that they have better assets to decide whether they want to pursue an entrepreneurial career or not. (von Graevenitz et al., 2010)

1.2.2 Entrepreneurial intentions (EI)

According to Bird (1988), intentions guide persons actions and attention into a specific subject, goal or path. Entrepreneurial intentions guide attention to starting new ventures or towards innovation of new products, services or business models. Intentions are affected by perceived desirability and perceived feasibility towards entrepreneurship. Perceived desirability concludes personal desirability towards the action and perceived social norms. Perceived feasibility concludes from self-efficacy and collective efficacy (Krueger 2000; Krueger 2009).

2 ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS (EI)

This chapter will consist of a review of literature on the subject of entrepreneurial intentions (EI) and entrepreneurial education (EE). It will discuss different intention-based models and explain the attitudes affecting EI. The second sub-chapter is going to discuss entrepreneurial education as a concept, the objectives of entrepreneurial education as well as its role in EI. In the final sub-chapter, I will introduce the theoretical framework supporting this thesis.

Intentions are one of the best viewpoints on predicting human behavior, which makes them a widely examined matter to understand certain behaviors, for example, entrepreneurship. They are part of human attitudes that are learned over time and attitudes are a big affecting matter on the formation of intentions. Opportunity recognition is a big part in formation of intentions and entrepreneurs need to evaluate different opportunities and outcomes of new ventures (Bird, 1988; Krueger et al., 2000). Intentions are also seen as a key driver of perceiving these opportunities (Yasir, Mahmood, Mehmood, Babar, Irfan & Liren 2021). Intentions guide actions, so it is clear that entrepreneurs must have entrepreneurial intentions before engaging in entrepreneurial activities (Bird, 1988; Krueger et al., 2000). While the concept of intentions is quite complex, there are multiple aspects that affect the formation of entrepreneurial intentions. The table below illustrates the summary of the aspects that this chapter aims to further discuss in aim to provide a deeper understanding of EI. This chapter will also introduce popular intention-based models used in entrepreneurship research.

Internal and external factors affecting EI		
Internal		Reference
Attitudes	Personal desirability	Krueger 2009
	Perceived feasibility	
Personality traits	High risk propensity	Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo 2017; Lima, Namaci, & Fabiani 2014
	Need for achievement	
	Preference for innovation	
	Internal Locus of Control	
Other	Age	Schwartz et. al. 2009

	Gender	Vukovic, Josanov-Vrgovic, Jovin & Papic-Blagojevic 2020; Schwartz et. al. 2009
External		
Social networks	Family	Raijman 2001; Vukovic et.al. 2020
	Peers	Heblich and Luedemann 2012
	Role-models	Politis, Ketikidis, Diamantidis and Lazuras 2016
Perceived entrepreneurship-related barriers	Lack of social capital	Lüthje and Franke 2003
	Lack of role models	
	Lack of knowledge	
	Insufficient public policy	
Perceived entrepreneurship-related support	Programs that aim to teach valuable entrepreneurship knowledge and skills	Lüthje and Franke 2003
	Initiatives for building networks	
	Initiatives and public policy that highlight positive entrepreneurial role-models	

Table 1 Internal and external factors affecting EI

2.1 Attitudes mold intentions

Attitudes have been seen as one of the main factors contributing into the formation of intentions. In the theoretical framework of EI used in this thesis, the attitudes impacting the intentions are perceived desirability towards the behavior as well as perceived feasibility. (Krueger 2009)

According to the model of EI by Krueger (2009) the factors impacting perceived desirability are personal desirability and social norms. Personal desirability is formed by the beliefs of personal consequences of the behavior, for example, benefits or stress (Krueger 2000; Shapero

1982). According to Clercq, Honig and Martin (2011), desirability towards entrepreneurship can also be affected by personality traits, like passion for work and learning orientation.

Perceived social norms on the other hand are the expectations and believes that one has about how the important people in their lives would react to this certain behavior. (Krueger 2000)

Perceived feasibility is conducted by perceived self-efficacy and perceived collective efficacy (Krueger 2009). Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is the belief of being successful and capable to entrepreneurial activities, and specifically the term refers to the strength of that feeling (Chen, Greene, & Crick 1998). Self-efficacy is part of persons attitudes and learned over life.

The influencing factors to the development of self-efficacy are the main sources of information, enactive attainments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological state. *Enactive attainments* are the experiences person has during life and self-efficacy is most influenced by it. Successful experiences impact positively on self-efficacy, and on the other hand, continuous failure may lower it over time. *Vicarious experience* means observing other that are similar to you performing. This gives us the idea that if someone else can do it, then maybe we have the capabilities to do it as well. *Verbal persuasion* is trying to assure a person that they have the right capabilities to succeed in some tasks. Persons *physiological state* can also have an influence to self-efficacy, for instance, in situations that require strength, person's self-efficacy is influenced by their estimate of their physical capabilities. (Bandura, 1982)

The theory of entrepreneurial self-efficacy being the distinguishing matter between entrepreneurs and others is rather popular and researched one (Chen et al. 1998; Esfandiari, Sharifi-Tehrani, Pratt & Altinay 2019; Krueger et al. 2000). Self-efficacy is an important part of career exploration among youth and decision making (Brown, Darden, Shelton, & Dipoto, 1999). Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is especially linked with entrepreneurial intentions (Krueger et al., 2000).

Self-efficacy theory in entrepreneurship studies states that to succeed in new venture creation does one not only need to see and seize opportunities but have the believe that they can achieve the wanted results if they engage in that business opportunity (Turkina & Thai, 2013). Self-efficacy is a big part of setting goals, and in the theory of entrepreneurship, it seems that with good self-efficacy entrepreneurs set higher goals than others in much more uncertain

environments. By setting the goals high the entrepreneur can widen his perspective and see opportunities that others may not. Goal setting is also a big part of new venture success (Baum & Locke, 2004).

2.2 Personality traits and EI

As stated earlier, attitudes like perceived feasibility and personal desirability play perhaps the biggest part in the formation of intentions (Krueger 2000; Krueger 2009), thus molding attitudes may be the key to increase entrepreneurial intentions in the first place. However, there are other aspects that impact entrepreneurial intentions, both interpersonal and environmental. The attitude-based model of intentions has been popular among researchers from the 1990's, but besides that, intentions to start a new business were widely examined through personality traits (Schwarz, Malgorzata, Wdowiak, Almer-Jarz & Breitnecker 2009).

Personality traits are persons abilities, motivations, attitudes and characteristics of temperament, that mold over time by experiences and actions. The concept of personality in psychology is complex and it's impossible to pin down exact personality traits that are common to every entrepreneur. However, it has been studied, which of these aspects of personality engage with entrepreneurial intentions (Brandstätter 2011). Recent research identifies few common traits to entrepreneurs in general; great risk-propensity, need for achievement, preference for innovation and internal locus of control (Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo 2017; Lima, Namaci, & Fabiani 2014). Willingness to invest own money, time and effort to get the business going is also typical (Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo 2017). High risk aversion has been seen as an advantage in both personal and business success. Risk aversion is also beneficial to the growth of the whole economy (Galor & Michalopoulos 2012). The toleration of risks perhaps makes entrepreneurs seize more opportunities than others (Ribeiro Soriano, Augusto, Rodrigues, & Caldeirinha 2012) and due to the fact, that you can't win if you don't try, achieve greater success. Entrepreneurial activities demand risk-tolerance, because innovation almost always equals uncertainty and some level of risk (Ribeiro Soriano et al. 2012).

Individuals with high motivation to achievement more often see and seize entrepreneurial opportunities, because it satisfies their need for achievement, and are considered more suitable for the entrepreneurial role in general (Stewart & Roth 2007). The preference of innovation

goes hand in hand with the previous two. As innovativeness has been seen as a significant trait for entrepreneurs, they must cope with the uncertainty of the possible outcomes of new inventions. Innovation creates growth (Munoz & Otamendi 2014) and thus entrepreneurs with high need for achievement, should have preference of innovation (Stewart, Watson, Carland, & Carland, 1999). In the table below, you can see a wide synthesis by **Filion (2000)** of personality traits that are commonly linked to entrepreneurs and thus EI (Lima et. al. 2014).

01. Self-concept	13. Need for achievement
02. Commitment	14. Need for power
03. Systemic root	15. Need for recognition
04. Vision	16. Need for security
05. Relation system	17. Attitude to growth
06. Delegation	18. Attitude in interpersonal relations
07. Purpose	19. Attitude to profits
08. Independence	20. Attitude to risk
09. Locus of control	21. Leadership style
10. Ability to adapt	22. Management style
11. Creativity	23. Decision-making style
12. Innovation	24. Strategic style

Table 2 Common personality traits of entrepreneurs by Filion (2000) (Lima et. al. 2014).

2.3 Other internal factors affecting EI

According to a study made by Vukovic, Josanov-Vrgovic, Jovin & Papic-Blagojevic (2020), gender can mean a great deal in the formation of entrepreneurial intentions, and it seems that without other environmental aspects, males have higher entrepreneurial intentions to begin with. Other scholars seem to agree as well, and not only does gender affect the overall level of EI, it also matters in the perception of entrepreneurial barriers. Women seem to give more importance and attention to barriers like lack of support, fear of failure and lack of competency and these perceptions seem to have a greater value towards EI. Still, the role of gender in EI is not consistent in all cases (Shinnar, Giacomini and Janssen 2012). Even though women may have similar attitudes towards entrepreneurship and a desire to start their own business, it seems that the actual intention towards entrepreneurship remains lower (de la Cruz Sánchez-

Escobedo, Diaz-Casero, Hernández-Mogollón & Postigo-Jiménez 2011). Schwartz et.al. (2009) discovered as well that male students seem to have higher intentions towards entrepreneurship to begin with.

Age has been tested to have an impact towards EI. Young high-school graduates tend to have lower EI, perhaps because they also are usually unaware of their future career path to begin with. While they grow up, they gather knowledge and interest and become more aware of what they want to do in the future, and thus it seems that also EI may rise significantly. However, some studies show that after the age of 35, entrepreneurial intentions start declining again (Schwartz et. al. 2009).

2.4 External factors affecting EI

Knowing other entrepreneurs, having mentors and role-models have been examined to have a positive effect on EI (Politis, Ketikidis, Diamantidis and Lazuras 2016).

Raijman (2001) examined that there is a significant connection between social networks and entrepreneurial intentions, in the means that having family members in business can provide one with a role-model as well as with financial and non-financial help and resources. The potential entrepreneurs in this research saw the lack of social capital as a significant barrier for starting their own business and thus it affected negatively on their entrepreneurial intentions. It seems that parents and other family members can have a big impact on EI, both in positive and negative ways (Vukovic et.al. 2020).

While the social impact of family members and role-models are discussed in rather many studies, some studies also implicate that one's peers have an impact on EI as well. Falck, Heblich and Luedemann (2012) discovered that there was a positive effect on EI by having an entrepreneurial peer group. The amount of that effect was affected by different factors, but mostly the value of individualism in the culture/country.

Studies have shown that not only social networks and socio-cultural factors impact EI, but also perceived support factors as well as barriers regarding entrepreneurship. To be able to build up, for example, students' entrepreneurial intentions, universities and public policy should build initiatives and programs that eliminate perceived barriers in starting a business and

intensify the perceived support factors by, for example, bringing in positive role-models, building networks and teaching valuable knowledge about the subject (Lüthje and Franke 2003).

2.5 Intention-based models

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) is a popular model to explain human behavior through intentions. According to the author it is important to measure the intentions behind the behavior, because the stronger the intention is to do something, the more probably the behavior is going to happen. Intentions guide on how willing one is to do something and how much effort one is willing to put in order to succeed in a behavior. The visualized model of TPB can be seen below.

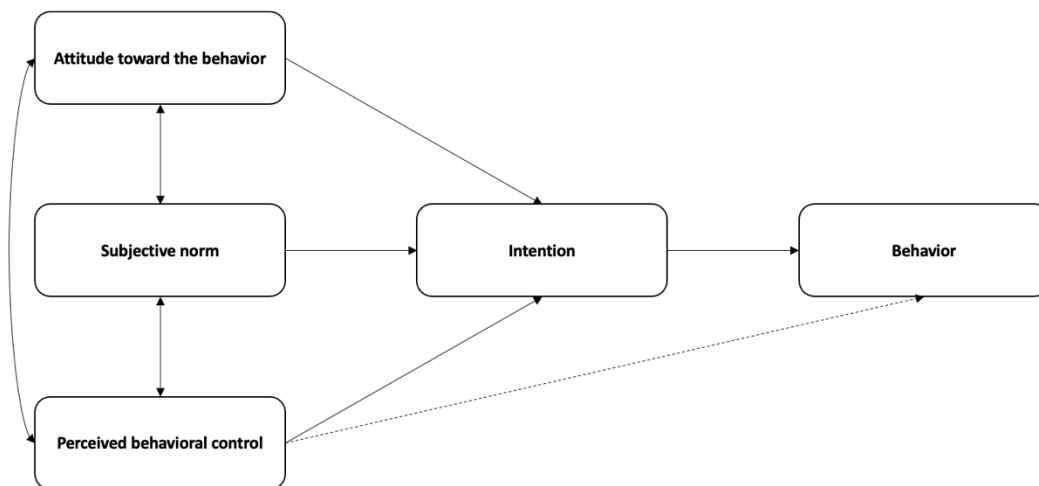


Figure 1 Theory of planned behavior (Ajzen 1991)

The main idea of the theory is that human behavior is dependent on motivation and ability towards the behavior. One must have the motivation, the intent, of doing something as well as the actual ability, resources, and opportunity, in order to start a behavior. However, where actual behavioral control is important and needs to be in place, the perceived behavioral control has a great role as well. Perceived behavioral control means the way one sees the behavior, for example, difficult or easy. This has also been compared with the theory of self-efficacy, which was discussed earlier in this chapter. In TPB, perceived behavioral control together with intention can be used to predict behavior directly. The theory also rules that when a behavior

does not need much control or there is no serious control issue towards the behavior, intentions solely are a great way to predict behavior (Ajzen 1991).

The aspects that impact intentions according to TPB are subjective norm, attitude toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control. Subjective norm measures the social pressure on performing or not performing a behavior. Attitude towards a behavior can be negative or positive and as discussed earlier, perceived behavioral control stands for the level that one sees they would be able to succeed or fail in that particular behavior and how easy or difficult it could be (Ajzen 1991). According to Ajzen (1991), the more positive attitude and encouraging social environment towards a behavior, the higher the perceived behavioral control and thus the intention towards that behavior.

The Entrepreneurial Event (SEE) is another popular intention-based model of entrepreneurial behavior by Shapero (1982). According to SEE, intentions are molded by perceived desirability and feasibility as well as the propensity to act. Shapero (1982) believed that behavior is controlled by inertia until something disturbs it. The disturbance can be positive or negative, for example job loss or winning the lottery, which then change the way one sees opportunities in their lives and thus can also significantly increase entrepreneurial activity in the process (Krueger et. al. 2000).

SEE does not only rely on attitudes affecting intentions and behavior, but it adds propensity to act, which theoretically depends on perceived control and the willingness to take control by acting on a certain behavior (Krueger et. al. 2000).

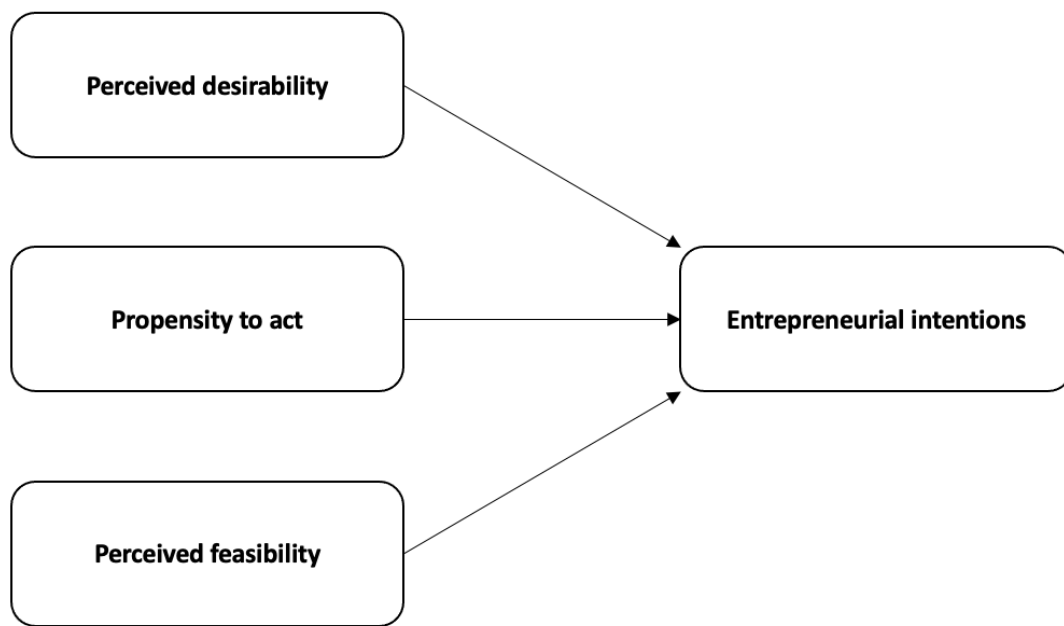


Figure 2 The Entrepreneurial Event by Shapero (1982)

Schwarz et. Al. (2009) saw the lack of intentional based models that combined both external and internal aspects that are affection the formation of intentions. Thus, they created *the model of Entrepreneurial Intent*, in which around half of the impact towards EI comes out of persons attitudes and half from environmental aspects. The figure below illustrates the complete model.

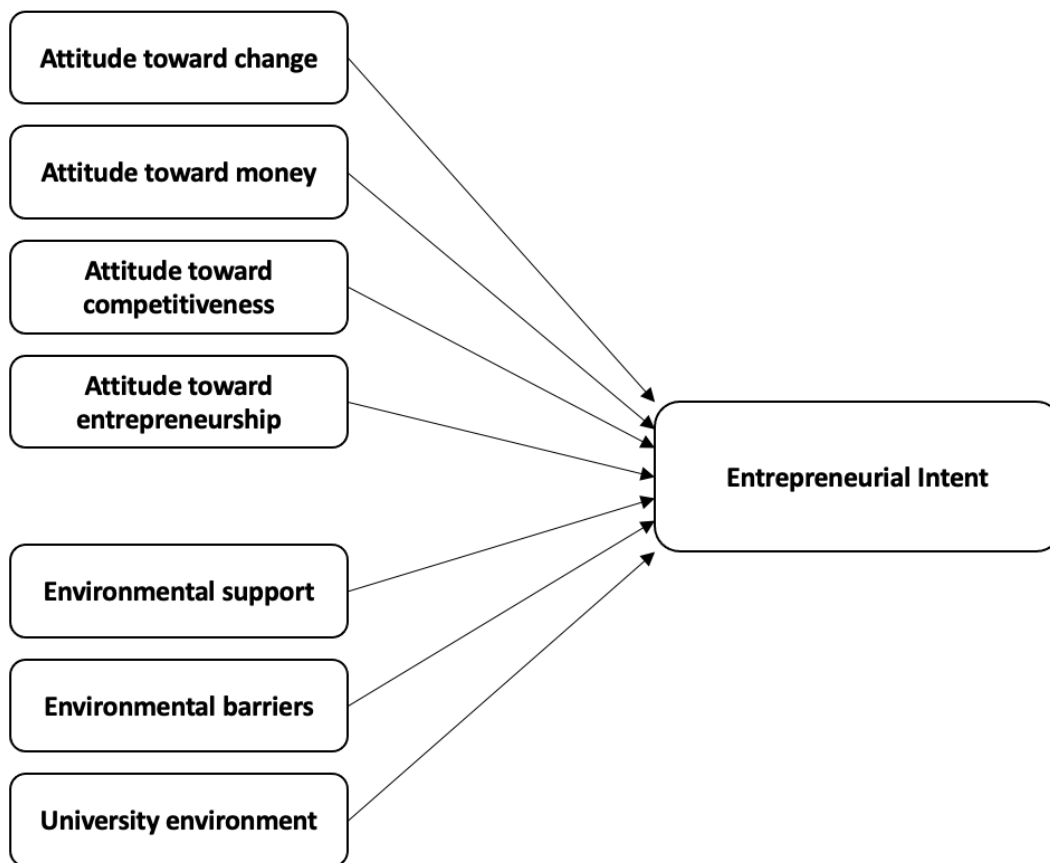


Figure 3 Model of entrepreneurial intent (Schwarz et. al. 2009)

The distinguishing of personal attitudes was made from the point of view of starting a new venture, and divided into three general attitude dispositions. These three dispositions were attitude towards money, change and competitiveness. The fourth disposition is the attitude towards entrepreneurship in general, while it is, at least in this study, a basic determinant of one wanting to become self-employed (Schwartz et. al. 2009).

While Schwartz et. al. (2009) saw attitudes as a significant aspect in the formation of intentions, they also distinguish that people don't live in isolation and thus, environmental factors are also quite significant when it comes to intentions. For example, students may find entrepreneurship as a more desirable career path if they are encouraged and supported, also in the university environment. On the other hand, if one does not perceive the environment to be allowing to new venture success, may attitudes towards entrepreneurship be affected negatively, which will have an effect on EI.

After testing the model among university students, Schwartz et. al. (2009) discovered that the attitude towards money, change and entrepreneurship are significant in predicting EI. From those three, the attitude towards entrepreneurship can be seen as the most significant. Also, a positive relationship between university support and EI was detected in the study.

After testing TPB and SEE, Krueger (2009) also build his own model to explain entrepreneurial intentions. Krueger et. al. (2000) came into a conclusion that while both models contained similar aspects of attitudes that impact intentions, they could not predict behavior from the point of view of attitudes solely. SEE on the other hand did add propensity to act as distinguishing factor affection intentions. *Krueger's model of EI* combines the two feasible theories into one explaining model that perceived desirability and feasibility affect the way of opportunity recognition and that combined with the propensity to act explain the formation of intentions (Krueger 2009).

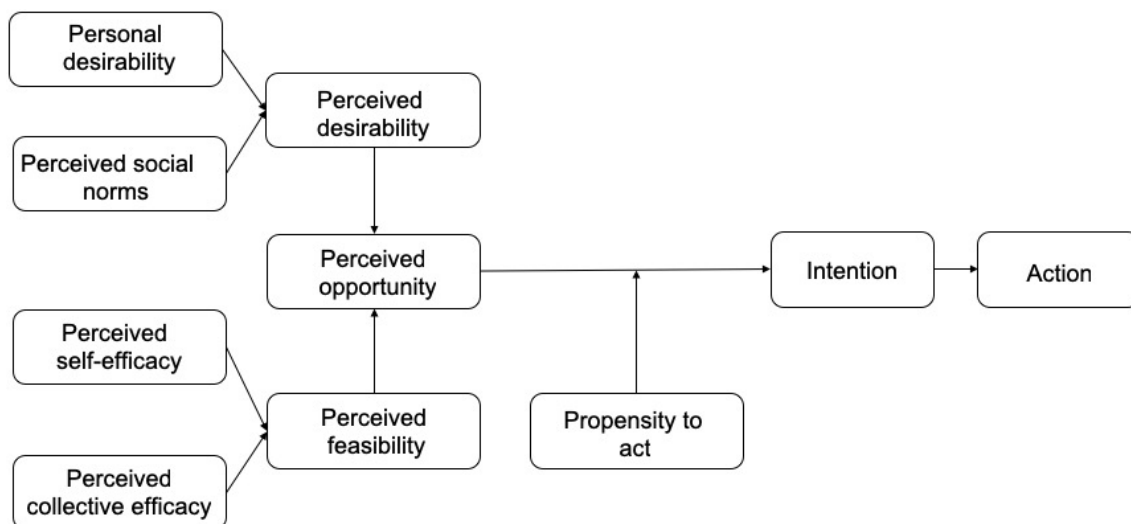


Figure 4 The Model of Entrepreneurial intention (Krueger 2009; Adapted from Shapero (1982) and Ajzen (1991))

3 ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

Entrepreneurship education and training has grown its popularity rapidly during the last decades and thus drawn the attention of scholars to examine how much it contributes to the amount and quality of entrepreneurship in general (Martin, McNally & Kay 2013). Perhaps because of the quick evolvement of EE, the concept itself has remained vague. Another reason why EE is difficult to describe is that the concept of entrepreneurship is yet to be pinned down (Chaker & Jarraya 2021). The debate on whether entrepreneurship can or cannot be taught has slightly moved aside to arise perhaps even a more complex question: how it should be taught (Mwasalwiha 2010).

As a broad definition, entrepreneurship education has the meaning of providing students with valuable knowledge, skills and practice to start a new venture (Chaker & Jarraya 2021).

Jones and Matlay (2011) had the aspire of creating a clear framework of EE to explain its heterogeny. The framework of entrepreneurship education is constructed by different pieces, the student, the educator, the community, the educational process and the institution of education. As students may seem fairly similar in the classroom where EE takes place, their journeys and prior life experiences may differ drastically, making “the student” a highly heterogeneous character. The educator is that as well, while some EE educators may have long experience on starting ventures and engaging into entrepreneurship themselves, some educators may just be starting their careers merely from the educational perspective. There are a lot of educators that speak from real-life experience, and a lot of educators that teach from academic perspective.

The educational process of EE is quite complex, and a lot of different teaching methods are used to build student competences and knowledge (Jones & Matlay 2011). The subchapter “forms of entrepreneurial education” will address this matter more throughout.

3.1 Objectives of EE

Facilities offering entrepreneurial education are aiming to affect to the attitudes towards entrepreneurship, support and build new skills and help student network. An entrepreneurial

mindset can be enough to a point, but if entrepreneurial skills and knowledge is built up through formal education, can it spring new ventures to a different level. Not only is it aiming to support individuals to a career of entrepreneurial activities, but to support economic development in the long run (Vukocic et. al. 2020). According to Mavlutova, Liogys, Lesinskis & Hermanis (2020), students claim to lack skills like general management and communication, business idea development and financial management. From a student's point of view, the objective of EE would be to fill those knowledge and gaps and thus increase student's entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

Mwasalwiha (2010) conducted a literature review and analysis on EE and the results indicate that 34% of scholars agree that the objectives of entrepreneurial education are in increasing entrepreneurial attitudes and mindset as well as entrepreneurial culture, both among individuals as well as among the whole community. Other objectives discovered were associating EE with creating new businesses and new jobs. Some scholars argued that EE is also helping existing companies to grow and succeed. However, the result of the analysis also indicates that the objectives of EE are dependent of the for and desired outcome of it.

While to be able to foster economic growth through new business ventures, it is important that EE does not only encourage towards entrepreneurship but constructs realistic visions for students about entrepreneurship. Piperopoulos and Dimov (2015) examined that depending on the structure of EE programs should be considered through the objectives. While practically oriented courses can build up enthusiasm towards entrepreneurial activities, theoretically oriented courses can “burst bubbles”, and give a more realistic view of entrepreneurship. As stated earlier, both objectives are important and perhaps it would serve students to include both courses into an EE curriculum.

3.2 Forms of entrepreneurial education.

There are numerous different ways and methods to teach entrepreneurship and to build entrepreneurial programs (Jones & Matlay 2011). Scholars have found evidence that to be able to foster different kind of new ventures and entrepreneurship, for example, social entrepreneurship, educational facilities should develop their programs in slightly different ways (Politis et. al. 2016). Mwasalwiha (2010) suggested that EE programs should be designed to support the idea of what kind of graduates it wants to produce.

The study of Mwasalwiha (2010) pointed out that the form of EE is very much dependent on the target audience. University business students were examined to be the most popular one, followed by entrepreneurs and small business owners and employees. It is evident that the educational purposes for each group are completely different, for example university students may want to educate themselves to become entrepreneurs or just to gain knowledge about the subject, whereas entrepreneurs and small business owners would want to gain resources to run and grow existing businesses. The review indicated that the curriculum of entrepreneurial programs differs depending on the educational institution very much. However, some similarities were found; the most popular subjects among EE seemed to be handling resources and finances, marketing and sales, idea and opportunity recognition, business planning and managing growth. Still, the curriculums included a wide collection of different themes also outside these subjects. Mavlutova et. al. (2020) examined EE from the point of view of students, what they thought would be important to learn. The three most popular subjects were: (1) finding financial resources, (2) validating their business ideas and (3) mentoring and consulting.

Mwasalwiha (2010) conducted a conclusion of the methods of EE and stated that most methods can be categorized into two different categories: passive methods and active methods. Traditional lectures, case studies and group discussions seemed to be the most popular methods among EE. Not as common, but still recognized were games, videos, role models, projects and creating business plans.

Jamieson (1984) proposed a distinction into three different categories, which were teaching *about* entrepreneurship, *for* entrepreneurship and *through* entrepreneurship (Chaker & Jarraya 2021). After analyzing 205 different entrepreneurial programs Kirby (2004) also came into a conclusion of three broad categories of EE: (1) Programs that focus on general knowledge about entrepreneurship, (2) Programs that develop skills and are aimed to lead towards entrepreneurial career and (3) Programs that are designed to small businesses and entrepreneurs to promote growth and survival of existing ventures. It seems that the main focus of EE still lies in teaching about entrepreneurship and how to manage a small business, rather than teaching through entrepreneurship.

Besides the traditional distinguishing between teaching about, for and through entrepreneurship, the digital era has brought other insights of how entrepreneurship education should be molded. While institutions are fairly pleased with the outcomes of EE nowadays, increasing number of new businesses and less unemployment, there is a continuous need for more innovative teaching methods in EE. Including digital methods, like automatic software, to validate business ideas and test financial plans in the syllabus could promote EI even more in the future (Mavlutova et. al. 2020).

3.3 Entrepreneurial education and EI

Even though university support towards entrepreneurship has been evaluated by many, results vary. The amount and quality of the education and support seems to be a distinguishing matter among students, but even if the quality of support is unsatisfactory, it may have a slight positive impact on entrepreneurial intentions of students. However, it's agreed that entrepreneurial education does have a positive impact on attitudes and self-efficacy among students, which are linked to the formation of intentions (Lu, Song & Pan 2021; Yasir et. al. 2021). According to a study by Anjum, Farrukh, Heidler and Tautiva (2021), not only the amount and quality of university support affects entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions, but the perceived amount of support, meaning that students need to be aware about the amount of support they are having in order it to affect their intentions.

Institutions of higher education seem to have a big impact on increasing entrepreneurial intentions and success of new ventures (David, John, & Gerald, 1980). Many scholars argue that education has a positive correlation in the amount of entrepreneurial activities in the society, with the quality of entrepreneurship and the propensity to innovation on a firm (Matlay, 2006; Olivari, 2016). However, though entrepreneurship education has a high value among policy-makers, the amount of evidence of its helpfulness in new venture creation is relatively small (von Graevenitz et. al. 2010; Martin et. al. 2013).

Because EI is affected also by demographic aspects, like gender of the students, educational programs should be taking that into consideration. For example, to be able to mold female EI effectively, assignments, mentors, homework's and even lecturers should be specified for that demographic (Politis et. al. 2016).

3.4 Summary of the theoretical framework

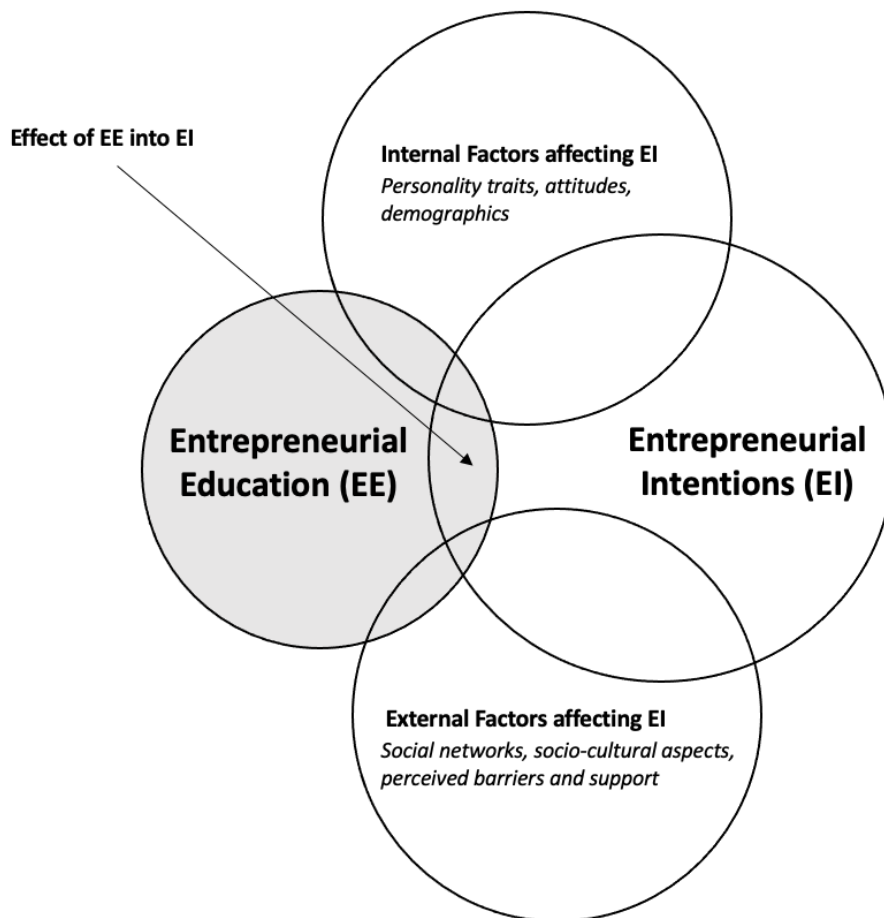
There are two principal subjects in the theoretical background of this thesis. This study is focused on the effect of entrepreneurial education into students' entrepreneurial intentions. In the first theoretical chapter we conducted a theoretical background to the formation of intentions and first and foremost, entrepreneurial intentions.

The Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991), that explains human behavior through intentions and Shapero's theory of the Entrepreneurial Event that combines perceived feasibility and desirability with propensity to act in the formation of EI are one of the most common theories when it comes to EI. Krueger combined these theories and in the purpose of this research, the theoretical framework will also see formation of EI as a combination of multiple aspects, both external and internal. Major internal factors affecting EI are *personality traits, attitudes and demographic factors, like age and gender*. External factors affecting EI are *social networks, like family, friends and networks at school or work, socio-cultural aspects, perceived entrepreneurship-related barriers and perceived entrepreneurship-related support factors*.

The second theory chapter concluded the literature on entrepreneurial education. Studies have shown that effective EE should always take into consideration the target audience and the wanted outcome of the educational program. Once these objectives are clear, the program should be designed accordingly. Jamieson (1984) proposed a distinction into three different categories, which were teaching *about* entrepreneurship, *for* entrepreneurship and *through* entrepreneurship (Chaker & Jarraya 2021). However, while the largest target group seems to be university students, teaching entrepreneurship through entrepreneurship is still the least used method of EE. Especially university programs are designed to teach about and for entrepreneurship and the most used methods of teaching are still traditional lectures, case studies and group discussions, when more active methods like building a business plan are less utilized (Mwasalwiha 2010).

Regardless of research among the effect of EE into EI, results seem to vary. However, education of any kind should have even a slight effect of EI. The amount of effect that EE has on student's EI is difficult to measure, but at least it should influence the different internal and external aspects that are affecting the formation of EI. For example, university education on

entrepreneurship can have an impact on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship, positive or negative impact on the perceived entrepreneurship-related barriers and support functions and does have an impact on perceived capabilities in general. To demonstrate the very core of the narratives that are being researched in this thesis, the following picture of the theoretical framework shows that EE is affecting both external and internal aspects and thus has an effect to EI in general.



The next chapter will present the narratives of students that have participated into an entrepreneurial education program at university level and aims to observe whether EE has affected their perceived EI and has the effect been positive or negative.

4 CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH

4.1 Qualitative research, phenomenological case study and narrative approach

Qualitative research is a wider term for all qualitative research methods, that usually utilize data in non-quantitative form. While quantitative research can sometimes be seen strictly as a testing environment, creating hypotheses and testing already conducted theories, qualitative research can be placed into the other side of the spectrum. While quantitative research is based on quantitative data, qualitative research leans heavily on text-based data like interview transcripts, field notes and documents as well as visual data like video, audio or even internet pages (Saldana 2011). According to Juutti and Puusa (2020), qualitative research is always somehow connected on humans, human behavior or human life in general and aims to understand a certain phenomenon or topic from the viewpoint of the research group. With qualitative data and analysis, researcher usually aims to understand a problem and unravel new aspects of a certain topic (Alasuutari 2012). The first reason why this I chose a qualitative method to approach this topic was that this approach could open new angles of a topic that has been primarily researched with quantitative methods. With this approach, research unravels more personal and in-depth insights of student's entrepreneurial intentions. Understanding the experiences of the people in the research group is in the center of qualitative analysis. (Juutti & Puusa 2020)

Qualitative type of research could be somewhat compared to detective work; researcher needs to gather as much clues as possible and be able to tie them together to come up with new relevant and interesting insights from the topic. It is typical that the amount of people in the research group is smaller than in quantitative research, but the amount of data collected can be large and detailed. The data collection methods vary from individual interviews and group interviews to documentaries and perception of different situations. Qualitative analysis can also combine different methods of data gathering, but a typical issue is to be able to get relevant and in-depth narratives from the research group, as the researcher should be able to get the interviewees to open up. Depending on the topic this can be less or more difficult, but it should be kept in mind while gathering the data. (Juutti & Puusa 2020)

There are different methodologies that can be used in qualitative research. When selecting the method, researched should always think topic first. What do we want to research and what do

we need to know? Do we want to describe a certain phenomenon or understand in-depth the different aspects regarding the topic (Juutti & Puusa 2020)?

There are multiple approaches towards qualitative research and one of them is phenomenology. However, most qualitative research is somehow supported by the idea of phenomenology (Juuti and Puusa 2020). There are also many types of phenomenological approaches, but in general it focuses on the perspective of an individual and persons thought and perceptions of the world around (Wojnar and Swanson 2007). According to Juuti and Puusa (2020), phenomenological approach is based on the idea that people are both affected by their environment but also affecting the world and phenomena around them. Because of this, people together create the meaning that are attached to different events and physical things.

Unlike many other research methods, narrative research is sometimes stated to be more unstructured and has less methods or clear approaches of how to analyze the narrative data gathered. However, it is a valid and elaborative method of doing research and as already said earlier, qualitative analysis aims to discover and unravel details of human life. In the core of narrative analysis is transforming qualitative interviewed data into “creative nonfiction”, stories, that describe the chosen research phenomenon perhaps in a more understandable and interesting way for the reader (Saldana 2011). Analyzing human narratives may even be one of the most effective ways to peek inside human minds and aim to shed light into different phenomena’s we face as humans (Squire, Andrews & Tamboukou 2013). This makes sense, since we also aim to understand and describe our own lives with storytelling and plotting. (Saldana 2011)

This research examines how university students perceive the effect of entrepreneurial education into their own entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes. A qualitative research method allows deep diving into the research groups experiences, and it has a phenomenological approach that puts students’ personal experiences and perceptions of their own intentions, attitudes and abilities into the center of this study.

While I wanted to conduct research from the study program I was in and wanted to get in-depth narratives to understand how entrepreneurial education affects my peers and how they perceive their own intentions and abilities, I chose a combination of a case-study and narrative analysis.

Case study approach is one where the researcher examines a phenomenon or a theory in a single setting. Unlike other qualitative methods that usually consists of large repertoire of different data points, case-studies can have a rather narrow source of data, while the intention is to examine the case in such depth (Saldana 2011). After selecting the case for the study, there are multiple ways of collecting case study data, for example, interviews, perceiving the case and case study notes as well as collecting quantitative data. While there are multiple ways of collecting data, there are also numerous ways of analyzing case study data. The most important factor of analyzing data from a case study is to concentrate to the single case at the time. In this study I have utilized the method of searching for cross-case patterns and aimed to construct different characters from those patterns. When looking for cross-case similarities, there are multiple tactics to start with (Eisenhardt, 1989). Rather than comparing each profile with each other, I chose to start coding my data and find common themes and dimensions to identify different patterns in formation and development of intentions.

The figure below describes the progression of this qualitative study. This research follows an adapted process of the Eisenhardt (1989) method of conducting a case-study.

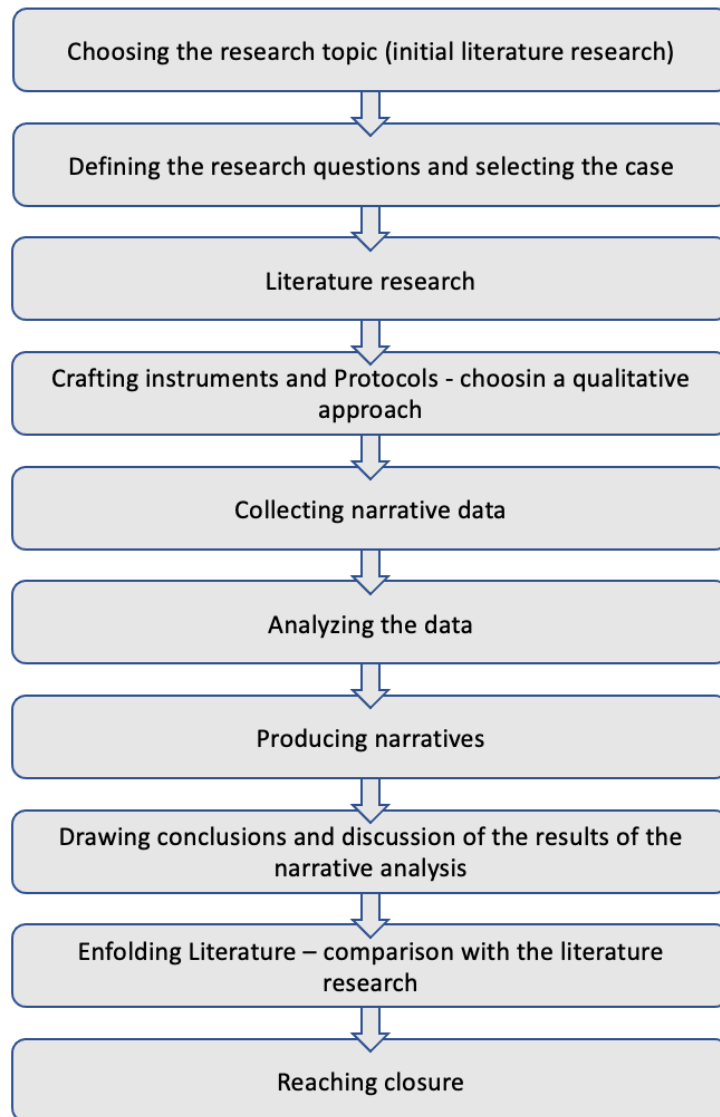


Figure 5 Research process adapted by Eisenhardt (1989)

4.1.1 Case Description

The chosen case program is an International Business and Entrepreneurship Master’s program held at the Lappeenranta University of Technology, referred as LUT. The case program name is shortened in the research and in the interviews as MIBE-program.

The core idea of the program is providing the student with extensive knowledge of the global business environment and develop their entrepreneurial competences. The aim is that graduated students will have attractive skillsets to work in today’s business environment and provide a wide range of opportunities for their future careers. The description of the program states the

following: “*After graduation, your career opportunities will include becoming an international entrepreneur, a manager in an international or multinational enterprise, or a management consultant on internationalisation strategies.*”. (LUT 2022a)

There are three main learning outcomes of the degree program, (1) professional skills of recognizing international business opportunities and seizing those opportunities, developing an entrepreneurial, strategic mindset in a global setting as well as tackling and understanding challenges in the field, (2) developing competences to discover and develop international entrepreneurial opportunities and (3) develop managerial skills to discuss and apply theories of entrepreneurship and international business in a global setting. (LUT 2022b)

The structure of the program consists of core studies, minor studies, advanced specialization studies and language studies. Core studies include base knowledge of starting and managing an international business, how businesses internationalize and start of building entrepreneurial competences. Minor studies are more chosen by the interest of the students, and can include, for example, analytical business courses, innovation studies, sustainability of the firm, marketing or digitalization. The specialization studies focus on strengthening the knowledge of consulting and managing international startups and multinational companies. After the coursework, students conduct a master’s thesis of a subject that they choose. (LUT 2022c)

The learning methods of the courses are mixed and consists of case studies, group work, individual essay work, smaller assignments and literature as well as tests, innovation and ideation, pitching business concepts and forming business strategies and plans. Networking and collaborative work is in the core of the program.

4.2 Collecting narrative data

According to Packer (2011), conducting interviews have become a general practice of doing qualitative research. While there are numerous ways of doing interviews, perhaps the most popular interviewing type is semistructured interviews. A semistructured thematic interview type is one that has also been chosen to this research. What is meant by a semistructured interview is that the interviewer has a general idea about the topic and question that they want to discuss about with the one being interviewed, but it gives freedom to the interviewee to answer as lightly as they want and even take the interview to a whole different topic or path.

In this study, the questions of the interviewees were divided into different timeframes of the lives of the interviewees; time before entering EE, time in EE and time after EE. It must be noted that not all the students were yet graduated from EE, but they had already conducted all of their coursework in the program.

The discussion topics of these different timeframes were similar to each other. While discussing the time before coming to the MIBE program, the interviewees were asked to commemorate how they perceived entrepreneurship at the time, if they had any entrepreneurial intentions then and what were their plans for the future at that time. They were also asked to reflect why they chose to apply for EE in the first place and how they felt about the program before it started. After the time before, we focused on discussing the time in the program, what did they find valuable and not so valuable, how did they feel about certain courses and did they perceive external support towards entrepreneurship from the university. We reflected in the discussion also a little what type of things were affecting their perception of entrepreneurship and did their intentions change already during the program. Last, we discussed their current state as well as future plans and intentions. Here we focused on how they perceived that their attitude towards entrepreneurship had changed and if they now had any entrepreneurial intentions.

From the table below you can find the structure of the interviews. It must be noted that the interviews conducted were semistructured and the discussions with all participants did not follow the initial structure as strictly as some did.

Timeframe/Theme	Questions
<p>Time before MIBE program</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe your educational background before coming to MIBE. 2. Describe your previous working experience and hobbies. 3. Can you reflect how did you perceive entrepreneurship back then? 4. What did you think about entrepreneurship as a career then?

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. How did you perceive your entrepreneurial abilities before coming to MIBE? 6. If you would have started a business back then, do you think it would have been a success?
Time during MIBE program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you think back to the whole degree program, what did you find most useful/valuable for you? 2. Was there something that you would have wanted more? 3. Were there any specific courses that positively or negatively stuck to your mind? 4. Do you recall what kind of support the university had for entrepreneurship? 5. Can you reflect how EE might have impacted your view about entrepreneurship, as a career or your own abilities?
Time after MIBE program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you perceive your entrepreneurial abilities now? 2. How do you perceive entrepreneurship as a career choice? 3. What do you do now after graduation?
Future	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Could you see yourself as an entrepreneur in the future? 2. If you would establish a business, how do you think it could succeed? 3. What is your dream job in the future?

Table 3 Interview structure

The people interviewed from the program was chosen from the first group that attended the program and started in the program in 2019. Most of the students had already graduated by the time of the interviews. The aim was to choose students that were demographically diverse, and the population chosen had a 50/50 split on gender. There were also some diversities in the nationality of the students, however, most were Finnish and that does not contribute to the analysis of the interviews. Since the program was a master's program, all interviewees did have

an educational background equivalent of a bachelor's degree. The table below describes the interview data in more detail.

Student	Gender	Former education	Length of the interview	Pages of transcribed data
Student A	Female	Bachelor of International Business	25 minutes	7
Student B	Male	College of Economics	36 minutes	12
Student C	Female	Bachelor of business law	37 minutes	8
Student D	Male	Bachelor of Business Administration	20 minutes	7
Student E	Female	Bachelor of Agricultural and Food Sciences	26 minutes	9
Student F	Male	Bachelor of Business Administration	31 minutes	12,5
Student G	Female	Bachelor of International Business	22 minutes	8,5

Table 4 Data description

4.3 Narrative analysis

As already stated earlier, a narrative analysis is not a strictly structured method of doing research and narrative data can be approached and analyzed in multiple ways. Since narrative data is basically in the form of a story, the plot of the story is in importance when analyzing the data. There are multiple frameworks and categorizations of typical plots in literature. Frye (1912-1991) categorized four types of typical plots in the western literature heritage, which were irony, tragedy, comedy and romance. Plots are not the only approaches to narrative data. Researcher can also be focused on the characters in the stories and how characters react into different objects in their environment. (Juuti and Puusa 2020)

The general process of analyzing qualitative data could be divided into five-step process: (1) Transcribing interviews and dividing the transcriptions into different units, (2) removing the different transcripts out of their own context, (3) identifying different themes and categories

from the transcripts, (4) analyzing the content of each category and (5) describing the content. (Packer 2011)

I started conducting this narrative analysis by listening to the interview recordings multiple times. Listening to the records gave me a good understanding of the different storylines and already got me on the right track of analyzing the different narratives and plots in each story. During my time of listening to the recordings, I also transcribed the data into a written form. At this point I felt that I was comfortable with the data and was ready to start analyzing it more deeply. Using the method described by Packer (2011), I also pulled the narratives out of the context of different profiles and started to find themes and coherent stories among the transcribed data. While trying to fit the narratives into a loose framework of established plots, like Fryes framework introduced earlier, it can be more fruitful for the purpose of the study to let the different plot-types to form from the data itself and compress a plot of each narrative individually. Once this is done, the researcher can start combining different plots into a more coherent narratives and combined stories (Juuti and Puusa 2020). In this research I have conducted three different characters based on the narrative data, and each one is a combination of multiple students in the research group. These three characters have a specific storyline identified from the narratives. Some students from the research group may be presented in multiple storylines, while the narratives and people are constructed from multiple characteristics. It has also to be noted, that some of the citations have been stripped down form unnecessary wording to be easier to consume for the reader.

The three main characters identified from the data were *The Entrepreneurial*, *The Middle-Man* and *The Non-entrepreneurial*. The names of the characters come mainly from the initial attitude and intention to entrepreneurship and the storylines dictate how these characters see that entrepreneurial education has affected to their intentions and attitudes. These characters and storylines will be introduced in the next chapter.

4.4 Quality of the research

In qualitative research the researcher itself is in the core of the study and it's important to note the subjectivity of the researcher. The validity of the research is dependent on the whole research process (Eskola & Suoranta 1998). Because of the subjectivity of the researcher and

that the researcher is an important part of the qualitative research itself, we have to abandon the idea of objectivity in qualitative research.

Validity and reliability of the study are often used in evaluating the quality of a quantitative study, however, these terms are somewhat criticized in the evaluation of a qualitative study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that these terms were based on a perception of one truth that is concrete, and that research should aim to reveal. Some qualitative researchers nowadays have suggested that rather than using strict terms to evaluate the quality of the research, it is more important to focus on the research process and content. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018)

One perspective to evaluate the quality of qualitative research is to evaluate the quality of the data gathered. Some of these criteria could be for example the meaningfulness and sufficiency of the data gathered. In qualitative research there is no exact way to know how much is enough data and if the data gathered is going to be meaningful for the study. Still, the researcher needs to be secure with the meaningfulness of the data and collect the amount of data that is needed to conduct the analysis so, that they can find meaningful results. One of the methods of evaluating the amount of data is data saturation. The researcher needs to be able to draw themes and conclusions of the data so that they are not based on arbitrary notes. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998)

Besides the quality of the research data, it is important to evaluate the research topic and subject. In qualitative research it is crucial to understand your own significance as a researcher and analyzer of the subject and the data. The method of gathering and analyzing the data are a large portion of the reliability of the research process, as well as the longitude of the research and reporting of the results. Qualitative research has to have a high ethical manner. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018)

There are multiple aspects that improve the quality of research. The researcher needs to have enough time to gather the data, analyze it and conduct the results. Comparing the results to the prior research is important, because it's a way to prove that the results comply (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018). The research process should be described in detail and the data should be analyzed in a constructive manner so, that the themes and findings are divided into small enough groups to make it easy to understand for the reader. The process itself should also be divided into small steps and areas. Because qualitative analysis is based on researching the

human mind and behavior, it is crucial to show and understand the endless need of research in the area (Eskola & Suoranta 1998). This research has taken into consideration all the aspects that affect the reliability and validity of this study to ensure its high quality.

5 THREE STORIES IN AND OUT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION

This chapter introduces three different characters identified from the student narratives: *The Entrepreneurial*, *The Middle-Man* and *The Non-entrepreneurial*. Three different storylines follow the characters journey in and out of entrepreneurial education and concentrates of how they have seen their own entrepreneurial attitudes, intentions and abilities before and after going through the MIBE program.

5.1 *The Entrepreneurial* – Entrepreneurial education from the point of deep interest to pursue an entrepreneurial career

What characterizes The Entrepreneurial is the consistent interest and positive attitude for entrepreneurship and the will to pursue an entrepreneurial career already before entering the master's degree program in entrepreneurship. The storyline starts from time before EE. The Entrepreneurial has already acquired some educational background from higher educational level and has followed that with some working experience. The educational background is not presented as deeply meaningful for the rest of the career or may even be considered as irrelevant with the career pursuits they have now.

College president gave a speech and I mean, I'm not quoting him, but he literally said that nothing that we learn in the next four years will be directly relevant to the rest of our lives... So as a result, there was no business program, there was no entrepreneurship program, the closest would be economics which is like the pure science version of business and that's kind of where I came from. (Student B)

During the years before EE, The Entrepreneurial has already had in their mind that career in entrepreneurship could be one for them to pursue.

Once I graduated from there I had it in my head that I wanted to get involved in entrepreneurship. (Student B)

Entrepreneurship, that is what like interested me. (Student E)

Se yrittäjyys niin se mua silleen just kiinnostti (Student E)

Of course, I also want to be an entrepreneur at some point. (Student F)

Tottakai mäkin haluan jossain vaiheessa olla yrittäjä. (Student F)

Still, at this phase it was unclear what an entrepreneurial career may consist of and what being entrepreneurial even meant. In some cases, The Entrepreneurial has already working experience from startups and has been figuring out what does being entrepreneurial actually mean. However, in other cases The Entrepreneurial has been interested in an entrepreneurial career but has not yet felt like they have the abilities to pursue entrepreneurship.

Once I graduated from there somehow, I had it in my head that I wanted to get involved in entrepreneurship and I say somehow because I didn't even really know what that meant ... I went through a process where I tried to figure out what that even meant. (Student B)

I would have probably needed to search for more information from many sources of how to establish a company and everything, like where to begin. (Student E)

Olisi pitänyt varmaan aika monesta paikasta hakea lisätietoa, että miten perustetaan yritystä, että kaikkea mistä lähtee liikkeelle. (Student E)

More than the educational background and career prior to EE, The Entrepreneurial got influenced by the networks around them. The Entrepreneurial has family and friends working in the field of entrepreneurship and that has molded their view of what it is like to be an entrepreneur.

We have so many entrepreneurs in our family as well, so maybe it is quite natural for me. (Student C)

Meillä on niin paljon suvussakin yrittäjiä niin se ehkä se on aika luonteva itselle. (Student C)

My family background, so I come from a family of entrepreneurs where I have seen my parents being entrepreneurial... there is a lot of entrepreneurs in my group of friends. (Student F)

Mun perhetausta eli tuun yrittäjä perheestä missä on saanut nähdä miten vanhemmat yrittää... mun ystäväpiirissä on paljon yrittäjiä. (Student F)

Even though The Entrepreneurial did not at that point feel like they would have the abilities to succeed in an entrepreneurial career, they did not feel uncomfortable with the idea of an entrepreneurial career and were not fearful of the uncertainty it may bring. The Entrepreneurial

character has been looking for lack of structure and is well aware of risks and chaos that entrepreneurial career might indicate.

I essentially, I was afraid, not fearful, but I was insecure about like well what would I bring to a startup... at that point in my life I was looking for chaos and I was looking for the lack of structure.
(Student B)

I have had my friends from the banking industry leave for the startup world to establish a business and while I have been raised among entrepreneurship it has never felt strange to me. (Student F)
Mulla on lähtenyt kavereita tuolta pankkimaailmasta yrittämään startup maailmaan ja sitten kun on kasvanut yrittäjyyden ympärillä niin ei se ole koskaan mitenkään tuntunut vieraalta (Student F)

The networks and entrepreneurs around The Entrepreneurial has molded their view and attitude towards entrepreneurship before EE. The Entrepreneurial sees entrepreneurship as a risky career and sometimes even lonely. They feel that you will have to work hard, probably harder than people in regular occupations, and you are all together responsible of your own success. Besides entrepreneurship being hard work, they also think that with risk comes also profit and success. The Entrepreneurial perceives, that if you are able to work hard you will also be successful. However, they also feel that anyone can be an entrepreneur that survives in the business environment, but they will need a good idea and a team effort to become exceptional in what they do. The Entrepreneurial has more prior knowledge before EE of the types of entrepreneurs there are and are more aware of what resources are needed and out there, unlike maybe other characters in this research.

When you are an independent entrepreneur or other type, you are of course responsible of the results for yourself. It can sometimes be a bit lonely path to push forward, although nowadays it's nice that you can have a lot of all kinds of support. It requires an awful lot of work, it's partly uncertain and it requires a lot of work to succeed in. There are better times and worse times... Then you succeed and risks and profits walk hand in hand... How I see it is that it requires a lot of work, a good idea and a good team and then it is going to work. To bring food at the table, anyone can be an entrepreneur, but then there is the difference, if you are a successful or profitable entrepreneur and that is a different thing. (Student F)

Sä oot niinku yksityisyrittäjä tai muu niin sä tottakai oot tulos vastuussa itselle. Se voi olla välillä vähän yksinäinen polku pusertaa, toki nykyään on kiva että saa tosi paljon kaikkia tukea. Se vaatii hirveästi töitä, se on osittain epävarmaa ja se vaatii paljon duunia, että sä menestyt siinä. Siinä on

parempia kausia ja huonompia kausia...Sitten sä onnistut niin riskit ja tuotto kävelee käsi kädessä... Miten mä näen sen, että vaatii paljon duunia hyvän idean ja hyvän tiimin niin se onnistuu se yrittäjäyys. Se, että tuot leipää pöytään, niin kuka vaan voi olla yrittäjä, mutta sitten se ero siinä, että olet menestynyt tai tuottelias yrittäjä niin se onkin sitten ihan eri. (Student F)

A positive image of it, because there have been so many entrepreneurs in the family, that you get a good business to yourself, if you just work hard and do long days every day, at some point it will pay you back. (Student C)

Semmoinen positiivinen kuva siitä, kun on niin paljon yrittäjiä ollut suvussa, että sillä saa hyvän tommosen bisneksen itselleen, jos oikeasti vaan hakkaa sitä työtä ja joka päivä tekee pitkiä päiviä, jossain vaiheessa maksetaan takaisin. (Student C)

The Entrepreneurial had an initial interest to study entrepreneurship and wanted an educational field that don't tie them too much into one niche segment. They felt like other programs were too narrow or not interesting. Already when choosing the programs they wanted to apply to, they thought to choose one that would benefit them most in their pursuit of an entrepreneurial career. The Entrepreneurial also saw studying international business as a benefit for entrepreneurial career and thought, that without a clue of how the international business market is working, they wouldn't be good entrepreneurs in the future.

Entrepreneurship, that like interested me and there was not that kind of program elsewhere, so that is why I chose that program, because it sounded interesting and at the same time it would be the most beneficial for me in the future. (Student E)

Se yrittäjäyys niin se mua silleen just kiinnostti ja muualla ei ollut sitä ohjelmaa niin sen takia mä valitsin sitten tuon linjan, että se kuulosti silleen mielenkiintoiselta ja samalla mistä olisi eniten hyötyä itselle jatkossa. (Student E)

From my point of view that program had a good general overview of international business and entrepreneurship. Then I weighted and applied to other master's degree programs and even got elected, but those were in my opinion maybe kind of narrow and too heavily concentrated on one segment... and then international business, I thought that gives a good general view and abilities of the basic elements of economy and internationally. (Student F)

Mun mielestä tossa ohjelmassa oli semmoinen hyvä yleiskatsaus kansainvälistä bisnestä ja yrittäjäyttä. Sitten mä puntaroin ja hain muihinkin maisteriohjelmiin ja pääsinkin niihin sisään, mutta ne oli mun mielestä vähän, ehkä semmoisia kapeita liian voimakkaasti keskittyi yhteen

segmenttiin... sit toi kansainvälinen kauppa, ajattelin että sieltä saa siitä hyvän semmoisen peruskuvan ja valmiudet talouden peruselementeistä ja kansainvälisesti – Student F

In the program, The Entrepreneurial was keeping their eyes open for entrepreneurial opportunities, networks and support functions for new entrepreneurs, that perhaps they could utilize in their future career. They were aware of the support the university could provide them if they would pursue an idea into a real business. However, networks made during the study program were the most meaningful benefit for The Entrepreneurial, along the guidance of what kind of entrepreneurial path they would like to start following.

Dimensions of entrepreneurship course had us map out the local ecosystem, so that was very useful just in terms of orienting myself and I think there was also a part of that course where we were asked to reflect on a goal for some years in the future and that was very helpful... Ultimately the value of the program for me was just meeting certain people at the university, certain people in the Business School... I had the opportunity to meet our professor who had worked on research to business projects in the past and he shared a book chapter that he had written based of those cases and so that kind of people pointing me in a certain direction was at least nominally helpful... The most valuable part of the program so networking and the flexibility in the program. (Student B)

Besides networking, The Entrepreneurial found value on learning how to work in teams and with different kind of people. They pointed out that the course work that had been done cross-functionally between study fields provided the most value when it comes to entrepreneurship.

Well, I must point out, I immediately thought of this one course, where we had a cooperation with engineering and business students... It is extremely important in entrepreneurship as well, that you learn to work with other teams and professions as well, than just your own circle. If you look at any company or startup, you can see that the communication and information gap between the entrepreneur or the CEO and the developer or someone else is pretty wide, so from my point of view that would be needed more in the courses, that was a good course. (Student F)

Tota mun on pakko kyllä nostaa, mun mieleen tuli samantien tää yks kurssi, missä meillä oli yhteistyö insinööri puolen ja kaupallisen puolen kanssa... Se on äärimmäisen tärkeätä myös yrittäjyydessä, että sä opettelisit tekemään töitä myös muiden tiimien ja ammattikuntien kanssa kun vaan sen sun lähiympäristön kanssa. Jos sä katsot yhtään mitään yritystä tai startuppia nii se puhe ja tieto gäppi mikä on sen vaikka yritysjohtajan tai toimitusjohtajan ja sitten vaikka sen

koodaajan tai jonkun muun välillä niin on aika suuri niin mä näkisin että sitä tarvitsisi enemmän, se oli hyvä kurssi. (Student F)

However, The Entrepreneurial realized already during the program that the reality of entrepreneurship is far from the theoretical study of entrepreneurship. Because the entrepreneurial already has a good practical picture of what it could be like as an entrepreneur, this was probably more evident to them than other characters in the program. Many of the courses in the program felt to The Entrepreneurial as invaluable or irrelevant to the actual pursuit of entrepreneurship.

If you look at the entrepreneurship literature, there's a huge disconnect between the study of entrepreneurship and the practice of entrepreneurship... I think that's the part that's ultimately missing from you know from the entrepreneurship education is that it's just not real enough. (Student B)

Real life is what I was missing from it more, sometimes it felt like to courses were repeating themselves and somehow feels that there could have been more diverse entrepreneurial education. (Student E)

Oikeen elämän juttuja olisin ehkä kaivannut enemmän, että välillä vähän tuntui, että jotkut kurssit toistivat itseensä, että jotenkin olisi voinut olla vähän monipuolisempaa yrittäjyyskoulutusta. (Student E)

University is quite based on theory and not really focused on what happens in the real world, which is in my opinion one of the challenges of this program. (Student F)

Yliopisto on aika teoria pohjainen eikä välttämättä keskity siihen, mitä oikeassa maailmassa tapahtuu, mikä onkin tämän ohjelman yks haasteista mun mielestä. (Student F)

The Entrepreneurial described how more practical education could have helped them mold their abilities as entrepreneurs and also felt that there were some practical assignments that actually did help them mold their abilities. When it comes to attitudes towards entrepreneurship, The Entrepreneurial does not perceive a significant change on how they view entrepreneurship. However, they do feel that the environment they are in is always going to have some effect of how they feel about entrepreneurship and what kind of entrepreneurial intentions they have. University degree also helped them validate to themselves that they are

actually interested in pursuing an entrepreneurial career and have what it takes to make it a reality.

I wouldn't say it's (attitude towards entrepreneurship) changed it but I do think that obviously where I spend my time has refined the idea and I've gotten involved in academic entrepreneurship and commercializing university technology which was not something that I was involved in earlier. None of my activities were affiliated with a university or research institution... my time at LUT has refined my path forward and given me more clarity and more specificity as far as how to implement my interest in entrepreneurship and how to do that in Finland. (Student B)

Well, I don't think that my thoughts dramatically changed... maybe more like supported feeling, like I can do this... you get out of it that official validation, that you are a master of entrepreneurship... then the most value is to your own self-esteem, that hey, I have been studying, I actually understand and know something about this subject. (Student E)

No en mä kyllä koe, että ajatus mitenkään dramaattisesti muuttu... ehkä vähän enemmänkin kannustavia fiiliksiä, että joo kyllä mä pystyn tähän... siitä saa tuommoisen virallisen validoinnin, että olet yrittäjyyden maisteri... silloin ehkä eniten painoarvoa on sille sun omalle itsetunnolle siitä, että hei mä oon opiskellut, ymmärrän oikeasti ja tiedän tästä asiasta jotain. (Student E)

The entrepreneurial intention of The Entrepreneurial did not change much during the program, while the EI was already high when it started, and they did not identify or learn factors about entrepreneurship that would change their mind towards pursuing an entrepreneurial career. The education program did rise more thoughts on possible ideas and paths towards entrepreneurship and validated The Entrepreneurials perception of their own abilities to become an entrepreneur. However, The Entrepreneurial feel that after the program they have a lot to learn about the practicalities of entrepreneurship and still don't feel that this would be the right time or place to pursue a career in entrepreneurship, just yet. Still, they have aspirations ideas and plans for the future to take steps towards where they want to be in the long run with their entrepreneurial career. The Entrepreneurial feels that going slow, helping other startups as a consult or doing entrepreneurial activities on the side would be more suitable way to start in this field of occupation. Considerations about resources, especially money, and the amount of knowledge are in their mind as a barrier for entrepreneurship. On the other hand, they have networks, they know where to find information and help and they feel confident that they have good, innovative ideas to pursue.

I want to be an entrepreneur at some point, but maybe not right now I can't, there is a big financial risk of course, that should be calculated. But yes, it has strengthened, that even though my view on entrepreneurship didn't change, still, during the master's program it has strengthened, the thought that I could try this out more seriously... There is one idea that I would like to spar, I went to the city website and there you can find these entrepreneurial coaches and mentors... I have one business idea that I'm actively working with all the time. (Student F)

Haluan kuitenkin jossain vaiheessa yrittää, mutta ehkä vielä ei pysty, siinä on suuri taloudellinen riski tietenkin, mikä pitäisi laskea läpi. Mutta niin kyllä se on niinku voimistanut, että vaikka se mun mielikuva yrittäjyydestä ei ole muuttunut, niin kyllä toi maisteriohjelman myötäse on ekä voimistunut se ajatus siitä että oikeasti kyllähän sitä voisi vakavammin ja tosissaan kokeilla... On yks idea mitä mä halusin päästä sparraamaan, menin kaupungin nettisivuille ja sieltä löytyy siis nää yritysvalmentajat ja yrityskummit... mulla on siis yksi yritysidea mitä mä aktiivisesti työstän koko ajan. (Student F)

Yes, so I am still interested in it, but right now I think, that it could be more like a side business, so that I would go on a payroll job and then do it on the side. Or like, that I would go to some kind of real estate business as an employee and when I would get more knowledge and then possibly become a full time entrepreneur. I have been thinking now to network with people and ask for their advice and then see... Then I would get more knowledge to myself for the future, if I would like to later of do this entrepreneur thing. (Student E)

Joo siis kyllä mulla edelleenkin kiinnostaa se, mutta mä ehkä nyt ainakin vielä tässä vaiheessa ajattelen, että se voisi olla semmoinen, että mä tekisin sitä sivubisneksenä, että kävis palkkatöissä ja sitten sivubisneksenä. Tai just vaikka se, että menis nyt niinku johonkin tommoiseen niin kuin asunto bisnekseen niin kuin palkallisena ja sitten kun sieltä saisit tietotaitoa ja mahdollisesti myöhemmin jäisi yrittäjäksi. Vähän nyt ajattelin verkostoitua tyyppien kaa ja kysellä niiltä sitten vinkkejä ja sitten katsoo... sitten saisi itsekin sitä tietotaitoa tulevaisuuteen, että jos halusi myöhemmin alkaa tehdä tätä yrittäjyyttä. (Student E)

5.2 *The Middle-Man* – Entrepreneurship education from the point of slight interest in pursuing an entrepreneurial career

The Middle-Man is a character that falls between The Entrepreneurial and The Non-Entrepreneurial, and the attitude towards entrepreneurship is just that; they have some interest but not real intentions towards an entrepreneurial career. Before applying to an entrepreneurial master's degree program, The Middle-Man has acquired some background from previous studies and by working. None of these activities were particularly entrepreneurial or at least they were not perceived that way. However, they had a slight interest in entrepreneurship before applying, which has raised mostly from having an entrepreneurial family or other social connections.

I have followed closely to my mom and dad and other entrepreneurs. (Student C)

Mä olen seurannut läheltä isää ja äitiä ja kaikkia muita yrittäjiä. (Student C)

Yes, it did interest me and then when my dad is also an entrepreneur at this point, so that also excited me towards it in a way. (Student D)

Kyllä se silleen kiinnosti ja sitten kun isä on kanssa yrittäjä tällä hetkellä niin sekin siihen innosti sitten myös osaltaan. (Student D)

Before EE, The Middle-Man had an idea what entrepreneurship could mean as a career, through friends and family, however, the idea of entrepreneurship was quite narrow. The attitude towards entrepreneurship was that it is hard work, long hours and required passion towards chosen business idea. In their head there was no middle road to entrepreneurship, you had to be truly committed to the profession and sacrifice other parts of your life to become successful.

I feel that I had quite narrow view of entrepreneurship. Now there is a lot of discussion about light entrepreneurship and other sorts of things, earlier I just thought that it should be something that you give 100% and have your full focus on entrepreneurship. (Student D)

Musta tuntuu, että mulla oli aika kapea käsitys siitä yrittäjyydestä. Että nyt kun paljon puhutaan tästä kevytyrittäjyydestä ja tällaisesta, niin silloin aikaisemmin ajattelin, että sen täytyisi olla sellainen mihin sitten paneutuu aivan täysillä ja täytyy keskittyä nimenomaan siihen yrittäjyyteen. (Student D)

Even with some secondhand experience about entrepreneurship from their social network, the Middle-Man did not perceive their abilities to be enough to run a successful business or other entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurship was viewed so heavy and difficult; they felt a bit scared and lacked courage to even think about it as an option. They felt that they would receive help if they needed it from friends and family, but that their own skills and knowhow was not in that level.

I have always been a bit skeptical about how I would dare... I knew I'll get a lot of support, if I come up with a good idea. (Student D)

Aina ollut vähän skeptinen siitä, että miten uskaltaa... tiesin et saan paljon tukea, jos keksisi jonkun hyvän idean (Student D)

While discovering options what to study after their bachelor's degree, the Middle-man did find entrepreneurship more interesting than some fields of study, however, they also saw other programs as interesting. Their road to EE was not as clear as with the Entrepreneurial, but not as unexpected then the Non-Entrepreneurial's journey. While the program chosen was also clearly focused on international business and did not really close nor narrow any possible career paths in the future, they felt that entrepreneurial focus was actually a positive and even more creative option than just studying about the global business environment.

It (the program) was new and a bit more interesting than financial management, while that was very analytical, so then I thought that is this more creative and that excited me more. (Student D)
Se oli uusi ja vähän mielenkiintoisempi, kun toi talousjohtaminen, kun se oli sellaista tosi analyyttistä, niin sitten mä ajattelin, että onko tällöinen luovempi ja innosti enemmän. (Student D)

Right from the beginning I would have wanted only to the Sustainability degree program, but then it got terminated... then I heard from LUT alumnies, that you can read a lot of the Sustainability program courses as a minor subject, so then I checked what at LUT would suit my interests more – entrepreneurship and international business. (Student C)

Ihan alun perin mä olisin halunnut sen pelkän Sustainabilityn, mut sit se lopetettiin... sit mä kuulin aiemmilta ketkä oli ollut LUTissa, että siellä pystyy hyvin lukee just tuota Sustainabilityä sivuaineena, niin sit mä katoinkin et mikä siel olis enemmän mun mielenkiinnon kohteitani - yrittäjyys ja kansainvälinen kauppa. (Student C)

Perhaps because the Middle-Man's attitude about entrepreneurship was molded on their narrow knowledge about entrepreneurship as a career, during the program they found really helpful the way it molded their perception about it. Really valuable for them was to see different theories about entrepreneurship and the multiple way that one can start their own business. They also found value on the support the university could provide to entrepreneurs just starting their journey. They liked the fact that in some courses they got to work with real entrepreneurs and companies, to see a wider picture of the global entrepreneurship environment.

I have gotten a deep understanding now to it all, what kind of entrepreneurship there is and that different values define what kind of entrepreneurship there would be a possibility to build in one's life. Then a kind of diversity, that you can be on paid employment at the same time as you are an entrepreneur, and these kinds of perspectives were interesting. (Student D)

Saanut syvän ymmärryksen nyt siihen kaikkeen, minkälaista erilaista yrittäjyyttä on ja, että erilaiset arvot määrittelevät sellaista millaista yrittäjyyttä olisi mahdollista alkaa rakentaa elämässään. Sitten sellainen monipuolisuus just, et voi olla palkkatyössä samaan aikaan, vaikka yrittää ja tällaiset erilaiset näkökulmat olivat kyllä mielenkiintoisia. (Student D)

However, even though the Middle-Man enjoyed eye-opening theoretical work that they got to do during the program, they did miss some of the practical work to see actually what needs to be done and did not perceive that their practical entrepreneurial skills were challenged or molded as far as their theoretical knowhow.

In my opinion the program went through the theoretical sides and all the possibilities and research that has been, but maybe the practical side of entrepreneurship was missing. We did have courses where we, for example, developed companies' internationalization strategy and did product development, but maybe even more practical teaching is what I was missing. (Student D)

Mun mielestä tosi hyvin käytiin teoreettiset puolet ja kaikki ne mahdollisuudet ja tutkimukset mitä on ollut, mutta ehkä semmoinen käytännön yrittäjyys puuttui. Olihan meillä sellaisia kursseja missä me oltiin esimerkiksi kehittämässä yrityksessä strategiaa kansainvälistymiseen ja tuotesuunnitteluun, mutta ehkä vielä enemmän sellaista käytännön opetusta jäi kaipaamaan. (Student D)

If the Middle-Man was slightly interested in entrepreneurship before EE, the program lit that spark on fire. The perception of entrepreneurship as a career changed, they found new angles on how they could be entrepreneurial and felt that all the new resources and information they

have been provided during the MIBE-program got them excited to pursue a career in entrepreneurship. They also had gathered some hands-on experience from work during school and had the chance to continue following other entrepreneurs quite closely. This led to the Middle-Man using the theoretical knowhow they had learned during coursework and implying into real life. This way they perceived the theoretical side more valuable and got to thinking that their own entrepreneurial abilities had improved.

When I followed at the time of Covid-19 that kind of small entrepreneur, that opened my eyes quite much, but then I could also mirror a bit those things that we had been thought. It's still not what it really is in real life, when you are an entrepreneur, the things don't always go the same way. (Student C)

Kun seurasi oikeasti koronan ohella semmoista pienyrittäjää, niin se aukaisi mun silmiä aika paljonkin, mut sit siinä pystyi myös vähän peilaa niitä asioita mitä me meilläkin oli opetettu. Ei se kuitenkaan ole se mitä se on oikeasti ihan oikeassa elämässä, kun olet yrittäjä ei ne aina asiat mene niin. (Student C)

Besides the knowledge gathered on courses and by learning on the job, the Middle-Man did see value in networks. They felt that having other entrepreneurial-minded people in the same program increased their own courage and felt that if their peers could do it then they could as well. Even when they had doubts about their own abilities or thoughts about entrepreneurship as a career in general, they had someone to talk to and peer support.

I feel that I have become much more courageous. When there is many others that thin about starting their own business, then you get a lot of conversational support and the encouragement has been maybe the most important part. (Student D)

Kyllä mä koen, että paljon rohkeammaksi on tullut. Se, että kun on monia muitakin, jotka ajattelee yrittäjyyden aloittamista, niin sitten saa silleen paljon keskustelutukea ja rohkaiseminen on ollut ehkä se tärkein. (Student D)

Maybe I could now have more courage to become an entrepreneur and I have also considered it. (Student C)

Ehkä mä voisin nyt uskaltaa paremmin lähteä yrittäjäksi ja oon myös harkinnut sitä. (Student C)

Like their perception of their entrepreneurial abilities, their attitude towards entrepreneurship changed as well. However, the Middle-Man still perceives entrepreneurship as a passionate

career path that enables one to fulfill their dreams and ambitions, the tone of voice has just changed and the negative attitude towards working hard and having to be passionate towards something has changes. The Middle-Man realized that most people are passionate about something, and entrepreneurship is just a pathway to unravel that passion. Still, they acknowledge that it is not easy and will require skills to handle uncertainty. The Middle-Man thinks that their time in EE has provided the skills to make uncertainty feel less scary.

It is that kind of way to pursuit own personal goals, so that you have your own dreams and entrepreneurship is a channel for those. You can make a livelihood with your own. Passion. Then to master all sectors and chaos would be an important skill. (Student D)

Se on sellainen henkilökohtaisten tavoitteiden saavuttamisen menetelmä, et on omia unelmia ja yrittäjäyys on kanava siihen. Pystyy elättää itsensä sen oman intohimon kautta. Sitten kaikkien osa-alueiden ja kaaoksen hallinta ois sit kanssa semmoinen tärkeä taito. (Student D)

After their time at the MIBE program, the Middle-Man has been able to start to pursue or at least ideate around the career path they feel passionate about. The Middle-Man is thinking about entrepreneurship as a very possible option, however, at this point of time just after graduation, the Middle-Man sees an entrepreneurial career starting as a part-time thing and perhaps growing in the future. Still, they feel that this kind of lighter form of entrepreneurship is very realistic and might be happening even soon after graduation. The security brought by a simultaneous work in another profession as a paid employee is seen as a positive thing that enables entrepreneurial activities in the meantime. A full-time entrepreneurial career is seen as unfit to this part of their life since they are not financially secure and not willing to sacrifice that much time into making their business successful. However, they feel that if they would have time, they would have the abilities.

I have a long-term goal, that I would get competent in what I like to do, that then I could, maybe not right now in the near future, but when I'm financially secure then I could focus on that and leave paid employment. That's a dream that I pursue... I think that that again requires so much time... Yes, I have the abilities, but fitting it into my own life then not necessarily. (Student D)

Mulla on semmoinen pitkän ajan tavoite, että tulis tämmöiseksi osaavaksi just siinä mistä tykkää, et sit vois ei nyt ehkä ihan lähitulevaisuudessa, mutta silleen kun on taloudellista turvaa niin sitten keskittyy siihen ja jättää palkkatyön. Se on semmoinen unelma mitä tavoittelee... Mä ajattelen, että se taas vaatii niin paljon aikaa... Kyllä nyt valmiudet joo, mutta sen sovittaminen omaan elämään niin ei välttämättä. (Student D)

5.3 *The Non-Entrepreneurial* – Entrepreneurship education from the point of no interest in pursuing an entrepreneurial career

Opposite to the Entrepreneurial, what characterizes the Non-Entrepreneurial is that they had no intentions towards pursuing an entrepreneurial career before applying and entering the master's degree program. Similar to the previous characters, the Non-Entrepreneurial has acquired some educational background as well as a working history. A master's degree was always something they wanted to pursue, however, the educational and working background was more related to the international business part of the master's degree program, rather than on entrepreneurship.

Before MIBE, I studied business and international business, because I didn't quite know what else I would have wanted to study. Still, I knew that I wanted to study everything in English and that's why I thought it was a good option then. – Student G

Ennen MIBEä mä opiskelin kauppätieteitä ja kansainvälistä kauppaa, koska en oikeen tiennyt mitä muutaakaan olisin halunnut opiskella. Tiesin kuitenkin, että halusin opiskella kokonaan englanniksi ja siksi se oli mun mielestä hyvä vaihtoehto silloin. – Student G

Before I got to MIBE, I had went to a University of Applied Sciences. I was a Bachelor of Business Administration with the primary subject being international business. Then I was working for couple of years afterwards in an international company, in a basic office job. I always knew that I'll apply to masters. (Student A)

Ennen kuin tulin MIBEen, mä olin käynyt ammattikorkean. Mä olin IB tradenomi ja mun pääniaine oli International Business. Sitten mä olin useamman vuoden työelämässä sen jälkeen kansainvälisessä yrityksessä, tällaisessa aika perus toimisto hommassa. Mä tiesin aina, että mä haen maisteriin. (Student A)

Prior to EE, the Non-Entrepreneurial didn't have any aspirations to pursue an entrepreneurial career nor did they feel that they would actually like to study entrepreneurship in the first place.

I never thought that I would study an entrepreneurship master's degree. (Student A)

Mä en ikinä ajatellut, että mä opiskelisin yrittäjäyys maisterin. (Student A)

I never really did have any willingness to become an entrepreneur, I just always wanted to be on someone else's payroll, because I found it easier and more secure. (Student G)

Mulla ei oikeestaan ikinä ollut halua olla yrittäjä, vaan halusin aina olla jonkun muun palkkalistoilla, koska se oli musta helpompaa ja varmempaa. (Student G)

The Non-Entrepreneurial's attitude towards entrepreneurship was almost boring. They saw entrepreneurship more from the necessity point-of-view, where people must be entrepreneurs just for the sake of getting a living. The Non-Entrepreneurial did not see entrepreneurs as hero's and had a more realistic, even negative, view of entrepreneurship being a difficult profession without that much reward in the end. Whereas the Middle-Man was not aware of these different, perhaps more low threshold options of an entrepreneurial career, the Non-Entrepreneurial does not see any of the large-scale, international entrepreneurial opportunities – at least they did not feel that that was in grasp for themselves.

Well, I thought entrepreneurship maybe more like small business ownership, for example, someone with a hair salon or who is a dermatologist and I thought that that is not my thing. (Student A)

No, mä ajattelin yrittäjyyden ehkä silleen enemmän pienyrittäjyytenä, esimerkiksi vaikka joku jolla on kampaamo tai on kosmetologi ja mä ajattelin että se ei ole mun juttu. (Student A)

Whereas the other characters got information and adapted attitudes about entrepreneurship from their social environment, the Non-Entrepreneurial doesn't have touching point with entrepreneurs prior to EE. They have a rather negative attitude about entrepreneurship and feel that an entrepreneurial career would be a difficult and exhausting path to follow. However, they also feel that people who have passion and drive towards a cause make good entrepreneurs and they do have a feeling that the negative side could feel less heavy if they would find that passion. They might perceive entrepreneurship as fascinating and interesting, but not something that they could ever do themselves, since it is such hard and painful road.

About entrepreneurship, I thought it is difficult and heavy, and that you should have some calling or a will to do something specific, like be a hairdresser or a dermatologist. Like in a way you should have some type of specific skill. (Student A)

Yrittäjyydestä ajattelin, että vaikeaa ja raskasta, ja että myös pitäis olla joku kutsumus tai halu tehdä jotain tiettyä, vaikka olla kampaaja tai kosmetologi. Tavallaan joku tämmöinen spesifi osaaminen. (Student A)

During my bachelors I had studied about entrepreneurship, and I thought that it is an interesting and cool profession, but that I could never do it myself. Maybe because I really did not have any type of calling and couldn't handle the uncertainty. (Student G)

Olin kandin aikana opiskellut yrittäjyydestä ja aattelin, että se kyllä on mielenkiintoinen ja siisti ammatti, mutta, että itse en vois ikinä ryhtyä siihen. Ehkä siinä oli sellanen, että ei ollu kauheesti mitään kutsumusta, eikä kestäny sitä epävarmuutta. (Student G)

Besides their interest, or lack of interest, towards entrepreneurship, the Non-Entrepreneurial did not perceive that they would have the skills to start and run a successful business, quite contrary, they were certain that they did not have all the skills and knowhow required.

I definitely thought that I don't have all the skills that you have to have in entrepreneurship. (Student A)

Mä ehdottomasti ajattelin, että mä en osaa kaikkia asioita mitä yrittäjyydessä pitää tietää. (Student A)

I don't perceive that I would have had good abilities to start a business with a low threshold. (Student E)

En mä koe, että mulla olisi matalalla kynnyksellä ollut hyviä valmiuksia lähtemään perustamaan yritystä. (Student E)

If we talk about abilities, I wouldn't have had any idea that how you start a business, or how you might run it. (Student G)

Jos valmiuksista puhutaan, niin ei mulla ois ollu mitään ajatusta siitä, että miten edes perustetaan yritys, saati sitten miten sitä pyöritetään. (Student G)

When the Non-Entrepreneurial decided, that they want to pursue a master's degree, they started looking for different options. However, as said earlier, what caught their eye in the MIBE program was not EE but international business studies. The Non-Entrepreneurial perceived EE as a kind of necessary evil that they had to study on the side while getting actual benefits on the international business education that they wanted. MIBE was not a clear choice because of its EE angle, but it was perceived still useful in the future career. The Non-Entrepreneurial

viewed EE as a study of different parts of how a company functions and that is one of the reasoning they made while applying to an EE program. They felt that gaining knowhow on how to run a business could not hurt their future career.

I was looking for the International Business side, so I chose LUT actually despite it having the entrepreneurial angle. Entrepreneurship was not the calling for me in MIBE, but the international trade and then I thought, that entrepreneurship education does not do any harm, even if you don't want to be an entrepreneur. (Student A)

Etsin sitä International Business puolta, et mä valitsin Lutin oikeastaan huolimatta siitä, että siinä oli se yrittäjyys puoli. Se yrittäjyys ei ollut minulle tavallaan se kutsumus MIBEssä, vaan se kv-kauppa ja sitten mä ajattelin, että yrittäjyydestä ei ole kuitenkaan mitään haittaa, vaikka ei haluaisi yrittäjäksi. (Student A)

My major in my bachelors was IB and I thought that I would like to continue on the same field. I did my bachelors thesis about entrepreneurship, and even though I had no interest in being an entrepreneur, I still found it interesting how companies work and thought that knowhow on all the different aspects on a business would take me far in the future. Somehow, I saw the entrepreneurial side so, that we would be thought how financing, HR, strategy etc. works and how you plan then and then in the future all doors would be open still. (Student G)

Mun pääaine kandissa oli IB ja ajattelin, että haluan jatkaa jollain samalla alalla. Tein mun gradun yrittäjyydestä, ja vaikka mua ei kiinnostanut yhtään olla yrittäjä niin mua kuitenkin kiinnosti se miten yritykset toimii ja ajattelin, että tietämys yrityksen kaikista osa-alueista veis mua pitkälle tulevaisuudessa. Jotenkin mä näin sen yrittäjyyspuolen niin, että meille opetettain miten vaikka rahoitus, HR, startegia yms. Toimii ja miten niitä suunnitellaan, et sit tulevaisuudessa sen kannalta ois ovet auki vielä kaikkialle. (Student G)

The time in the program was really enjoyable for the Non-Entrepreneurial, despite the lack of interest towards an entrepreneurial career. As one might assume, the most beneficial knowhow they got from the program was the knowledge of international business and how international companies work in a complex context. During their time at LUT they also got to know some of the resources they could have if they would want to pursue an entrepreneurial career, but didn't really pay too much attention to those, while they were focused on studying. Still, some kind of interest raised, since they acknowledged the fact that if they would have a good idea, they could get help on getting started.

Yes, I knew, for example, about Lutes and many others, who came frequently introducing themselves or were on display, but I didn't obviously pay that much attention, because I'm not so interested in doing anything more besides study. But, I also knew that if I would like some more information, I would find it easily. (Student A)

Joo mä tiesin esimerkiksi Lutesista ja monista muista tahoista, jotka kävi useasti esittäytymässä tai oli näkyvillä, mut mä en tietysti kiinnittänyt niihin silleen huomiota, koska mä en oo itse niin kauhean kiinnostunut tekee ylimääräistä opiskelun ohella. Mutta mä tiesin myös tavallaan, että jos mä haluaisin lisätietoa niin niin varmasti sitä löytää helposti. (Student A)

Besides perceiving international business studies as beneficial, like the previous characters, the Non-Entrepreneurial found gaining networks and a new social environment helpful for their own growth and learning experience. Not only having good peers, but what stood out for the Non-Entrepreneurial was good, inspiring professors and teachers that even influenced to the future plans and aspirations.

Of course, one thing that I found important was networks, so a lot of like schoolmates and professors and lecturers and all other people, that was a big deal... Contemporary Issues in International Business and Entrepreneurship, that was a really great course and that professor was really good, and that was the way that got me thinking that maybe business is not my own field, but that it could be social sciences or politics or something. (Student A)

Tietysti yksi mikä on iso juttu niin on mun mielestä niin verkostot, et paljon just opiskelukavereita ja proffia ja luennoitsijoita ja kaikkia muita ihmisiä niin se oli kyllä tosi iso juttu... Contemporary Issues in International Business and Entrepreneurship, se oli todella hyvä kurssi ja todella hyvä se proffa ja se oli sellainen, että mä tajusin että mun oma ala ei ehkä ollenkaan kauppis vaan se vois olla ehkä yhteiskuntatieteet tai joku poliittinen juttu. (Student A)

I met new people and teachers there, with whom I could bounce around ideas of where to go next and those are indeed valuable connections. (Student G)

Kyllähän siellä myös tapas kaikkia uusia ihmisiä ja opettajia, joiden kanssa pysty pallotella sitä ajatusta, että mihin suuntaan lähtee ja onhan ne arvokkaita kontakteja. (Student G)

During the program, however, the Non-Entrepreneurial's interest in the actual EE was limited. The least beneficial courses listed were those where focus was fully on entrepreneurship. Not only the subject of these courses was described as non-interesting, but the content of the courses were also perceived as shattered and there was a lot of things to do in one course.

Those entrepreneurship studies were not my thing... some entrepreneurship course in the beginning, where we always wrote things on the walls... there were a lot of scattered pieces, so I liked the teachers, but there was a lot to do and some quite irrelevant. (Student A)

Ne yrittäjyyden opinnot ei kyllä ollut mun juttu... joku yrittäjyyden kurssi silloin aika alussa, sellainen missä meidän piti kirjoitella aina sinne seinille... siellä oli ihan hirveästi mun mielestä semmoista sälää, että mä tykkäsin kyllä niistä opettajista, mutta siinä oli mun mielestä jotenkin todella hirveästi tekemistä ja sitten myös sellaista irrelevanttia (Student A)

At least non-beneficial was the first, the dimensions of entrepreneurship... while that dimensions course was uninteresting from my point of view. (Student C)

Ei ainakaan hyödyllinen se eka, se dimensions of entrepreneurship... ku se dimensions oli epäkiinnostavaa mun mielestä. (Student C)

Perhaps because of the vague picture the Non-Entrepreneurial had about entrepreneurship, the benefit of EE was shown to them as a more broad understanding of what are the different dimensions of entrepreneurship and that made entrepreneurship slightly more interesting as a profession as well. The Non-Entrepreneurial gained perhaps the most different perception of entrepreneurship as a career, while they did not have any touchpoint to entrepreneurship through family or other social network.

Well, in my opinion very well was covered the theoretical sides and all the possibilities and research that has been done. (Student D)

No mun mielestä tosi hyvin käytiin silleen teoreettiset puolet ja just se, että kaikki ne mahdollisuudet ja tutkimukset mitä on ollut. (Student D)

Even though entrepreneurship was not my thing, it (EE) at least broadened my knowledge and knowhow, because now I, for example, know what international entrepreneurship could be like and what all in all is a part of entrepreneurship, all the different theories that were touched upon. (Student A)

Vaikka yrittäjyys ei ollutkaan mun juttu niin ainakin se laajensi mun tietämystä ja osaamista koska nyt mä esimerkiksi tiedän mitä voisi olla vaikka tällöinen kansainvälinen yrittäjyys tai mitä kaikkea yrittäjyyteen ylipäättään kuuluu, kaikkia eri teorioita mitä siitä nyt käytiin. (Student A)

The Non-Entrepreneurial's attitude towards entrepreneurship, surprisingly to them, did shift into a more positive one. They found new dimensions of entrepreneurship through EE and perceived more opportunities around them. Besides entrepreneurship being difficult and uninteresting, the Non-Entrepreneurial learned about possibilities and risks in a more realistic way and saw that entrepreneurship can be an occupation among other possible ones. Still, the thought that one needs to have a passion and drive towards the business idea stayed the same, perhaps since the Non-Entrepreneurial still feels that an entrepreneurial career requires hard work and patience. Seeing peers that were interested in and pursuing an entrepreneurial career made the Non-Entrepreneurial think that perhaps anyone with the right mindset can start a business.

Yes, my idea about entrepreneurship changed somewhat, first, I might have gotten some boost to the idea that there is a lot of different kind of entrepreneurship, as much as there are different entrepreneurs. So, in theory, if I had an idea, even I could start a business, it's business among others. Of course, you need to work hard and be patience and it might not necessarily pay off. Still, now I feel that maybe it's not so hard that I could not do it, that anyone who has the will to do it can do it. (Student G)

Kyllä mun ajatus yrittäjyydestä muuttui jonkin verran, ensinnäkin, sain ehkä buustia siihen ajatukseen, että yrittäjyyttä on niin paljon erilaista, kun on yrittäjiäkin. Eli periaatteessa jos mulla ois joku idea, niin voisinhan mäkin lähteä yrittämään, se on bisnestä muiden joukossa. Totta kai siinä saa tehdä paljon töitä ja olla kärsivällinen ja välttämättä se ei aina tuota tulosta. Silti ehkä nyt on semmonen fiilis, että se ei oo niinkun ylitsepääsemättömän vaikeeta vaan oikeestaan kuka vaan, joka halua tehdä sen niin voi. (Student G)

The entrepreneurial intention of the Non-Entrepreneurial did change quite a bit during EE, even if they perceived EE to be irrelevant and not as significant as other parts of the program. The Non-Entrepreneurial sees their career path so, that they could be entrepreneurial in the future. The brightest aspirations for themselves and their future careers are indeed entrepreneurial. The change is more significant than with other characters, perhaps because of the gained knowledge and gain of social networks in an EE setting. Before the program the Non-Entrepreneurial saw themselves in the management of some big international company, but now they have started to think is that fulfilling enough for them. They have also realized that perhaps working hard for your dreams to come true is more important than money or security.

I wonder, that is it inspiring enough for me, that I would be someday in some company's C-suite that is not my own, and if the other option is that I could do the same for myself then there is something really fascinating... Entrepreneurship interest me a lot, that I would have something of my own and like own the thing that you do and then maybe also grow it so that there would be other people with you doing it. Somehow owning your knowhow. (Student A)

Mä mietin, että onko se minulle tarpeeksi inspiroivaa, että mä olisin vaikka joskus jonkun firman johdossa joka ei ole mun oma, että jos toinen vaihtoehto on tehdä se sama itselleni niin onhan siinä jotain tosi kiehtovaa... Yrittäjäyys kiinnostaa paljonkin, että olisi jotain niinku omaa just et omistaisi sen mitä käytännössä tekee ja ehkä sitten kasvattaa sitä myös silleen, että sinne tulisi muita ihmisiä. Tavallaan omistaisi sen oman osaamisensa. (Student A)

Now I have maybe realized that my dreams are somewhere entirely different than in some corporation's executive team. I feel that even though entrepreneurship as a path could be quite scary and heavy, still it would be better for the future that I would do something that I dream of, rather than do something that I'd only get money from on a monthly basis. Maybe I have realized that if you do things wisely you can prevent those risks. But on the other hand, if you go wrong a couple of times it is quite small on the scale of the rest of your life, contrary that you, for example, burn out when you just try to survive on a job that you don't like at all. (Student G)

Nyt on ehkä tajunnut sen, että kyllä mun unelmat on jossain ihan muualla kun jossain korporaation johtoryhmässä. Tuntuu, että vaikka yrittäjäyys polkuna vois olla aika pelottava ja raskas, niin silti olis tulevaisuuden kannalta parempi et tekis jotain sellasta mistä unelmois, eikä vaan sellasta mistä saa rahaa joka kuukausi. Ja ehkä tajunnu sen, että jos asiat tekee fiksusti niin niitä riskejäkin voi välttää. Mut toisaalta, jo nyt menee pari kertaa pieleen niin koko loppuelämän skaalalla se on aika pientä, versus et esim. menee burnouttiin, kun yrittää vaan selvitä jossain työssä mistä ei yhtään tykkää. (Student G)

6 DISCUSSION

In the last chapter, I introduced three different stories of the journey of each character identified in the study about their journeys in and out of entrepreneurial education. This aimed to answer the research question *What different pathways to, and outcomes of entrepreneurial education university level entrepreneurship students produce in their narratives?*

In this chapter, I will focus more on the things that these characters found significant or insignificant during their time on the program. This part is analyzing the first additional research question: *What factors in education do university level entrepreneurship students narrate to being significant in the development of entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions?*

By analyzing and aiming to answer these research question I hope to enlighten the general question of this research and reflect on the main research question: *What kind of narratives do university level entrepreneurship students construct on the effects of entrepreneurial education in their perceived entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions?*

6.1 Students find networks and theoretical studies as valuable, but are lacking practicality in EE

The last chapter introduced three different pathways to and out of EE, but it also contributed to the unanswered question of what in EE students find especially significant, what they would have wanted more and what did they feel was insignificant. Each character had a different base knowledge to begin with when it came to entrepreneurial career and entrepreneurship as a phenomenon. This subchapter is going to discuss different themes that were recurring in the narratives.

Because the program was academic and a university level degree program, the first theme was *theoretical studies of entrepreneurship*. The program did have courses that touched upon the theories and dimensions of entrepreneurship researched. Perhaps not so surprisingly, The Entrepreneurial found this part of the program somewhat insignificant when it comes to gaining entrepreneurial abilities. In fact, they did find the theoretical side of entrepreneurship studies

even completely disconnected on the practical side of entrepreneurship as a career. Understanding this, it is quite easy to assume that the theoretical studies were not viewed as valuable. One reason behind this could be that the student with more entrepreneurial background and intentions prior to the studies already had a basic knowledge on the theoretical and practical side, and already had an attitude towards entrepreneurship theories being disconnected from reality. Another option is that they had a great view to practical entrepreneurship prior to the program through their social network and that is why they did not see the theoretical side fitting into the view that they perceived around them.

The Middle-Man had a different perception of theoretical studies than The Entrepreneurial. They found different theories of entrepreneurship to be valuable for them because they had a narrow view of entrepreneurship before coming to MIBE and viewed the studies to be eye-opening. The narratives did not provide a lot of information on how the theoretical studies affected their perceived entrepreneurial abilities, but it affected their attitude towards entrepreneurship to be wider and more positive. It can be said that their perceived abilities did get a positive turn as well, while they saw different opportunities of an entrepreneurial career to be possible for themselves.

The Non-Entrepreneurial did not narrate theoretical studies to be valuable, rather they said that those courses which content was solely focused on entrepreneurship were the worst courses on their opinion. However, they did find EE to broaden their perspective of different dimensions of entrepreneurship. These courses were found difficult and scattered, but still on the later stages of their narratives came up that they have gained knowledge on entrepreneurial theories and dimensions. However, they did not narrate that to be especially valuable for them.

Networks was a strong theme in all the narratives. All the students found the social network formed in the studies to be valuable. The Entrepreneurial perceived networks to be the most meaningful thing in the whole study program. These students were already alert on entrepreneurial opportunities and pathways to grasp during EE. Perhaps therefore they found, not only their peer students to be a valuable network, but the people working on the university and the professors of the program. They valued the guidance they were given from people at the university of what kind of entrepreneurial careers should and could they pursue.

The Non-Entrepreneurial perceived the value of networks similarly than the Entrepreneurial. They found value of the social network they gathered from peers studying in EE, but they also got a lot of value of the network that they formed from teachers and professors and other faculty of the university. Perhaps because they did not know so much about entrepreneurship prior to the program, they also needed more professional guidance of realizing what kind of opportunities there is for them.

Slightly differing from The Entrepreneurial and The Non-Entrepreneurial, The Middle-Man found most valuable the peer-network that they formed during EE. They felt that they had the most value on support and encouragement that they got from other like-minded people.

There were some things that were perceived valuable in only some narratives. The Entrepreneurial did find it valuable to develop their *teamworking skills* and being put in a multicultural, diverse environment to learn and do assignments in. They also perceived that there were some multifunctionality during the program and found it as a significant in the development of their entrepreneurial abilities, while working with people from different backgrounds, for example, different educational backgrounds is part of the entrepreneurial reality that they perceive.

Not surprisingly, The Non-Entrepreneurial found *the international business* side of the program valuable and enjoyable. This was expected while it was the main dimension The Non-Entrepreneurial was initially interested in.

Especially interesting in these narratives for future contributions to EE was the part where students descried what they were lacking in the program that they were in. The one theme that stood up was the lack of practical education or development of practical skills for entrepreneurship. While The Entrepreneurial found more theoretical courses insignificant on the pursuit of an entrepreneurial career, they also perceived that even the courses that aimed towards practicality were left a bit halfway and did not represent the reality of running a business.

Similarly, The Middle-Man did lack practicality. They felt that even though theoretical knowhow goes somewhat long way, their practical skills on entrepreneurship were not developed to the level that they have wanted the program to take them. Still, they did find some

assignments and courses to come close to what they would need to develop their skills in entrepreneurship.

6.2 Theoretical contributions

Entrepreneurial intentions are highly affected on the perceived desirability towards entrepreneurship as well as the persons perceived feasibility of entrepreneurship as a career for themselves (Krueger 2000; Krueger 2009). As we covered in the first chapter, the factors affecting EI can be divided into internal and external factors (see Table 1).

In this research, the narratives of the students did describe the change in attitudes that they had towards entrepreneurship, affected by EE. The change in attitude was highly impacted on the knowledge base and prior intentions they had before coming to an entrepreneurial program. The students with clear vision of what is entrepreneurship and prior entrepreneurial intentions did not see a change in perceived desirability towards entrepreneurship. Perceived feasibility may have increased somewhat in a positive manner since they felt that their entrepreneurial knowledge and skills were validated during the program. The less the students had experience and knowhow on entrepreneurship, the more their attitudes were molded in the program. The students with some entrepreneurial intentions found entrepreneurship as a more desirable career after, because they had realized that there are a lot of different ways to be entrepreneurial, rather than just one. They also thought that their entrepreneurial skillset had improved and thus they perceived entrepreneurship as a more feasible career choice for them. The students without entrepreneurial intentions before the program also had an attitude change. After the program they saw entrepreneurship as a desirable career because they could pursue the thing that they feel passionate about as a job. However, their perceived feasibility did not yet increase that much that they would have entrepreneurial intentions in the near future.

Personality traits were not discussed much in the student narratives, however, the student with entrepreneurial intentions prior to the program did perceive entrepreneurship as a risky career choice but were still sure that they would like to pursue that career. Therefore, it could be concluded that The Entrepreneurial had a high risk-propensity, whereas other students did perceive entrepreneurship to be risky as well and saw that as a barrier.

The percent of male students that had more entrepreneurial intentions was larger than the amount of female student. Also, the narratives of the student with no EI to begin with were all female. Because of the number of respondents was quite small, there is no clear conclusion to make about if gender had an impact in the formation of EI in the first place, but as said earlier, it has been researched that men have higher entrepreneurial intentions (Vukovic, Josanov-Vrgovic, Jovin & Papic-Blagojevic, 2020). The results gotten in this research comply with this theory.

The impact of social networks in the formation of EI was highlighted in the narratives of students in EE. Students with an interest in pursuing an entrepreneurial career had a social network of entrepreneurs around them. Being able to perceive entrepreneurship as a career so close did mold their attitudes and idea of what entrepreneurship is really like. Raijman (2020) discussed about the importance of a social network also from the point of view of resources. Some students perceived that having an entrepreneurial family would provide them with resources, both financial and non-financial, if they would decide to pursue a career in entrepreneurship. Besides the prior networks the students had, they found the networks made during EE to be impactful and valuable in the formation of their entrepreneurial intentions and molding their attitudes. The research shows that an entrepreneurial peer-group has a positive effect on EI, and that was also validated by this research. (Falck et. Al. 2012)

Lüthje and Franke (2003) saw that support factors provided by, e.g., university and public policy is an important factor when it comes to fostering entrepreneurial intentions. In the narratives of the students came evident that they perceived the support that university and other facilities nearby could provide them if they would pursue a career in entrepreneurship. While the more entrepreneurial students were actively looking for these support functions, the less entrepreneurial student found out about them during courses and introductions in the university. What perhaps was not evident to the students, the more entrepreneurial characters did find more support than the less entrepreneurial. Also, networks were found valuable in presenting positive role-models of different entrepreneurs. (Lüthje & Franke 2003)

According to EE research, one of the main objectives of EE is to increase positive entrepreneurial attitudes and mindset (Mwasalwiha 2010). The student narratives did show a change in attitude, but more so within the students that didn't have a broad understanding of entrepreneurship as a career. Could be said that the program reached this objective while the

students that lacked knowledge were impacted the most. Another angle of the objectives of EE is that it should build up a realistic view of entrepreneurship, and according to Piperopoulos and Diminov (2015), this is what theoretical courses in the EE curriculum should do. However, the narratives of the students in MIBE program indicate that the theoretical courses were found somewhat distanced from the reality and thus did not construct realistic visions of entrepreneurship as a career. However, some students did find different theories valuable in a sense that they got familiar of the different dimensions of entrepreneurship.

It is agreed that EE should have a positive impact on entrepreneurial attitudes and self-efficacy among students (Lu et.al. 2021; Yasir et.al. 2021). This research can validate this, while the amount of impact was highly dependent on the level of entrepreneurial intentions to begin with. Still, even the student that perceived their attitude towards entrepreneurship to stay similar than it was prior to EE, they felt that the education provided validation of their own entrepreneurial skills, networks, and guidance towards an entrepreneurial career path, making EI stronger. Still, most of the students thought that they were yet not in a situation where they should pursue their entrepreneurial careers, but rather they could do that in the future. This supports the theory that even though EE is highly valued and molds attitudes and intentions, the effect on new venture creation is still relatively small. (von Graevenitz et.al. 2010; Martin et.al. 2013)

7 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will conclude the study and the outcomes of the research. This part of the thesis will also conclude the answers to the three research questions presented in the beginning of the study.

The study aimed to discover the narratives of university master's degree students on how entrepreneurial education has affected their attitudes toward entrepreneurship, their entrepreneurial intentions, and their perceived entrepreneurial abilities. The students that participated in the study were all from the same study program, The International Business and Entrepreneurship master's program in LUT university. The study was conducted as a qualitative case-study using a narrative approach.

The main research question was:

What kind of narratives do university level entrepreneurship students construct on the effects of entrepreneurial education in their perceived entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions?

The answer to this question is broad, but at the core of the narratives was that university students did narrate a perceived change on their entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions. In some narratives the effect was bigger than in others. Students with high entrepreneurial intentions before EE saw more effect on their entrepreneurial abilities and more clear validation to their entrepreneurial intentions. However, they did not perceive an attitude change towards entrepreneurship and thought that their view on what is entrepreneurship, stayed similar.

Students with some entrepreneurial intentions perceived a positive impact on their attitude towards entrepreneurship, especially in a way that they saw more opportunities in the field of entrepreneurship as a career. Positive change in attitude and increase of the perceived entrepreneurial abilities did develop into increased entrepreneurial intentions by the end of the study program.

Students with no entrepreneurial intentions before coming to EE also experienced a positive attitude change towards entrepreneurship. After the program they perceived entrepreneurship as a possible career choice but did not see as big of an increase in their perceived feasibility to

pursue an entrepreneurial career. Still, entrepreneurial career was not seen as impossible and entrepreneurial intentions were somewhat increased.

The difference between these three main narratives might be the amount of motivation these students had to learn about entrepreneurship. For the non-entrepreneurial student's entrepreneurship courses were difficult and even described as boring or scattered, so perhaps the lack of attention could be linked to the amount of increase in entrepreneurial abilities and perceived feasibility. On the other hand, for the entrepreneurial student's prior knowledge on entrepreneurship might have impacted on motivation to learn basic theories of entrepreneurship and they would have needed more advanced education to perceive a big impact. The students that had some entrepreneurial intentions the program was motivating and challenging enough, without being too difficult or uninteresting. This could be the reason why they had the biggest impact on both perceived feasibility and perceived desirability towards entrepreneurship.

The second research question was "*What different pathways to, and outcomes of entrepreneurial education university level entrepreneurship students produce in their narratives?*". To answer this question, three different narrative stories was conducted, with three different storylines to and out of EE: The Entrepreneurial, The Middle-Man and The Non-Entrepreneurial.

The Entrepreneurial character was combined from student narratives that already had strong entrepreneurial intentions before coming to EE. They had a stronger knowledge on what entrepreneurship looks like as a career, from already doing entrepreneurial activities and through social networks. They chose to study entrepreneurship and were seeking an EE program. In the program they found value on networks and practical assignment, as well as sought out other support that they could utilize while pursuing an entrepreneurial career. The program provided them with validation of their skillset and their entrepreneurial intention, but the outcome of the narratives was not an entrepreneurial career, at least for now. Still, they have strong entrepreneurial intentions in the future.

The Middle-Man had some entrepreneurial intentions before coming to the program but did not feel like they would have the abilities to start a business. They also viewed entrepreneurship as a difficult career path that probably would not be the one for themselves. They looked for a program that would suit their interests, but it was not clear that they wanted to start in EE.

During the program they valued the networks as well as the theoretical knowhow they gained on entrepreneurship. Coming out of EE, they perceived their knowhow to be increased significantly and now viewed entrepreneurship as a more suitable career for them, because they found out during the program the multiple different paths an entrepreneurial career could follow. Even though their attitude towards entrepreneurship was more positive and they perceived their entrepreneurial abilities to be better than where they started, after the program they did not yet want to pursue an entrepreneurial career. However, EI was increased, and they saw entrepreneurship as a future for them.

The Non-Entrepreneurial did not have any entrepreneurial intentions before MIBE and the attitude towards entrepreneurship was not positive. They came to the program because of the international business aspect of it and despite of the entrepreneurial part. During the program they found international business studies to give them most value, but also valued the networks it provided. Still, they did perceive their attitude to change into a more positive one, because they learned the variety of entrepreneurial career paths. They also saw that their entrepreneurial knowhow and abilities were somewhat increased. Entrepreneurship as a career was somewhat interesting and possible coming out of EE, so entrepreneurial intentions were increased.

The last research question was: “*What factors in education do university level entrepreneurship students narrate to being significant in the development of entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions?*”. Factor that all students narrated to be significant and valuable in the program was networks, both peer-group as well as the faculty of the university. Some students narrated the theoretical entrepreneurship studies to be valuable on the development of their entrepreneurial knowhow and intentions, but the more entrepreneurial intentions and knowhow the student had before the program, the less valuable they viewed theoretical entrepreneurship studies.

Other factors narrated as impactful were international business studies, teamworking skills and being able to work in diverse, cross-functional teams. What most of the students lacked from EE was more courses that would develop their practical entrepreneurial skills.

7.1 Implications to Entrepreneurship Education

Based on this research, some implications could be suggested to improve entrepreneurial education in the case program. First, it would be important to understand in the beginning on

the studies the level of entrepreneurial knowhow of students as well as their attitude towards entrepreneurship. This way, students could have different approaches towards EE from the beginning, that would benefit them.

Secondly, the lack of developing student practical skills was mentioned in all narratives. The program provides practical assignment that are not perceived to match the reality of entrepreneurship as a career. However, working with entrepreneurs, providing good role models, and developing real products or businesses models were perceived as closest to the practicality that the students lacked.

For the students that did not have much information on entrepreneurship to begin with, the theoretical approach to entrepreneurship as a career is highly important. However, this could be combined with real life examples, like more visiting lecturers that are pursuing an entrepreneurial career. Peer-support was important to those with less entrepreneurial experience but providing peers to those students that already are involved in entrepreneurial activities is as important. That could be done by combining alumni's or other entrepreneurs in the area in the program as a peer group. The implication of this study highlights the different levels of knowledge and intentions students have in the beginning and how it would be crucial to address these needs even with slightly differentiated approach.

7.2 Limitations and future research

It should be mentioned that this research had small sample size and that the students that contributed to the research were only chosen from one case program. This is due to limited resources and time conducting the research, but also because this study wanted to focus specifically on the MIBE program in LUT. However, because this study had a narrative approach that aimed to describe the topic in deep detail, the small sample size was not a limitation in providing interesting research results. If the research group would have been constructed from more than one program, it would allow comparison between different EE program styles and curriculums and how that impacts EI and EA. These results are limited to the perception of this research group of their own attitudes, intentions and abilities and may not provide a base for generalization in such.

Another limitation of this study is, that there are more factors affecting entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes than this research could have taken into consideration. For example, socio-cultural aspects and age were not considered in these narratives. Still, the students focused on perceiving the impact of entrepreneurial education specifically. The major limitations of this study are in the core of its method, this research aimed to study students' perceptions of their entrepreneurial intentions, attitudes, and abilities with a very deep, detail focused level.

For future research, it would be interesting to compare different study programs and what kind of effect does program structure make. Research could aim to unravel the different factors inside EE that make the most difference in entrepreneurial intentions and why, even though entrepreneurial intentions seem to increase because of EE, it does not show as an increase in new venture creation.

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