THE ROLE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROCESSES IN ENHANCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP THROUGH BUSINESS GROWTH IN THE NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND

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Declaration and Statement

I declare that I have not while being registered for the Ph.D. programme at Manchester Metropolitan University, be a registered candidate for another award of a university.

The material in the thesis has not been used in any other submissions for an academic award.

Academic events participation

- Attending North West Postgraduate Enterprise Futures Conference 'What Next?' February 2014

- Attending the 7th Manchester Metropolitan University Postgraduate Research Conference at MMU Business School, Nov 2014

- Volunteer time keeper Committee Member of the 8th MMU Postgraduate Research Conference 'Innovation', MMU, UK, November 2015

- Participating in the "Three Minute Thesis" (3MT) competition, MMU, Cheshire, May 2016

- Attending Cheshire East 'Helping your Business Grow event at Legends by Bentley March 2017

- Attending the Institute of Small Business and Entrepreneurship (isbe) 2017 conference, Isle of Man, May 2017

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Abstract

This study explores potential synergies between entrepreneurship and project management across North West of England. It investigates entrepreneurial activities involved in business growth and examines whether project management processes are relevant within such a context. These activities are uncovered through the lens of the theory of planned behaviour. Extensive reviews of the relevant literature provided an insight into the research questions, set out research objectives, and the theoretical perspective of this study.

The study adopted a qualitative research method to gain in-depth insight of the theory of planned behaviour as a lens in understanding entrepreneurial activities and project management processes from the perspective of business growth. The participants for this study were 40 successful entrepreneurs in the North West region of England. Non-probability sampling was used in the target population selection and face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were employed as the data collection technique. The data collected were analysed using an inductive approach to thematic analysis with the theory of planned behaviour serving as a lens.

The findings present an in-depth understanding and knowledge of the integral link between entrepreneurship and project management, which is presented as entrepreneurial activities and project management processes framework consisting of the three major aspects. These aspects include the theory of planned behaviour intentional antecedents (main themes), entrepreneurial activities 'growth drivers' (sub-theme), and project management processes (sub-themes). The framework showed that entrepreneurs need different growth drivers (entrepreneurial activities), project management processes, and cognitive elements for business growth.

The novelty of study is highlighted in its contribution to business growth of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England by focusing on the relationship between entrepreneurial activities and project management process. It provided evidence of strong links between the two fields, which rarely exist in the literature. In general, the implications for both practice and theory highlighted from the thesis indicated the need for further studies exploring questions around whether entrepreneurship and project management should be integrated. Consequently, the study also offers useful policy implications for countries seeking to nurture entrepreneurship activities to business growth and sustain long-run economic growth.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial activities, Project management processes, Business growth, North West of England, Theory of planned behaviour, Successful entrepreneurs.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my late mother, Ugoeze Felicia Ibariego Agunwah, who meant so much to me, a constant source of support and encouragement during my Ph.D. programme. You were there all through my journey to completing this programme and taught me to work hard for the things that I aspire to achieve. Although you are no more, to celebrate the outstanding achievement, you shall always remain in my heart.

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Chapter 1   Overview of the study

1.1   Introduction

There is a wise consensus from literature (Chen et al., 2018; Dvoulety, 2017; Urbano and Aparicio, 2019), that entrepreneurship is an important driver for the stimulation of economic growth (Urbano and Aparico, 2016) through job creation, reducing unemployment at the macro level and improving firm productivity and sales at the micro level (Bhoganadam et al., 2018; Block et al., 2017; Vixathep, 2013). Similarly, project management literature identify project management as one of the key prime movers of economic development of both at micro and macro levels of nations (Nagarajan, 2012). This is based on the fact that Project management is applied in diverse industries and organisations, allowing them to effectively innovate to achieve growth and achieve their strategic objectives (Hyvari, 2006; Owens, 2006). Growth here depicts not only expansion of firm, but also the number of years the firm has existed (Di et al., 2017; Giovannetti et al., 2011) or process maturation (Jerbrant, 2014; Schelini et al., 2017). Furthermore, project management is designed to control the key elements, which provide practical information for achieving project objectives, thus driving economic growth (Nagarajan, 2012).

Although entrepreneurship and project management provides similar impact on economy, both have existed as separate fields of study and are built upon distinct sets of mind and intellectual skills, which have driven the two disciplines (Fouche, 2011). The past decades have seen remarkable development from both fields in terms of theory and practical implication, which have, revolutionise management practices in influencing firms' growth (Davidsson etal., 2006). Findings of (Bröckling, 2016; Frederiksen and Davies, 2008; Kuura, et al., 2014; Kuura and Lundin, 2019; Martens et al., 2018). For instance, Kuura and Lundin (2019) have advocated for the merging of the two fields of study. They argued that in practice, entrepreneurial activities and project work are linked, emphasising that the two fields share fundamental goal, they transform abstract ideas into tangible benefits for economic growth.

Correspondingly, Frederiksen and Davies (2008), revealed how applying strategic management in entrepreneurial venture could reduce uncertainty when establishing new stream projects. For example, employing strategic decision can help to reduce the risks in exploiting new opportunities and testing of opportunities to connect with novel technology. This is achieved by adapting existing resources, knowledge, mind sets and technologies to suit the new problems and situations. In addition, these authors emphasise that "in real practice, the connections between entrepreneurship and project management appear stronger," and hence the call for linking the two "segregated communities" (Kuura et al., 2014: 214).

This research therefore explores potential synergies between entrepreneurship and project management by adopting a qualitative approach to uncover whether and how project management processes are being used by entrepreneurs (through entrepreneurial activities) in successfully running their businesses. Here, the entrepreneurial activities are venturous human actions in pursuit of creating value, which results in the expansion of economic activity by identifying and exploiting new products, processes, and services or market (Ahmad and Seymour, 2008). It is worth mentioning that in this study, the entrepreneurial activities are considered as the growth driver. In contrast, project management processes specify the stages involved in a project from start to finish of the project to achieve set objectives.

Drawing on the work of Kuura et al. (2014), which explored whether identifying links between the two practice fields, particularly cross-linkages between them, can unlock possible synergies for the development of theories and practices on both sides. It is also believed that it is possible to use traditional project management processes (planning, execution, monitoring and controlling) in the creation of a start-up (Kiznyte et al., 2016). This study aims to further expose the links between the two fields. This could be achieved by exploring entrepreneurial activities (Innovation, risk-taking, decision-making, etc.) involved in business and growth and to examine whether those traditional project management processes (planning execution, monitoring and control) are relevant within such context. These activities are

uncovered by probing the working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England, using the theory of planned behaviour.

1.2   The North West of England (the study location)

North West England is bounded to the east by the Pennines and to the west by the Irish Sea. The region extends from the Scottish Borders in the North to the West Midlands region in the south. As highlighted in Figure 1.1 It is one of nine official regions of England, consists of the five counties of Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside. It is the third most populated region in the United Kingdom after South East and Greater London. The map below (figure 1.1), shows the five counties in the North West of England.

Figure 1.1: Map showing the five counties in the North West of England. Source: (British American trade)

The North West covers an area of 14, 183km (5472 sq. miles), with an estimated population of 7,258,627 in 2017 (Clark, 2018) compare to 7,052,000 in 2011 (Statistical Bulletin, 2012). This represents about 11% of UK population (Eurostat, 2018). It is the third most populated region in the United Kingdom after South East and Greater London. The region is built on diverse industrial sectors such as chemicals, textiles, shipping, engineering, pharmaceuticals and diversity into modern high technology including information and communication technology.

With respect to, international trade, the port of Liverpool has served as a transportation hub and for imports and for exports of goods/products in the region of interest. This region has promoted its strengths by implementing project management processes and driving productivity with growth strategies that align skills, local transport, and economic renewal (HS2 Regional Briefing, 2017). Similarly, in the rural and coastal areas of the North West, it holds unique environmental and economic features, e.g. tourism and agriculture (Kalantaridis and Bika, 2011), which have made it regarded as an industrial hub for trading and for entrepreneurs in the North West.

In addition, Cheshire and Warrington's region contains a mix of high profile international companies, with many in the fields of scientific analysis and research including life science, chemical engineering, energy, and environmental technology (Cheshire Science Corridor Enterprise, 2015). For instance, the Bentley Motors headquartered in Crewe employs 6,500 people in life sciences and pharmaceuticals. Over 7,000 firms operate in the financial and professional service sectors (HS2 Regional Briefing, 2017). Also, Cheshire is known for its chemicals and energy sectors (ibid). Among the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas in the North West, only Cheshire and Warrington have high skills (degree equivalent or higher) above the UK average (Cheshire and Warrington LEP, 2014).

In Lancashire, manufacturing provides the most significant contribution to the area's economy, particularly in the aerospace and automotive sectors (The aerospace

industry in Lancashire', 2015) online access. In the UK, Lancashire has the largest concentration of aerospace production, employing over 20,000 people in 120 companies (Lancashire LEP, 2014). Furthermore, the region has a high reputation in nuclear technology and science. Cumbria's nuclear sector is an international centre for excellence (Cumbria LEP, 2017). It has strong links to the county's advanced manufacturing sector with significant employers that include British Aerospace Systems (BAE), GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), Siemens, Tritech, and Pirelli Tyres (ibid). Cumbria Tourism (the Lake District) has a strong visitor economy and is one of the UK's most visited destinations (Cumbriatourism, 2018).

Thus, the avalanche of industries, financial, research institutions, and seaport in North West England resulted in its selection as the geographical region for this study. In respect to these activities, the region's strengths are promoted through implementation of linking entrepreneurial activities and project management processes. This drives up productivity with growth strategies that align skill to achieve project objectives. Hence, the positive influence on entreprenership and project management.

1.3   Definition of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is primarily an economic function carried out by individual and entrepreneurs, either acting independently or within organisations, to perceive new opportunities and introduce new ideas into the market, under uncertainty, by making decisions about location, product design, resource use, institutions, and reward system" (Carlsson et al., 2013: 914). Entrepreneurship is endemic with disparities and even contradictions about what is and is not. Because entrepreneurship is multifaceted and studied from many different perspectives, which has raised a multitude of definitions, there has been an attempt to understand the behaviour of the entrepreneur through a psychological base perspective as diverse as the definitions may be. In addition, there have been fundamental flaws in the inability of Carlsson and colleagues to incorporate how and why the entrepreneurs think and act

the way they do. For instance, the authors are unable to distinguish an individual from another through entrepreneurial characteristics.

1.4 Theoretical framework

In this research, the theoretical framework will serve as an intersection among the existing knowledge, the researcher's epistemological disposition, and the methodically analytic approach (Collins and Stockton, 2018).

There is a wide range of established theoretical and empirical explanations used in the entrepreneurial analysis. This includes personality trait theory, psychological micro-perspective-explaining the traits of the successful entrepreneur, macro-perspective explaining the policies and incentive structures needed to increase entrepreneurial activities in society, etc (Davidsson and Wiklund, 2001). The personality traits and demographic variables that differentiate entrepreneurs from non-entrepreneurs were the initial focus of interest. These lines of analysis allowed Davidsson and Wiklund (2001) to identify the relationship between certain personality traits and demographic characteristics and individuals showing entrepreneurial behaviour. However, the methodological and conceptual limitations associated with this approach produced a flawed result (Robinson, 2007).

The relationship between traits and these performance outcomes cannot be inferred simply by looking at entrepreneurs' personality profiles. Therefore, the theory of planned behaviour was selected for this study as an appropriate lens to understand how entrepreneurs benefit from project management processes. Firstly, cognitive frameworks are theoretically robust for understanding complex and obscure phenomena such as entrepreneurship (Delmar and Davidsson, 2000; Krueger et al., 2000; Mitchell et al., 2002). Secondly, the theory of planned behaviour has been thoroughly tested and has received wide acclaim among scholars as a reliable cognitive model for understanding and predicting behaviour (Ajzen, 2005; Armitage and Christian, 2003; Engle et al., 2010).

In the entrepreneurship and project management context, the theory of planned behaviour thus enhances an understanding of the emergence of entrepreneurial

behaviour before the onset of any observable action, and this has notable implications for policy (Kautonen et al., 2013; Linan and Chen, 2009). For example, where the objective is to promote enterprising activity by fostering a culture conducive to entrepreneurship (Kautonen et al., 2013; Linan and Chen, 2009). In addition, the theory of planned behaviour framework is most influential for the prediction of human social behaviour (Kautonen et al., 2013). It is a well-designed measure for an individual's behaviour, normative and control belief (Ajzen, 2011), which lies within the core of this study.

1.5   Methodology

Given this research study's aim, the interpretivist research stance is considered appropriate because it perceives that people, the world, and institutions are fundamentally different from actual science (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Ritchie et al., 2013). The research aim required a qualitative approach to gather a variety of personal experiences. Qualitative research is often described as a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, the method will aim to understand how people make sense of the world and how they experience events (Willig, 2013). The researcher in this study, is not a detached observer but is absorbed in the entrepreneurs' world while they tell their stories. Data were collected from 40 entrepreneurs using face-to-face semi-structured interviews. This method gives room for flexibility during the interview process by allowing the researcher to explore any unexpected themes that emerge during the meeting.

All 40 of the individuals are successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England, and they are focusing on business growth/success. These entrepreneurs have gone through various experiences towards starting up their businesses and achieving business growth. Hence, they have lived stories to tell about their business. Data were analysed using the inductive approach of thematic analysis, which, is suitable and consistent with the interpretative philosophical strand adopted for this research study. It also permits the researcher to understand and explore people's views and

opinions on the quality of relationships (Golicic and Mentzer, 2005). Furthermore, it avails the researcher the opportunity to test and utilise the theoretical framework adopted.

1.6   Research background

Entrepreneurship and Project Management are not new terms. They appear to be very different fields, but they share much more in common. Both emerged from the Industrial Revolution of the late 17th to early 18th century during the period of massive re-organisation of the economy aimed at enhancing manufacturing (Allen, 2009; Hodgson and Cicmil, 2006), and are widely associated with economic growth (Gries and Naude, 2010; Mas-Tur et al., 2015). From the academic perspective, both have similar histories and a similar theoretical and professional status (Kuura et al., 2014; Kuura and Lundin 2019). Entrepreneurship and project management as fields of knowledge have developed extremely rapidly, and their contributions are now considered worldwide as critical for economic growth and development (Kuura et al., 2014).

Globally, entrepreneurial activity contributes to economic performance by introducing innovations and fostering competition and rivalry (Audretsch and Peña-Legazkue, 2012; Carree and Thurik, 2003; Wennekers and Thurik, 1999; Wong, et al., 2005). The growth of the economy globally rest on two critical factors: (1) initial operations and (2) the post-project phase- sustaining the business operation (project) (Ajam, 2011). These key points apply to both fields for economic growth regardless of whether an entrepreneur or project manager is involved.

Entrepreneurship emerged from the thoughts of the economists concerned with the speculation about market and the opportunities for innovative entrepreneurship. The focus of entrepreneurship has often been opportunity identification, i.e., the ability of the entrepreneur to identify an opportunity that creates new firms, offering new products and introducing new processes that provide evidence as a 'lead' activity (Kirkley, 2016). It also involves nurturing the established firms to a high level

(and wage employment) by making use of scale economies and providing incentives for further investment and education (Courvisanos and Mackenzie, 2014). While entrepreneurship was rooted in economic ideas, project management processes developed through the mind of engineers concerned with efficiency and optimisation (Fouch, 2011).

The focus is on achieving set project goals leading to project success. Theory suggests that the project manager takes responsibility for implementing project activities along with the project team to accomplish the project goal (Kerzner, 2017). Likewise, entrepreneurship and project management adopted a similar business start-up approach aimed at the creation of new firms, which also brings about economic development (Ajam, 2011). Although these two fields come with their inherent uncertainties, indeed they both, according to Bredillet (2013: 64), "involve projection in the future and therefore a possibility of decision making about the imminent plan for business growth."

These two fields of study, i.e., entrepreneurship and project management, followed distinct paths and shaped different communities of practitioners and researchers (Kuura, 2012; Kuura et al., 2014; Trokić, 2016; Fouch, 2011). However, both fields have experienced expansion/different maturation levels in the past thirty years (Martes et al., 2015). Entrepreneurship research is primarily inspired by approaches from sociology, psychology and economics (Huang and Knight, 2017). These approaches have been utilised in identifying, predicting and stimulating entrepreneurship (Aldrich and Baker, 2000; Busenitz et al., 2003; Landström et al., 2012; Venkataraman, 1997) and will be fully detailed in the review of extant literature of entrepreneurship in chapter three. Similarly, Carlsson et al. (2013) provided an overview of where the field of entrepreneurship stands and how it is positioned relative to the existing disciplines and new research fields upon which it draws. They espoused the diversity involved in entrepreneurship, how it has developed from the mainstream disciplines of economics, sociology, and psychology, representing a variety of research traditions, perspectives and methods.

There is wide range of established theoretical and empirical explanations adopted in entrepreneurial analysis. This includes personality trait theory, a psychological micro-perspective-explaining the traits of successful entrepreneurs, and a macro-perspective-explaining the policies and incentive structures needed to increase entrepreneurial activities in society (Davidsson and Wiklund, 2001; Qian, 2018). In contrast, project management encompasses multidisciplinary skills, involving the practice of abilities in a wide variety of technical (hard) and non-technical (soft) areas. The hard and soft represented as has been classified as science and as an art. As a science (Demeulemeester and Herroelen, 2002; Clements and Gido, 2012; Fraser, 2011), it follows a systematic approach towards accomplishing projects. This involves the application of hard skills, planning, scheduling and controlling (Clements and Gido, 2012).

On the other hand, as an art, project management focuses more on the socio-cultural dimension (Small and Walker, 2010) and behavioural approach (Meredith and Mantel, 2012). In project management as art the emphasis is about soft skills such as leadership, communicating effectively, working within the organisation's culture, motivating the team, managing stakeholder expectations, understanding business objectives, solving problems effectively, and making clear and knowledgeable decisions (Belzer, 2001).

1.7   Problem statement

Recently, there has been serious discourse on the relationship of entrepreneurship and project management (Fonrouge et al., 2018). The discourse was driven by the fundamental goals of both fields of study as drivers for economic growth. There are divergent views: such as in codes and perspectives. For instance, In terms of codes, while entrepreneurship research is formed around the code opportunity (Alvarez and Barney, 2013; Shane, 2012; Vogel, 2016), project management is built on the code project success (Belassi and Tukel, 1996). In the perspective of start-up, entrepreneurship views business start-up as being part of an entrepreneurial act involving different phases e.g. the idea, pre-start-up and post-start-up (Kuura et al.,

2014), project management perspective start-up phase means planning (Midler and Silberzahn, 2008). Thus, difference in terminology. On that respect, (Fouch, 2011) opined that the two fields should continue to remain separate. However, others such as Kuura et al. (2014); Kuura and Lundin (2019); Fonrouge et al. (2018); Bröckling (2016); and Frederiksen and Davies (2008) believe that the fundamental goal of this two fields should be the determinant on how they are related. Kuura et al. (2014) opined that the damaging fragmentation and separation of the two fields of study has contributed to a separation of the communities and the fragmentation of knowledge.

According to Seidl (2007: 203), it is also obvious that the phrase and terminology used in the two fields seem to "differ fundamentally in the way they process meaning." These words are encoded in a different way in project management or entrepreneurship research. For example, the concept of performance is not constructed the same way and does not convey the same meaning in the two fields. In project management, the variable performance is usually related to the success of a project, according to predefined goals to be met upon project completion, whilst in entrepreneurship, performance may relate to growth, future profit, or any specific goals pursued by an entrepreneur and this at different time horizons (Fonrouge et al., 2018). Despite contribution of these two fields to economic growth, both fields have significantly maintained parallelism in the literature (Kuura et al., 2014).

Thus, this potential missing link in the literature shows a lack of fundamental understanding of the interface between entrepreneurship and project management, and their similarity. This missing link is therefore the research gap that this research wants to explore. In this study, detailed work will be carried out to understand the interface between entrepreneurship and project management fields of studies to bridge the knowledge gap regarding the elements of project management that have contributed to the success story of an entrepreneur. Data will be generated from interviews with successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England and that data analysed to determine how project management processes are utilised in

entrepreneurial activities to enhance business growth. The research focuses on identifying drivers of business growth, those entrepreneurial activities that can be associated with project management

The current research investigates entrepreneurial activities involved in business growth and attempts to examine whether project management processes are relevant within such context. These activities are uncovered by probing the working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England using the theory of planned behaviour. Successful here is based on the goals and benefits of the project to the economy (De Wit, 1988) and the direct approach utilised to execute the project (Adnan et al., 2013).

The theory of planned behaviour is suggested since the author is considering the working practice and experience of the successful entrepreneur. The researcher is interested in exploring successful entrepreneurs, because they are running growing their businesses and for whom the measure of success is growth (Rose et al., 2006). Also considered in this study is the number of years the business existed, which is important in determining how successful the entrepreneur is. The behavioural theory is appropriate to aid understanding of the entrepreneur and their behaviour. This will also take into consideration their mental processes when they interrelate with other people and the environment in which these mental processes and interaction take place (Mitchell et al., 2002). Entrepreneurs are used as actors in the study because the researcher is investigating how entrepreneurs think (cognitive) and act (behaviour). Detailed information on success will be discussed in the following chapter.

1.8 Research rationale

The drive for this research is to reveal the key drivers of business growth and to expose the similarity that exist in both entrepreneurship and project management. This is achieved by probing the working practices and experiences of the successful

entrepreneurs in the North West of England. The choice of North West of England as the geographical area is for its industrial ranking as a hub for entrepreneurs. Second, with the limitation of time and money; it will be difficult to cover the entire Britain adequately. An initial literature review revealed fragmentation of knowledge between entrepreneurship and project management, which was highlighted in the absence of either project management elements or entrepreneurial activities in the entrepreneurship literature, and vice versa. This is even so when both fields share fundamental goal (Brockling, 2016; Fonrouge et al., 2018; Frederiksen and Davies, 2008; Kuura and Lundin, 2019).

Furthermore, the seemly bifurcation of phrases and terminology, which appears to convey the same output (growth) differs in meaning in both fields (Seidl, 2007). Therefore, it raises a further need to study interconnectivity between entrepreneurship and project management, since both fields have significantly maintained parallelism in the literature (Kuura, et al., 2014). This research will integrate entrepreneurship and project management in the perspective of how project management processes have been applied and its effect towards business growth. By applying a behavioural 'theory of planned behaviour' on these two fields, one can shed light on how this kind of alternative perspectives can be used to further the fields in research and practice. Another rationale for this research is based on the contribution of entrepreneurship and project management to economic development as explained in section 1.1. Exploring therefore, how entrepreneurs could exploit project management processes to pursue entrepreneurial activities could have implications for practice on improving firm's growth and therefore economic development.

1.9   Aim
The aim of the research is to explore literature on entrepreneurial activities (i.e., leadership, planning, innovation, networking, communication) and project management processes (i.e., planning, execution, monitoring and control) to examine how project management processes are being applied by entrepreneurs in

operationalising their activities for creating and growing their business. These activities are uncovered by probing the working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England using the theory of planned behaviour. This interface between the project management and entrepreneurship has not been academically well researched the research aim to address this subject matter. In other and to achieve this; two key questions need to be addressed.

1.10 Research Question

- How have project management processes been applied to entrepreneurial activities to influence business and growth in the North West of England?
- How can the theory of planned behaviour be applied to explain the success of entrepreneurial activities of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England?

1.11 Research Objectives

Accordingly, to achieve the research aim and to answer the above two research questions, the following objectives are established:

- To critically review the literature and theoretical concepts of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activities (leadership, decision making, innovation, to mention but few), project management processes and business growth.
- To explore synergies between entrepreneurial activities and project management processes that support business growth in the North West of England.
- To explore the experiences and practices of successful entrepreneurs from the perspective of project management processes and behavioural intentions.

- To create a framework that explain the inter-connectivity between entrepreneurship and project management in the perspective of entrepreneurial activities and project management processes.

1.12 Significance of study

This research contributes to the understanding of the connection between entrepreneurship and project management literature by using the theory of planned behaviour, and it makes two important contributions. First, the study suggests that the theory of planned behaviour, could be applied to uncover the links between project management and entrepreneurship as suggested by Kuura et al. (2014). This is evident in the fact that entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial activities were using project management processes, which was embodied in the context of the theory of planned behaviour. It was found that the phrases and terminology might differ in context, but actually are used in both fields unaware.

Second, from a practical perspective, understanding business growth through the different perceived factors, including the project management processes covered in this present study, is essential. This study could provide nascent entrepreneurs with knowledge and guidance about the way they could manage and run their businesses in a very successful manner. In addition, the study could provide successful entrepreneurs with additional knowledge about how project management processes support the growth of their business through their working practices.

1.13 The Chapter Structure

Figure 1.1 represents a diagrammatic structure of the chapters covered with contents in this research project titled, the role of project management processes in enhancing entrepreneurship through business growth in the North West of England. The research structure gives a brief synopsis of how the research was conducted starting with the introduction chapter one and to the conclusion chapter six. To achieve the aim of this research successfully, this thesis is divided into six chapters.
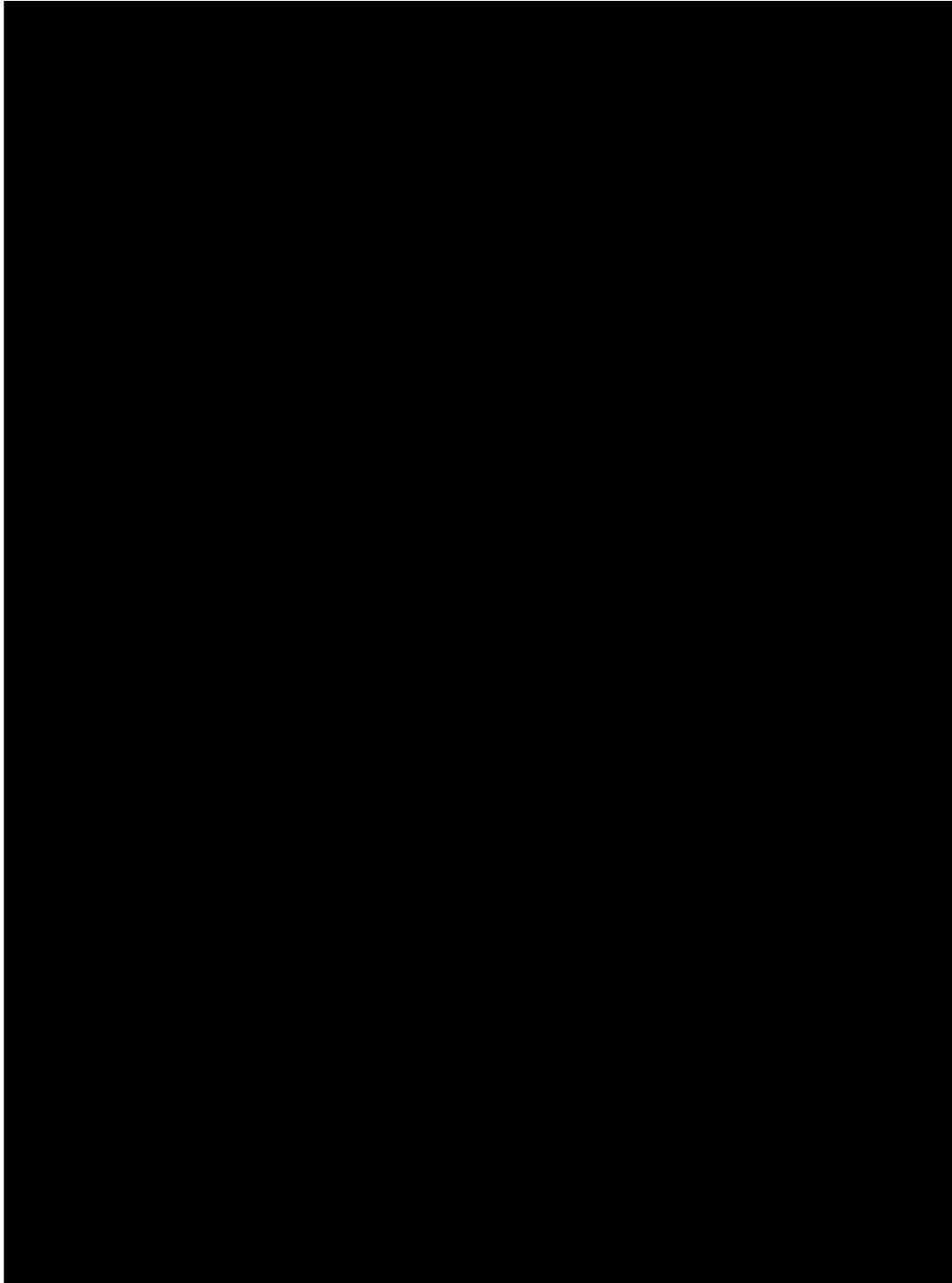
Figure 1.2: The Chapter Structure

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research background, highlighting the gap in the fields of study (entrepreneurship and project management) relating to the scope of the research (North West England). It discusses the rationale in this study,

the research aim and objectives, and the significance of the study. It finally provides the steps taken (structure) of the thesis in a diagram form.

Chapter two: Literature review on entrepreneurship and project management

This chapter presents a comprehensive critical and analytical review of relevant studies on entrepreneurship, project management, and the entrepreneurial activities identified that drives business growth. Furthermore, in the chapter, a discussion of the project management processes was included. The chapter also draws attention to the geographical context (North West of England) in which the study focuses on the micro and macro level of development.

Chapter three: Theoretical framework

This chapter discusses the fulfilment of Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour and establishes what the theory is and why it is relevant to the research. Also, in the chapter, some of the behavioural theories were highlighted, and reasons given for rejection in this study. The theory of planned behaviour employed as a lens through which the reviewed literature and research data are evaluated deductively, and research questions addressed. In addition, the chapter explored the theory of planned behaviour on entrepreneurship and project management reviewed literature, demonstrating evidence of commonalities between the two fields in the form of a table.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the research methodology developed in this present research study and its justification. The chapter also discusses the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the research construct. Applying the inductive approach of thematic analysis, the chapter highlights the emerging themes related to entrepreneurial activities and project management processes in the region of North West of England. Also, the chapter presents an illustration of the research methodology of the chapter in the form of a flowchart.

Chapter five: Research findings and discussion

This chapter provides the empirical findings and presented in line with the methodological description detailed in chapter four and discussion made concerning the previous work identified in the reviewed literature. A development of a framework illustrating the synergies between the entrepreneurial activities and project management processes employing the theory of planned behaviour also was presented.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

This chapter concludes the thesis with a summary of the main findings and conclusion from the entire research processes applied in the study. The chapter also illustrates the contributions of the study, research personal reflection, highlights limitations as well as its implication for practice, policy and future research.

1.14 Summary

In summary, the present study focuses on the synergies between entrepreneurial activities and project management processes. Thus, the research aim to explore entrepreneurial activities (leadership, planning, innovation, networking, communication) to mention few, involved in business growth and to examine whether project management processes (Planning, execution, monitoring, and control) are relevant within such context. These activities are uncovered by probing the working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England using the theory of planned behaviour. The geographical context of the North West region of England was presented in this chapter

By aligning these two fields of study, entrepreneurship and project management, the present study aims to provide a thorough and better understanding of business growth, particularly from project management processes such as planning, execution, monitoring and control and theory of planned behaviour perspectives to study successful entrepreneurs. Such a framework could be applied in other contexts that have similar characteristics or used as a benchmark in less developed countries.

This research will contribute to understanding business growth through different perceived factors, including the project management processes covered in this present study. Thus, it will be beneficial to both developed and developing economies because the knowledge gained in this study can be utilised by both nascent and existing entrepreneurs to achieve growth in business. The findings from this research will offer some important implications in terms of business growth. It will assist the nascent entrepreneurs, policymakers, managers, practitioners, and the public in general to understand entrepreneurial activities and project management processes in a different social context. The research will also enrich both entrepreneurship and project management literature. Lastly, the thesis outline presented showed a summary of the entire research process.

The following chapter critically reviews the literature of the two fields under study entrepreneurship and project management in a systematic way, identifying the research problem and gaps to be addressed, leading to a theoretical framework that guided this thesis.

Chapter 2 Literature review on Entrepreneurship and Project management

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the background to the research, identified the research problem, gaps to be addressed and established the study's research aim, and objectives. The aim of this chapter is to critically review and evaluate the literature on entrepreneurship and project management to enable the understanding of the entrepreneurial activities and project management processes often used by the successful entrepreneurs. The objective of this chapter is to explore these entrepreneurial activities and project management processes and examine how they support business start-up and growth. To achieve this objective, this chapter proceeds by presenting the importance of entrepreneurship and project management to the economy in general and North West of England, in particular. The concept of entrepreneurship and project management and different ways in which both fields are studied are discussed, that helps to understand diverse notions about their definitions.

2.2 Importance of Entrepreneurship and Project Management to the Economy

Globally, entrepreneurship has increasingly played an important role in stimulating economic activities and growth (Stam and Stel, 2009; Urbano and Aparico, 2016). The importance of entrepreneurship to the economy has drawn the attention of many recognised and distinguished researchers, policymakers and politicians over the years (Davidsson et al., 2006; Demirdağ, 2015; Ferreira et al., 2017; Van Stel et al., 2005). In contemporary and non-contemporary economies, entrepreneurship enables the introduction of innovations, by encouraging competition, change, and increasing rivalry (Mrożewski and Kratzer, 2017; Vivarelli, 2013; Wong et al., 2005). This is in agreement with Ribeiro-Soriano (2017), who suggested that entrepreneurial activities such as innovation, create new industries and generate jobs from established industries (Audretsch, 2009; Haltiwanger et al., 2010). Creation of jobs results in reduced unemployment, creation of more products, as well as good

standard of living, thus promoting economic growth (Courvisanos and Mackenzie, 2014; Laukkanen, 2000; Matlay, 2005; Othman et al., 2005; Sergeant and Crawford, 2001).

Again, through competitive advantage and industrial diversity by entrepreneurial business creation, entrepreneurship can affect economic growth (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2004). Small and medium-sized firms operating high-growth businesses provide the majority of new jobs (OECD, 2002). Studies have shown that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and new enterprises (start-ups) are crucial in the innovation process, either adapting existing technologies, or as part of a wider innovation network, collaborating with suppliers and clients (Gallego et al., 2013). Although Acs et al. (2008) provided evidence that suggests entrepreneurship is an essential mechanism for economic development through employment, innovation, and welfare effects, however, it fails to include strategies for entrepreneurship development (Zahra and Ireland, 2000). These strategies for entrepreneurship development centre upon recognition of the socially important role of entrepreneurship, which ensures the socio-economic development of the country (OECD, 2004). The strategy pays considerable attention to facilitating development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and establishing an environment for starting up new businesses (Naumann, 2016).

The impact of entrepreneurship on economies is seen in the contribution of enterprises and the SMEs to the generation of employment and GDP or value added (Blackburn and Schaper, 2012; Karadag, 2016). The association of entrepreneurship to SMEs is aimed at bringing out the significance of entrepreneurship. SMEs have easily identifiable characters as to the number of employees and annual turnover and as a result, most researchers equate entrepreneurship with SMEs. Many small businesses are not regarded as entrepreneurial in the sense of being innovative and stimulating change in the economy and society compared to some large organisations (Gray, 2002). Therefore, it is important not to simply suggest that entrepreneurship is a function of organisational size.

On the other hand, the project management literature suggested that project management was not initially a priority for industrial operators (Kerzner, 2017). However, due to unfavourable economic conditions like the recessions of the late 1970s and early 1990s, the housing crisis, which began in 2008, the European economic downturn in 2013 and 2014, and the global economic decline since 2015, it has become a culture for the operators to embrace project management (Kerzner, 2017). This claim is in line with that of Vrchota and Řehoř, (2016) who opined how project management has become widely recognised, embraced, and its importance greatly expanded. Since the early work on scheduling in the 1960s, project management has continuously developed, with significant contributions and advances being made each year (Harrison and Lock, 2017). Project management contributes to the GDP estimates of a nation's economy (PMI, 2017). A recent analysis by the Anderson Economic Group for the Project Management Institute (2017) revealed that the project management labour force is expected to increase by 33 percent in 11 countries across Asia, Europe, and America by 2027 (PMI, 2017).

Again, the study suggested that the project management- oriented industry is estimated to contribute up to £4.3 trillion to the GDP of these countries between 2017 and 2027. Within the UK, during the same period, the project management profession is expected to generate 168,196 new jobs (PMI, 2017). From the foregoing in both entrepreneurship and project management literature, it suggests that both disciplines are prime movers of the world economy, and it is pertinent now to narrow down the above discussion from generic importance to the identified geographical region of interest in this work. This will highlight how significantly entrepreneurship and project management has impacted on the economy of the North West of England.

2.3   Importance of entrepreneurship and project management on the economy of the North West

The economy of the North West is the third largest in the United Kingdom, with 47,465 businesses and a business birth rate of 16% (Rhodes, 2018). The North West

region is highlighted as an attractive destination for entrepreneurs; those who form the foundation of economic growth in the region, and a large percentage of fast-growing companies choose to locate in the region (Allport, 2016), thus, creating vital jobs and wealth across the region. Presently, over half a million privately owned businesses headquartered in the North West, extending a diverse range of sectors (Begum, 2017). More so, in the North West, many centres of excellence are recognised increasingly, including the city regions such as Liverpool, Manchester, Cumbria, and Cheshire (Eurostart, 2018). These city regions seized the opportunity to promote their strengths and enhance productivity with growth strategies that align skills, local transport, and economic renewal.

A new study by Hampshire Trust Bank and the CEBR suggests SME's economic contribution in Greater Manchester alone is set to rise from £13bn in 2016 to £17bn by 2025. There are many technology and software businesses because of the strong innovation and university links in the North West of England (Eurosart, 2018). According to the House of Commons library Report on "Regional and country economic indicators" (2019), the North West's total output Gross Value Added (GVA) for 2017 in £ billions was 174 and per head was £23, 918, While in 2016 output GVA was £165 billion (Thornton, 2018). The mid-market in particular is having a significant impact on growth in the Entrepreneurship and project management broadens the economy of the North West, promotes foreign investment, infuses new technology and increases the standard of living (Herrera-Echeverri et al., 2014). In view of the significant contribution of entrepreneurship and project management to the economy, almost all the cities in the region, Liverpool, Manchester, Cumbria, Cheshire, including the rural and coastal areas have a substantial amount of their resources to enhancing entrepreneurial activity (Sanyang and Huang, 2010) as well as globally.

 According to Liverpool Business News research in 2019, on business growth the region's small and medium-sized businesses are set for growth in the North West (McDonough, 2019). For example, in manufacturing, there is an advanced manufacturing and chemical production in the region, which is the largest

concentration in the United Kingdom. In the exception of London, Manchester is the next largest home for media hub (Regional Innovation report 2014). In relation to international trade, the port of Liverpool has been a transportation hub, both for imports and for exports of goods/products.

In that respect, the places mentioned above have seized the opportunity to promote their strengths through the implementation of project management processes and drive up productivity with growth strategies that align skills, local transport, and economic renewal. Also in the North West of England, according to Kalantaridis and Bika (2011), the rural and coastal areas hold unique features both in environmental and economical, specifically in the aspect of tourism and agriculture as an asset. Therefore, these features made it possible for trading in the North West as such labelled an 'industrial ranking as a hub for entrepreneurs.

In addition, another benefit of entrepreneurship and project management in the North West economy is the Mersey Gateway Bridge in Cheshire. The Mersey Gateway bridge project was developed to provide much-needed new transport network link between the towns of Runcorn and Widnes to relieve the congested and ageing Silver Jubilee Bridge (Mrtpi et al., 2010). Studies show that economic benefits Mersey Gateway not only for the people but also for businesses in Halton and for the surrounding area such as Liverpool city region, Cheshire, and across the North West are almost four times greater than its cost. The economic benefits are itemised below;

- 470 permanent full-time equivalent jobs on site during the construction phase,
- 4,640 permanent new jobs because of the operation of the Mersey Gateway, regeneration activity and inward investment, and
- £61.9 million a year in Gross Value Added from the new jobs by 2030.

In the aspect of transportation, there is major transport improvements such as,

- Reductions in some journey times of up to 10 minutes in peak periods,
- Increase in journey time reliability and less congestion,

- 80% less traffic using the Silver Jubilee Bridge, freeing it up for use as a local bridge, and

- A major strategic new transport route linking the Liverpool city-region and the North West to the rest of the country (Parr, 2008)

2.4   The Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has emerged over decade and arguably, the most potent economic force the world has ever experienced (Kuratko, 2005). As a result, entrepreneurship has been defined in many ways as a dynamic process of vision, change, and creation. According to them, entrepreneurship requires an application of energy and passion towards the creation and implementation of new ideas and creative solutions. In another ways, Entrepreneurship, according to (Szaban and Skrzek-lubasińska, 2018), is a multidimensional term that is extremely difficult to define. Most study on entrepreneurship presents different definitions that adequately exemplified the heterogeneity of the entrepreneurship field (ibid). That is a substantial misperception in the way individuals use the term 'entrepreneurship' (Chmielecki and Sułkowski, 2016). This has been compounded using several terms for entrepreneurship such as 'self-employed', 'small business owner/manager', which are often used interchangeably. Hence, there is no set way of defining entrepreneurship. According to Chandra (2018), entrepreneurship is a fast-growing and dynamic field of research and definitions are dependent on the contexts in which they were given. Since many entrepreneurship researchers base their definitions on the context, activities, and views being discussed, the researcher has identified that there are pluralities associated with the existing definitions, due to the diversity of views presented in the literature.

The definition of entrepreneurship that borders on entrepreneurial activities includes the risk taking (MacKo and Tyszka, 2009; Westhead et al., 2011), decision making (González-cruz and Devece, 2018; Shepherd and Patzelt, 2017), Innovation (Gonza and Vendrell-herrero, 2012), planning (Honig and Hopp, 2016), Networking (Gurrieri, 2013; Weigl., 2008) to mention few. These definitions seem to suggest that

entrepreneurs are perceived as more entrepreneurial activity prone than other people. However, the claim cannot be fully substantiated, for example a study with regard to risk taking in entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs show no differences (Richard, 1989). Whereas, Stewart Jr et al. (1999) confirmed the hypothesis that entrepreneurs have a more positive attitude toward risk than non-entrepreneurs. Therefore, the divergent of opinions cannot lead the researcher to ascertain whether entrepreneurs are more risk prone than other people, which highlights the inconclusiveness of this definition.

Furthermore, other scholars' have visualise growth as a consequence of entrepreneurs' activities such as human capital (Davidsson and Honig, 2003; Rauch et al., 2005; Unger et al., 2011), social capital (Anderson and Jack, 2002) and leadership (Esmer and Faruk, 2017). Researchers have argued that human capital plays an active role due to constantly increasing knowledge- intensive activities in most work environments (e.g., Bosma et al., 2004; Honig, 2001; Sonnentag and Frese, 2002). It is believed that the human capital relates to entrepreneur success (Unger et al., 2011) but the magnitude of this relationship is not completely known (Marvel et al., 2016). There are discrepancies in the way most authors view this relationship, while some authors see the relationship between human capital and entrepreneur success as overemphasised (Baum and Silverman, 2004), others argue that human capital constitutes one of the core factors in the entrepreneurial process (Haber and Reichel, 2007). Thus, there is disagreement about the relative importance of human capital in entrepreneurship research. Thus, it remains unclear what kind of human capital should be related to success and under what circumstance (Keith and Frese, 2005).

Accordingly, from this broad range of activities, some scholars define entrepreneurship as a process (Moroz and Hindle, 2011), as an act (George and Zahra, 2002) or as the pursuit of opportunity (Stevenson, 1983, cited in Gartner and Baker, 2010). This definition depicts entrepreneurship based on what entrepreneurs do and how they do it to create business opportunities and create wealth. Others

view entrepreneurship as a set of behaviours (Hisbert and Link, 1988, cited in Herron and Robinson, Jr., 1993), innovation (Schumpeter, 1934/1912, cited in Johansson and Malm, 2017), and opportunity-driven process (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000).

With regards to Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) definition which emphasises the opportunity-driven process that is business initiation with the notion of recognising an opportunity and making a deliberate choice to become an entrepreneur and establish a business. This definition does not imply only opportunity-driven but might also be necessity- driven. While an opportunity-driven situation occurs when the entrepreneur is 'pulled' into entrepreneurship out of choice, necessity-driven is when the entrepreneur is 'pushed' into it because other options for work are absent or unsatisfactory (Aidis et al, 2006; Bosma and Harding, 2007; Williams, 2008). However, whether the process is necessity or opportunity driven, the activities involved are almost the same as both take advantage of a unique market situation regarding being alert to new or existing opportunities.

Having said that, entrepreneurship researchers base their definitions on the context and views, with many inconsistencies among the existing definitions, there have been no one definition that feed into the narrative of the present study. Nevertheless, entrepreneurship definition according to Gries and Naudé, (2011) sets relevancy in this study and centres on the context of business growth. Entrepreneurship by their definition includes gathering of resources, process, and state of being through and in which individuals utilise positive opportunities in the market by establishing and growing new business firms. This definition combines economic, sociological and psychological fields of study referred to as 'Approaches to Entrepreneurship'. Thus, it shows that entrepreneurship is too multifaceted to be explained through a single set of factors (Naudé, 2013).

Despite the extensive academic research dedicated to defining entrepreneurship, the researcher has observed that differences in these definitions lie in those

approaches to entrepreneurship. With respect to the Gries and Naude (2011) definition of entrepreneurship, this study considers entrepreneurship as a purposeful activity to initiate, maintain and/or develop a profit-oriented business in which 'business growth' is a critical element of entrepreneurship also referred to as business success. Hence, entrepreneurship is a creative human process, one that mobilises resources from one level of productivity to another superior one (growth) through individual's initiative of taking on responsibilities and the mental ability of carrying out the task from idea to implementation (Toma et al., 2014).

This study centres on probing the working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England, which situates on entrepreneurs' behaviour. Therefore, it is pertinent to understand which of the behavioural theories that fit into the narrative of understanding the working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs. By doing this, the researcher can make a case for a gap in the literature by exploring how successful entrepreneurs use their cognitive abilities to manage business activities. From the above extant entrepreneurship, literature on the concept of entrepreneurship revealed three cardinal field of studies in which entrepreneurship has been studied for better understanding of the context of entrepreneurship. The understanding of these three cardinal ways of studying entrepreneurship will reveal clearly the divergence that exists in entrepreneurship. These cardinal field of studies include (1) economics (Schumpeter, 1934), (2) psychology (McClelland, 1961) and (3) sociology (Weber, 1904) (cited in Thornton, 1999). The next section discusses the entrepreneurship field of studies highlighting on the three ways used in studying entrepreneurship.

2.5   Entrepreneurship field of studies

This section will explore the three ways in which entrepreneurship definition of entrepreneurship. As earlier mention, the field of entrepreneurship have been mainly categorise into three different approaches, contributing to developing the field of entrepreneurship (Busenitz et al., 2003; Swedberg, 2000; Thornton, 1999). According to Shane, entrepreneurship is assimilated from an interdisciplinary

perspective: "The domains of economics, psychology and sociology and all seem to provide insight into a piece of the puzzle, but none seem to explain the phenomenon completely" (Shane, 2003: 10).

2.5.1 Economics Approach to Entrepreneurship

Since the mid-1700s, several aspects of entrepreneurship such as risk bearing, market coordination, innovation, financial resources, decision-making and its implication have been studied through the lens of economics (Casson et al., 2006). In the mid-eighteenth century, economists to varying degrees (Carlsson, Braunerhjelm, McKelvey, Olofsson, Persson and Ylinenp????, 2013) have studied entrepreneurship. Cantillon, who coined the word 'entrepreneurship' in 1755, perceived the entrepreneur as an economic performer whose role is to take risk regardless of uncertainty by hiring resources (land and labour) at specified prices, for the purpose of producing goods for trade to consumers at uncertain prices (Cantillon, 1755, cited in Cornelius et al., 2006). Initially, no classical economist reflects on entrepreneurship, as the entrepreneur at the time was merely a "businessperson" (Ricketts, 2006: 38). Thus, there was "no incorporation of a systematic treatment of entrepreneurship in classical economics" (Ricketts, 2006: 38).

The classical economists maintained combining the role of the capitalist (providing financial resources) with that of the entrepreneur (innovating, risk taking and decision-making) (Ricketts, 2006) perceiving entrepreneur as a capitalist providing a financial resources (Smith 1776, cited in Galindo and Méndez, 2014; Ricketts, 2006). However, Smith did not distinguish between the capitalist as the provider of the 'stock' of the enterprise and the entrepreneur as the sole decision maker (Blaug, 2000). The earlier economic scholars did not recognise that investing capital involved risk taking but saw it as a part of the broader role of the capitalist, rather than differentiating it (Blaug, 2000; Ricketts, 2006). Hence, the present day understanding of the role of an entrepreneur often did not conform to the early usage of the term.

Uncertainty and risk have a relatively short account in the economic theory, although there is progress in the literature about these concepts. The economic activity involves risk, and the changing word cause uncertainty to become an everyday reality. In 1921, Knight, who establishes a distinction between them, suggested the idea that the risk and uncertainty can be relevant for the economic analysis. Uncertainty is a feature of economic life, and risk implies quantification for measuring so that such tools can be used to mitigate its effects (Motocu and Crisan, 2009). The latter is particularly important in making decisions, because the processes and phenomena that influence the situation of a company or a business context may be in different circumstances of uncertainty or risk, which differently affects the outcome of the system operation.

Therefore, it is necessary to recognise uncertainty and risk along with the bases that distinguish them, so that the attitude towards them can be further nuanced (Prunea, 2003). Risk is defined according to classical theory as the probability of occurrence of a certain deviation on the course of achieving a goal (Watada et al., 2011) The interacting factors determine this deviation, and the risk is the probability that a failure or disharmony may occur and prevent the system from moving on (Toma et al., 2012).

In contrast, uncertainty means a set of conditions and factors, unidentified and unpredictable in terms of occurrence and evolution; even if they are identified and predicted they are highly unstable (Di Gregorio, 2005). From this perspective, in evaluating these unpredictable risks, there is a difference in the evaluation by entrepreneurs based on their different knowledge and experiences (Loasby, 2011). Another important aspect of entrepreneurship as studied in economics is the equilibrium market (Schumpeter (1883-1950) cited in Boutillier and Uzunidis, 2014). It was argued that the interruption occasioned due to the dynamic nature of entrepreneurial activities resulted in 'creative destruction' in the market equilibrium (cited in Mathews, 2006). Equilibrium market is the state in which all market participants are, in effect, fully and correctly aware of what all others are doing.

Schumpeter argued that entrepreneur competitive behaviour brings about a 'gale of creative destruction' (Schumpeter, 1942, cited in Mathews, 2006). Thus, the entrepreneur is the instrument to economic development and agent of change(Boutillier and Uzunidis, 2014).

From this point of view, entrepreneurship is not merely about identifying opportunities, but it requires both effort and skill, and so a high degree of motivation is required (Mathews, 2006). This suggests that economic change emerges from the intellect, knowledge, and abilities of the entrepreneur. In contrast, the creative destruction of the existing equilibrium claimed by Schumpeter and the creation of a new equilibrium in an industry experiencing disequilibrium could happen simultaneously (Kirzner, 1997), thereby nullifying this disequilibrium as envisaged by Schumpeter. For example, lack of information and technology by some entrepreneurs could cause market failure, which then gives the opportunity for other more skilful and knowledgeable entrepreneurs to make more profit by taking over the less efficient competitors.

Finally, the economic lens provides exciting insights into how economists studied entrepreneurship. The number of studies in this area is quite significant and it reflects the increasing attention paid to entrepreneurship by economists. It can be argued that entrepreneurship policies are evolving as one of the essential instruments for economic growth (Audretsch et al., 2006). However, the most common critique of the economic approach is that it does not explain why certain people become entrepreneurs (Xie, 2014) while others end up as salary earners. The advancement of economic approach in entrepreneurship presented here provided several main explanations: organiser of production, ability to spot an opportunity, financial resources, innovator and agent of change, risk-taking and creativity. The above factors highlighted have significantly impacted entrepreneurial growth.

2.5.2 Psychological Approach to Entrepreneurship

The psychological approach to entrepreneurship focuses on discovering the personality traits that distinguish entrepreneurs from others in society. According to this approach, the pecuniary actions of individuals are primarily determined by their personality; some people are merely better at achieving entrepreneurial success than others, and these traits are internally originated. Similarly, the focus on the entrepreneur's trait and character have also been corroborated by economists such as Knight (1921), Schumpeter (1934) and the leading researcher, a psychologist, (McClelland, 1961, cited in Simpeh, 2011). These economists' ideas are anchored on the fundamental perspectives towards gaining, a better knowledge of entrepreneurship, particularly, by identifying and examining personality characteristics of the entrepreneur (cited in Borghans et al., 2008; Kerr et al., 2018). It is of the view that the likelihood of an individual to exploit opportunities is influenced by psychological characteristics leading to different decisions on opportunities by individuals with the same information and skills (Shane, 2003).

The psychological approach to entrepreneurship has been used to explore the connection between the business and the entrepreneur's personality (Baum et al., 2014; Rauch and Frese, 2007b). The analysis of full set of personality predictors for both start-up activities as well as success in the context of entrepreneurial behaviour, suggests that the traits significantly correlated with entrepreneurial behaviour (business creation and success). According to Ryan and Deci (2000), individuals that are primarily motivated by an integral process will only engage in activities which they consider exciting. These individuals are often diverted from undertakings that are relevant to goal attainment to pursue tasks, that are naturally more gratifying (Scholl, 2004). As a result, these individuals will be strongly motivated to work hard and efficiently.

In addition, the psychological approach reveals the personality traits of the entrepreneur, which involves attitudes to opportunity, resilience, assertiveness, receptiveness to new ideas and comfort with power (Deakins and Freel, 2003).

Personality traits of an entrepreneur are a potential means to explain entrepreneurial growth status (Yan, 2010). Some authors have attributed entrepreneurship success to personal qualities, management skills, and opportunity recognition skills (Ramirez-Portilla, 2013; Sambasivan et al., 2009). Overall, the psychological approach to entrepreneurship builds on the presumption that an entrepreneur has a personality compared with a non-entrepreneur (Philipsen, 1998).

However, the understanding of how people develop entrepreneurial behaviours is believed to be more useful than searching for traits that make up the entrepreneurial personality (Baum et al., 2007). This is based on the premise that any individual could absorb entrepreneurial behaviour provided they have the required beliefs, willpower, skills, and knowledge to follow the entrepreneurship activities (Kirkley, 2016). Such an individual is passionate and believes that they have a solution to an unforeseen need or problem and are eager to expend considerable effort to satisfy demands. Similarly, the activities are led by intentions, and the intentions driven by the attitudes towards the behaviour, which are rooted in cognitive structures, that are intense with belief (Krueger, 2007).

 It can be concluded that most researchers could not pin down clear-cut differences between entrepreneurs and other people based on personality trait (Baron, 1997; Bjerke and Hultman, 2004; Chavez, 2016). This suggests an apparent lack of conclusive evidence in the literature to support that entrepreneurs are different or are special people based on the trait perspective. The contradiction is that most entrepreneurs do not possess all of the entrepreneurial characteristics (Frese and Gielnik, 2014). It is impossible to differentiate entrepreneurs from managers or the general population based on the entrepreneur's supposed possession of such traits. Besides, it is unknown which personality trait is responsible for business creation and success (Kerr et al., 2018).

This is consistent with the view presented by Swedberg (2000), which opined that there had not been any agreement amongst the psychology researchers about which

traits make up the entrepreneurial personality. These contradictions are further highlighted because the trait approach lacks clear definitions of entrepreneurial traits. Consequently, Rae (2007) had stressed the importance of recognising an alternative approach to the entrepreneur that would incorporate the dynamic and flexible nature of human agency, individual actions, and consequences through entrepreneurial learning. Nevertheless, the psychological approach of entrepreneurship until date has had a significant role in enabling researchers to understand entrepreneurship, and it has produced research about the activity like economics and sociology (Swedberg, 2000).

2.5.3   Sociological Approach to Entrepreneurship

Early studies of entrepreneurship in the sociology field (Weber, 1904) explained the concept both from the human and societal perspective and its effect on the economic organisation of the society (Weber, 1904 cited in Swedberg, 2000). It takes into account the beliefs and social values, among other factors, to obtain the best understanding of the role of entrepreneurship in economic growth (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2008; Baumol and Strom, 2007). However, recent work has questioned the perspective of values as embedded within the process of socialisation of any society (Frønes, 2016) and the environmental influence on entrepreneurship (Edewor et al., 2014), comprising infrastructure, cultural, political, economic and social, which facilitates business development in the society.

These factors influence an individual's willingness and ability to embark on business development and exploring these factors is best done through the sociological approach of entrepreneurship (Gnyawali and Fogel, 1994). The sociological approach analyses the social context, process, and effects of entrepreneurial activity, and within this perspective, 'entrepreneurship'. It can be construed either as purposive action leading to the creation of new formal organisations, or more broadly as an effort to introduce durable innovations in routines, technologies, organisational forms, or as social institutions (Ruef and Lounsbury, 2007).

In addition, sociological scholars have approached entrepreneurship from two dimensions: supply and demand (Thornton, 1999). Supply addresses the activities of entrepreneurs to meet the demand for innovation (Romanelli and Schoonhoven, 2001; Shapero and Sokol, 1982) while demand deals with the roles of the environmental context (Romanelli, 1989) societal signal (Alvarez and Barney, 2007). Understanding entrepreneurship, as a social phenomenon, allows drawing on the well-developed and more general works of literature on social capital and social networks, which identify entrepreneurial activity is a vital source of innovation, employment and economic growth (Carree and Thurik, 2003; Cross and Parker, 2004; Van Stel et al., 2005; Wennekers and Thurik, 1999).

The development of qualitative methodologies extensively within sociology provides a sound basis for the identified requirement for entrepreneurship scholars to conduct research in small businesses (Curran, 1986). It can be argued that sociological approaches to entrepreneurship are closer to practical reality than that of mainstream economics (Swedberg, 2000). The reason being it examines the social context, process, and determination of entrepreneurial activity (Ruef and Lounsbury, 2007). It tends to differ from related work in psychology and economics by considering the socio-cultural context within which an entrepreneur operates (Swedberg, 2000).

In summary, the three approaches to entrepreneurship, economics, psychology and sociology approaches highlighted the diversity and different context of entrepreneurship. The economic approach focuses on how the economic system works and therefore characterise entrepreneurship by particular functions it plays such as risk taking, innovation, decision making financial resources to enhance the operations of the overall systems. The psychological approach expounds how entrepreneurship relates to personal characteristics and individual cognitive processes within varying situational contexts. In addition, psychological approach analyses entrepreneurship at the level of individuals, it is believed that entrepreneurs have values, needs and attitude that are unique to them. On the other hand, the

sociological approach analyses the social and organisational embeddedness of entrepreneurial behaviour in the context of process, and effects of entrepreneurial activity, and within the perspective of entrepreneurship (Peneder, 2009).

Based on the above, the researcher can conclude that these three approaches to entrepreneurship are relevant in the understanding of the diversity that exists in entrepreneurship study and that no approach can fully describe this diverse field. Having discussed the three cardinal fields of studies that gave entrepreneurship identity, it is instructively in line with this study to present entrepreneurial success. Drawing from the aim of this study, it is important to present what constitute entrepreneurial success and various criteria for success in entrepreneurship for the benefit of the reader.

2.6   Entrepreneurial Success

Entrepreneurial success can be viewed in different ways. The term 'successful entrepreneur' connotes different things to different people and is very context-dependent (Angel et al., 2018). The focus of most researchers such as (Achtenhagen et al., 2010; Gupta et al., 2013; Wach et al., 2016) is to ascertain common criteria, which entrepreneurs employ to define success. The prominent criteria are personal satisfaction and wealth creation (Fisher et al., 2014; Reijonen and Komppula, 2007; Wach et al., 2016). In contrast, Angel et al. (2018) refutes the two entrepreneurial success criteria because it fails to notice acknowledge the likelihood of entrepreneurs assigning different meanings or perceptions to success. For instance, Kirkwood (2016) suggested that the success criterion 'personal satisfaction' could mean satisfaction with job well done or creative and intellectual satisfaction or satisfaction from achieving goals. Based on Kirkwood's proposal, it indicates that entrepreneurs may assign different meanings to this criterion. (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011; Sieger et al., 2016) collaborated this position and opined that there is a different meaning to personal satisfaction, which can be achieved in different ways (e.g., identifying with and supporting a community or even by realising a social mission).

Previous research has established two categories of entrepreneurial success, which includes a firm's expansion, (Achtenhagen et al., 2010; Mateev, and Anastasov, 2010), business financial structure and productivity (Mateev and Anastasov, 2010). In contrast, Achtenhagen et al. (2010) entrepreneurial success focuses on a firm's growth in sales, with an increase in employees or profit. However, for Gupta et al. (2013) success is about value addition, revenue generation, and business expansion regarding the volume of the business. The success of a business venture can also be measured in the form of qualitative features like quality of a product, goodwill of the customers and market position (Kruger, 2004). However, there is an argument regarding these different ways of defining entrepreneurial success where (Harada, 2002) posit that some entrepreneurs would prefer to remain in the business despite facing difficulties and loss due to high determination characteristics. These are rather dated references.

The success of any business is dependent on the entrepreneur's goals for the business (Ayala and Manzano, 2014). Small firms can be successful if they meet the purposes of the owners (Davidsson, 2000). In the case of this study, as mentioned earlier in the previous chapter one, the researcher's interest is in exploring successful entrepreneurs, individuals that are running, growing their businesses and for whom the measure of success is growth. Also considered is this study is the number of years the business existed, which is important in determining how successful the entrepreneur is. It is believed that entrepreneur is successful if their business has been in operation for up to three years. The notion is supported by (Vesper, 1990), who revealed that only 10% of businesses survive after three years of service. Similarly, in a study conducted by Zinger and LeBrasseur (2003) on small enterprise, revealed business survival after three years in operation. Emphasising on the term 'survive' Van Praag (2003) argued that the longer a business can survive and prevent involuntary exit, the more successful it has been.

Similarly, Mata and Portugal (1994) and van Praag, (2005) also claimed that approximately one-half of new businesses close within the first 3 years following start-up. Overall, a business exist from the market can echo very different business outcomes from simple failure to being successful (Weterings and Marsili, 2015). Conversely, vast majority of cases where start-ups exit the market indeed signifies absence of short-term success (Coad et al., 2014). In that respect, the underlying premise is what positively drives entrepreneurial activity should also positively drive entrepreneurial success (Ebert et al., 2019). The clarification presented above about entrepreneurial success and success criteria have paid to the ambiguity that exist in the term 'successful entrepreneur. The following section provides an understanding of project management concept for better understanding of the topic of this study, view of highlighting the processes adopted in study project management.

2.7 The Concept of Project Management

The belief held until recently is that projects and project management are assumed to be relatively homogeneous (Bredillet, 2010a). However, there is an increasing awareness that projects are different, and their relative success or failure uniquely assessed (Crawford et al., 2005, 2006; Turner and Müller, 2006). A project is a temporary organisation to which resources are assigned to deliver beneficial change" (Turner et al., 2010:14) and development in organisations (Lundin and Söderholm, 1995). Also, the Project Management Institute (2013) defines a project as a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service, or outcome (PMI, 2013b). Even where a project has repetitious elements, it is still unique because it does have a different owner, facilities, and design location. Thus, no two projects are the same.

On the other hand, project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements (Kerzner, 2017). Project management has not been subjected to much academic study due to its practice-driven nature and little dependence on research (Besner, 2006, 2008; Blomquist et al., 2012; Martinsuo and Vuorinen, 2016). The origin, history, and

evolution of project management, as well as its academic background, foundations, and underlying theory have been the subject of debate (Kwak and Anbari, 2009). For some Project management began as a technical practice-driven field (Blomquist et al., 2012; Briggs, 2012), which it still is, and both the practice and academic sides appear to be well linked (Besner and Hobbs, 2008).

Over the past 60 years of the discipline's history, the relationship between practice and theory has not always been converging. For example, (Lundin, 2011) argued that more than 20 years earlier, the research work in the project management field had been scattered and divergent: almost entirely practice-oriented on the one hand or purely theoretical and abstract on the other. The divergence between practice and theory has robbed the field need literatures for more advancement of the field of study. From the early 1950s, attempts have been made to define project management either from the practitioner's or from an academic viewpoint. These two viewpoints were articulated in most of the project management definitions in the literature (Bredillet, 2004a, 2004b).

Accordingly, there has been a debate on whether project management is a science or an art (Briggs, 2012). Project management encompasses multidisciplinary skills, involving the practice of abilities in a wide variety of technical (hard) and non-technical (soft) areas. Some scholars view project management as a science (Bliss 2006; Clements and Gido, 2012; Fraser, 2011) while others consider it as an art (Belzer, 2001; Klein, 2006; Nellenbach, 1999). However, another group of scholars, consider project management is best explained as both an art and a science (Briggs, 2012; Larson and Gray, 2011; Lee, 2019; Meredith and Mantel, 2012). These two dimensions of project management are known as the hard (science) and soft (art) skills of project management. Thus, project management is not a one-dimensional construct (Briggs, 2012; Hendarman and Cantner, 2018). The terms *hard* and *soft* represent opposite ends of a continuum rather than disconnected categories (Gustavsson and Hallin, 2014). Thus, provides insight into project management and its definition as a field.

From an organisational point of view, project management is defined as "the process of controlling the achievement of the project objectives" (Munns and Bjeirmi, 1996: 81; Mohammadjafari et al., 2011). This reiterates the project manager's application of tools and techniques to effect project success (see for example (Kerzner, 2013). Here project management is identified as a science (hard skill). For the Project Management Institute (2012), project management is described as the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques (planning, monitoring, and execution) to project requirement (PMI, 2012). The PMI definition comprises of both science and art.

This definition comprises of interpersonal skills as a single and most significant quality for reaching management levels, creating a temporary social system within a larger organisational environment (Briggs, 2012), and interpersonal relationships between the project members (Durão et al., 2017; Weber et al., 2011). These inter-personal skills in project management include traits such as leadership, communication, negotiation, risk management, problem solving, and decision-making (Marando, 2012). It is also suggested that project management could be described as an art and science of converting vision into reality (Turner, 1996). Turner's definition seems to open a new wave of definition since it combines both science and art. At this point, it is important to further probe the way project management is studied as compared entrepreneurship.

There has been a debate on whether project management is a science or an art (Briggs, 2012). Some scholars view project management as a science (Bliss, 2006; Clements and Gido, 2012; Fraser, 2011) while others consider it as an art (Belzer, 2001; Klein, 2006; Nellenbach, 1999). However, another group of scholars, consider project management is best explained as both an art and a science (Briggs, 2012; Larson and Gray, 2011; Meredith and Mantel, 2012). These two dimensions of project management are known as the hard (science) and soft (art) skills of project management. Thus, project management is not a one-dimensional construct (Briggs, 2012; Hendarman and Cantner, 2018). The terms *hard* and *soft* represent opposite

ends of a continuum rather than disconnected categories (Gustavsson and Hallin, 2014). They provide insight into project management and aid in defining the field. The two dimensions are examined in this study and are embedded in the various definitions of project management.

2.7.1 Project Management as a Science (hard skill)

The science of project management focuses on its technical aspects, such as processes, tools, and techniques (Belzer, 2001). It involves planning, execution, scheduling and controlling of project activities to achieve performance, cost, and time objectives for a given scope of work, while using resources efficiently and effectively (Clements and Gido, 2012). Similarly, (Azim et al., 2010: 392) commonly refer to hard skills in a project management context as "processes, procedures, tools, and techniques." Marando (2012) refers to hard skills in project management as a tangible deliverable. Deliverables include a work breakdown structure (WBS), project schedule, critical path diagram; earned value reports, project budgets, and dashboards, to mention a few. These skills are more technical in nature and often incorporate the use of tools like project scheduling.

Scheduling is very important and strategic for the project manager (Fraser, 2011). It helps the project team and all stakeholders to know what needs to be done and by which resources at a specific point in time (ibid). Similarly, Demeulemeester and Herroelen (2002), scheduling involves laying out the actual activities of the project in the time order in which they have to be performed. At this point, the real resources needed at each stage in the project are calculated, along with the expected completion time of each of the activities. The project manager's role is to implement these technical aspects of project management, along with the team members, to achieve project objectives (Marando, 2012). It is evident from Kerzner's (2006) observation that people-related issues play a crucial role in project performance, underlining the importance of a project management and leadership roles. Further, it is argued that leadership roles in project management setting and its

responsibilities toward a project team and stakeholders influence the project outcomes and performance (Anantatmula, 2010).

For these hard elements of project management to be effectual, the organisation needs to employ an effective project manager who can implement these skills accurately and achieve high performance (Munns and Bjeirmi, 1996). The hard skills of project management apply a strong discipline to assessing scope and requirements in advance, and they are portrayed under five main components: initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and control, and finally closure (Kerzner, 2013). These are referred to as *processes* in this study. This study focuses on the three most relevant to the purpose of this research. These are *planning, execution, monitoring, and control*. Note: monitoring and control is seen as one process in project management because they are closely associated.

2.7.2 Project Management as an Art (soft skill)

Söderlund and Maylor (2012), designate soft skills, the second and opposing dimension of project management, as the management of interpersonal relationships allowing the relevant individuals involved in the project to work together, while Meredith and Mantel (2012) perceives it as the behavioural approach to project management. Project management as an art, according to Larson and Gray (2011), is often inconsistent and contradictory to the orderly world of project planning. It centres on strong interpersonal skills as a single and most significant quality for reaching management levels, creating a temporary social system within a larger organisational environment (Briggs, 2012), and interpersonal relationships between the project members (Durão et al., 2017; Weber et al., 2011). These inter-personal skills in project management include traits such as leadership, communication, negotiation, expectation management, problem solving, and decision-making (Marando, 2012).

In this respect, it is becoming more evident that success in the project management function is unattainable with technical skill set only (Gillard, 2009). There is growing

evidence that soft skills in a project are more important than hard skills (Belzer, 2001: Klein, 2006). It is believed that project management is more art than science, and a clear understanding and useful application of soft skills enhances the success of the project (Belzer, 2001). This is reflected in the ability of the leader in project management to effectively communicate the work within the organisation's culture, motivate the team, manage stakeholder expectations, understand business objectives, solve problems effectively, and make clear and knowledgeable decisions (ibid).

Posner (1987) argued that the fundamental issues confronting project management leadership relate to the management of people, not to the technical challenges. This issue stems from the multi-dimensional environment in which the project team functions daily (Gillard, 2009). In line with this claim, Smith, (2001) opined that in managing a project, it is impossible for the project manager to do so without the project team. He suggested two reasons for employing project teams in a work environment that is complex. First, every project is unique, and second, conditions for team selection and motivation are often not that simple rather far from ideal (Smith, 2001). In a typical organisational structure issues presents in team selection, which often in some cases the project manager may not have the disposition to select the project team. Exacerbating situation, a few of the team are engaged in more than one project.

In addition to the internal environment, the project manager must deal with external organisations including varied groups and stakeholders having a special interest or conflicting interest with respect to the project at hand (Gillard, 2005). This complex environment presents a communication paradigm unparalleled by any other management position. It is believed that the absence of management skills in a project manager leads to project failure (Brousseau, 1987). Thus, the project manager should possess good leadership qualities (Gillard, 2009). He also added that even though leadership and management are closely related, both require different knowledge and skill set, and they accomplish different goals. It is opined that

management deals with the present, resources, facts, whereas leadership focuses on the future, people, and personalities (Gillard, 2009; Van Ingen, 2007).

Significantly, there are certain traits, attitudes, behaviours, emotional responses, family background, or culture, which can affect project outcomes (Dietrich et al., 2010; Sackmann and Friesl, 2007; Tyler, 2003). These traits can be modified to a certain degree through education and training (Müller and Turner, 2010). Many scholars have identified those applications of soft skill such as an understanding of employee motivation, organisational dynamics, and team behaviour (Brandel, 2006). Others include the ability to effectively direct teams (Sacco, 2006); planning, negotiating, and collaborative problem solving (Black, 2006); networking (Jiang et al., 2001); and excellent interpersonal communication (Larson et al., 2014; Sampson, 2007).

In summary the two ways project management is viewed as art or science highlighted the diversity and different context of project management. The science aspect of project management revealed the processes such as planning, monitoring and execution adopted towards during business start-up and growth, while the art aspect provided an insight about the behavioural tendencies such as personal traits, leadership, communication skills, of the project manager. Based on the foregoing, one can conclude that there are similarities in terms of the activities and processes in the both fields' studies that lead to business growth. These activities and processes have been identified as themes and sub themes and will be discussed in the next section.

2.8   Project Management

It is argued that to understand entrepreneurship, there is a need to deviate away from considering the entrepreneur in isolation and look at entrepreneurial activities (Jack and Anderson, 2002). The view is that the entrepreneurial activities influence economic outcomes and some of these activities are embedded in a social context (ibid). As mentioned in chapter one, the entrepreneurial activities are venturous

human actions in pursuit of creating value, which results in the expansion of economic activity by identifying and exploiting new products, processes, and services or market (Ahmad and Seymour, 2008). In respect to the definition, entrepreneurial activities are a social interaction that focuses on economic growth of a region, community or even nation. The question here is what are those activities that entrepreneurs implement to achieve business growth?

The extant literature review of the three cardinal entrepreneurship field of study revealed some of these entrepreneurial activities (growth drivers). These include risk taking, innovation, to mention but a few. It also informative to note that some of these activities are also found in project management literatures. For instance, the development of project-based activities in the organisational setting is naturally accompanied by processes focused on evolving the understanding of project success as well as its influence on the organisational performance (Martens et al., 2018). Therefore, as projects are successful, organisational results can be favoured, referring to the contribution of project success to organisational performance in certain areas such as efficiency, development and innovation (Mir and Pinnington, 2014). Similarly, project management process was heighted during project management literature review. These activities and processes are important to create value and establish growth in business. Therefore, detailed discussion of these activities and processes will required for better understanding of how the impact business growth.

2.8.1 Risk taking

There is a general belief that successful entrepreneurs are perceived as people with a high tendency to take more significant risks than non-entrepreneurs (Busenitz and Barney, 1997; Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Palich and Bagby, 1995; Schendel, 2007; Stewart and Roth, 2001). In every business, there is, to some extent, a degree of uncertainty or risk associated with starting and growing the business, which the entrepreneur can withstand. Baron (2004) argued that successful entrepreneurs cognitively can evaluate the actual risk in ventures; by making decisions through

using his/her capabilities to assimilate, store and retrieve information to achieving optimum performance (Baron and Henry, 2010). The tendency of the entrepreneur to take risk may also be related to risk perception. While estimating how risky a situation is, the entrepreneur forms some beliefs about future outcomes. The perceived riskiness of the situation depends on experience.

This belief is drawn from the widely held media myths that successful entrepreneurs have triumphed against the odds by instinctively identifying opportunity at the right time (Mitchell, 1997). Furthermore, drawing on this widely belief about successful entrepreneurs, many entrepreneurship scholars made a hypothetical assumption about successful entrepreneurs. The success achieved is not because the entrepreneur adopted better decision processes, rather they took the opportunities that came their way (Delmar and Shane, 2003). Therefore the entrepreneur is frequently facing a decision context characterised by higher uncertainty (Miller, 2007). Building on this assessment, successful entrepreneurs choose the decision process best suitable to reduce the risk level intrinsic in creating and growing the business. In support of this view, Gruber (2007) and Miller (2007) suggested that systematic and rational decision-making could be useful in an entrepreneurial context even though it is agreed that an entrepreneur regularly faces a decision situation branded by additional ambiguity and greater uncertainty (Shyti and Paraschiv, 2014).

Similarly, Westhead et al. (2011), on the subject, claimed that typical entrepreneurs are moderate risk-takers, although economic theory suggested otherwise. Risk-taking is dependent on the entrepreneurs' idea of situation and expertise (Chavez, 2016). The entrepreneur undoubtedly will encounter surprises during starting and operating the business. However, different thoughts of actions will not eliminate all possible abstruseness, and uncertainties (McGrath et al., 2000); instead it will minimise them (Russo and Schoemaker, 2002).

In project management, risk is viewed as interpersonal rather than technical Williams (2017). Thus, the character of the project manager can be a problem. For example, the need for trust between client and project manager (Kadefors, 2004) and the effect of lack of trust on the performance of the project are well known de Man and Roijakkers (2009), Zwikael and Smyrk (2015). Dealing with risk in projects is different from situations where there is enough data to adopt an actuarial approach. This is because projects invariably involve a strong technical, engineering, innovative, or strategic content; therefore, a systematic process has proven preferable to an intuitive approach.

The uniqueness of a project may be simple, routine, or complex, with complex projects being the most uncertain (Engwall, 2003). According to Antunes and Gonzalez (2015) and Bakhshi et al. (2016), complexity in a project can arise from the number and nature of interactions among variables or components involved, creating multiple, dependent feedback loops that give rise to emergent and unpredictable outcomes. This presents an unclear goal or uncertainty in its method of delivery. This complexity thus makes it impossible for the project manager to plan the project from start to finish without carrying out full risk assessment. The technicality of the project can also be very challenging or may require routine technical background and environment. Hence, the type of project manager that can successfully manage these diverse projects on a variable complexity rating will be different for each project (Hanif and Tariq, 2014).

Risk is an important moderator for performance (Zwikael and Smyrk, 2015) and often, things go wrong for reasons unique to a particular project. Even though risk cannot be eliminated, firms spend enormous funds in managing it (Chapman and Ward, 2004). Thus, failure to manage risk results exceeding budget, delay in schedule and unaccomplished performance target (Kishk and Ukaga, 2008). Nevertheless, these criteria usually do not consider either a comprehensive set of the unique characteristics of the project, its surrounding environment or the attitude of an organisation towards risk (Cagliano et al., 2015).

2.8.2 Decision Making

The decision to grow the firm is the first and foremost strategic decision all entrepreneurs must make. According to Gilbert, et al. (2006: 929), "the decisions entrepreneurs make in the venture's early years have profound, long-lasting implications for performance". Some entrepreneurial scholars have highlighted the entrepreneurial context comprising of high uncertainty, ambiguity, time pressure, emotional intensity, high risk and these can have a significant impact on entrepreneurs' evaluation on specific situations and decision-making (e.g., Baron, 2008; Berner et al., 2012; Mullins and Forlani, 2005). Decision making in entrepreneurship could be intuitive (Delmar and Shane, 2003; Dencker et al., 2009), improvised (Vera and Crossan, 2005; Hmieleski et al., 2013) or rational (Miller, 2007; Murmann and Sardana, 2013). The claim that entrepreneurs use intuition as a basis for decision-making has little or no evidence on how much they use them (Sadler-Smith, 2016). This notion that entrepreneurs use intuition is not easily verifiable (Blume and Covin, 2011). Consequently, not much is known about the degree to which entrepreneurs rely on intuition in their decision-making.

In contrast, some entrepreneurship scholars Pettigrew (2014) and Plehn-Dujowich (2010), view entrepreneurs as rational decision makers (De Winnaar and Scholtz, 2019). In this circumstance, the entrepreneur's centre of attention focuses on ways of thinking about business and uncertainty involved (Ireland et al., 2003). According to Plehn-Dujowich (2010), the entrepreneur makes a decision based on economic condition, rationality, and accordingly considers the pros and cons of starting a new business, deciding to remain in the same one or making a choice of wage employment. This is where rational decision making play a role. Thus, making a logical choice built on conscious deliberation (Elbanna, 2006; Schwenk, 1984) that is analytic, systematic, and rule-based and involves an explicit mechanism (Hodgkinson and Healey, 2011).

Based on the forgoing, one can suggest that the best way to explore an opportunity may be through a systematic approach. The entrepreneur will think first of an issue, then define it, diagnose, and design a solution before deciding. The entrepreneurial material is based on facts, and the mental process involved in the planning are of the sequential, systematic and articulated types (Mintzberg, 1976, cited in Cunha, 2007). Furthermore, entrepreneurs as well as decision makers in general, make use of the three approaches of decision-making intuition, improvisation and rational decision making.

The third way entrepreneurship scholars opined that spontaneous decision making has been utilised to formulate and execute novel strategic decisions, so as to capitalise on opportunities to move their firm in a more promising direction (Vera and Crossan, 2005). Research by Baker et al. (2003) affirms that entrepreneurs do indeed spend a significant amount of time extemporaneously formulating and executing strategic decisions, using only the resources available to them in the moment. However, some scholars posit that this act of improvisational behaviour is perceived as neither a good nor a lousy form of action for entrepreneurs, rather it can create both positive and negative results (Miner et al., 2001). For Hodgkinson et al. (2016), under different conditions, the use of improvisation action varies, while for Vera and Crossan (2005), it could be highly innovative or disordered, meaning improvisation could solve or worsen a problem. In that regard, it suggests that the effects of improvisation are likely to be moderated by several factors (Hmieleski et al., 2013).

The use of these three decisions making approaches is dependent on individuals. Different individuals may have distinct preferences for one mode or another, but these are not mutually exclusive. Considering the importance and the implications of such choices, understanding how entrepreneurs think about growth, develop core beliefs on growth, cognitive style, and knowledge structures employed in processing

information to make decisions, is unavoidable in depicting a thorough explanation of conditions under which business grow.

In project management, decision-making in a project context is very critical and a complex undertaking (Al-Harbi, 2001; Marques et al., 2011). Most decisions are relatively less important, while some are critical and could cause a positive or negative impact on the success of the project (Williams and Samset, 2010). According to Kähkönen (2008), the term complexity is an increasingly important point of reference when trying to understand the managerial demands of modern projects. The decision-makers have to deal with multiple alternatives and criteria in an uncertain environment (Valiris et al., 2005). They argued that the process of decision-making in projects involves many stakeholders, that is, decision–making is a collective process rather than a purely individual one (ibid).

Furthermore, decision-making in project management requires logic of sequence; in that sense, it is rational (Galli, 2018). In a project context, the project manager must make decisions to achieve a set goal or project objectives. The quality of these decisions depends on the capacity of the decision-maker to perform an identical evaluation, which is, decision on the current situation of the project as opposed to the initial objectives (Marques et al., 2011). This in some sense makes the project manager to present a detailed progress report of the project from the initial stage to the current stage. Therefore, the ability to make informed, timely, and effective decisions is a key competency of the project manager (Cohen, 2005).

2.8.3   Innovation

Every business aims to achieve growth (this growth does not come automatically but comes in form of new ideas and knowledge of the entrepreneur (Segarra-Ciprés and Bou-Llusar, 2018; Shane, 2012; Woolley and Rottner, 2008). The ideas and knowledge come in various degrees and varies considerably within new ventures (Fuentelsaz et al., 2018); such new idea or knowledge is termed innovation. The new ideas help in maintaining the operational running of the business. It can be argued

that innovation is an inherent characteristic of entrepreneurship (Shane, 2012; Woolley and Rottner, 2008). According to Shane (2012: 17-18), "entrepreneurship not only comprises of discovering opportunities but involves also devising new business ideas and ways to bring together resources to exploit those opportunities". Thus, entrepreneurs cannot achieve success without innovation (CAFRAD, 2000, cited in Çolakoğlu and Gözükara, 2016).

The growth of business can increase significantly provided the entrepreneur has the capacity to drive innovation (Fuentelsaz et al., 2018). The innovation consists of idea formation, admission and implementation of new ideas in processes, products and services (Kotsemir and Meissner, 2013). Hence, innovation generates jobs from the established business (Ribeiro-Soriano, 2017; Coad and Reid, 2012; Coad et al., 2016; Daunfeldt et al., 2015). That positively affects economic growth. The entrepreneur has the responsibility to introduce the innovation of the products or services into the market thereby creating a completion in the market (Courvisanos and Mackenzie, 2014a). This is through introduction of new technology of the entrepreneur and the ability to manage the new technologies (Muñoz et al., 2016) in the market place facing his competitors. It is through innovation that the entrepreneur differentiates himself from others. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development identifies entrepreneurship and innovation as among the drivers of economic growth in the knowledge-based economy (Audretsch, 2012).

In project management, researchers and stakeholders have defined the concept of innovation severally as 'the successful commercial exploitation of new ideas' (Dodgson et al., 2008). It includes the scientific, technological, organisational, financial and business activities leading to the commercial introduction of new (or improved) product or service. In the construction industry, these improvements could be in the form of enhanced or new approaches to project delivery, new concepts in designs or use of new materials (Egan, 1998). Innovation has also been considered as "the development and implementation of new ideas by people who over time engage in transactions with others within an institutional context" (Van de

Ven, 1986: 604; Aghion et al., 2013). The advantages of innovation upon implementation yield a reduction in cost and/or time associated with project delivery and improves the quality of the final output with an enhanced level of client satisfaction.

Also, innovation in Project management provides an enabling environment, which in turn fosters innovation-championing behaviour and ultimately, enhances project performance. This is achieved by creating the kind of climate in the workplace, which enhances innovation championing behaviour among project management team and Improving innovation, and project performance (Kissi, 2012). There is a heightened awareness of the need for project team members and particularly project managers to exhibit innovation championing behaviour and actively seek better approaches, better processes, new technology and new products in delivering projects (Dulaimi et al., 2005). By exhibiting innovation, championing behaviour, project managers can promote the advantages of an innovative idea, obtain approval, acquire the necessary resources from senior managers, and facilitate the generation of ideas among team members. Besides, by demonstrating commitment and taking ownership of the process, project managers are likely to engender support and commitment among team members to make projects successful.

2.8.4 Leadership

The successful entrepreneurs can be associated with leadership functions such as providing vision to the development of a new product, service, or organisation (Gesell, 2010). The entrepreneurial leadership qualities such as risk taking, evaluating opportunities, innovation, productivity, are interchangeable and strategic (Esmer and Faruk, 2017) towards business start-up and growth. Entrepreneurs as leaders combine leadership potential such as identifying a problem, generating convincing idea to address problem and to set about its remedy by creating and growing the business (Cai et al., 2019) with entrepreneurial skills (Esmer and Faruk, 2017). Thus, a leader deals with concepts and ideas. It also implies that the entrepreneur, aside from being the owner and manager who decides and gives instructions, is also

involved in the day-to-day activities/practices of the business with the employees, showing the technique. According to Altuntas (2014), this type of leadership provides actions towards establishment of a business at the individual level and benefiting from the opportunities that are outstanding at the market level. This type of leadership is important for the growth of the business in the future (Phaneuf et al., 2016) as it involves recognising and exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities (Renko et al., 2015).

In project management literatures, it is generally agreed that leadership is more than an element of the management functions and is concerned with initiating change, providing direction and motivation, and keeping tasks on track (Hernon, 2009). On the other hand, management is the process of coordinating and administering resources to ensure that an organisation's mission and goals are accomplished on time (ibid). The project manager has a leadership role in creating an effective working environment for the project team. Therefore, the project manager uses leadership skills to motivate the team to work on the project to achieve goals (Kuster et al., 2011; Northouse, 2010).

2.8.5   Networking

Networking can be described as the proactive behaviour by which an individual develops and preserves relationships with others with the objective of mutual benefit in their work or career (Forret and Dougherty, 2001). The existence of the network is not for itself but is rather for the value it brings through the process of networking (O'Donnell, 2004) expounded. Similarly, Wolff and Moser (2009) found that networking is the behaviour performed to gain (network contents) benefits by building, maintaining, and using informal relationships. Presently, the focus has been on how entrepreneurs' social networking impacts on business growth (Andersen and Lorenzen, 2007; Turkina, 2018; Turkina, 2013; Turkina and Van Assche, 2016). The entrepreneur interacts with external factors such as friends, previous work colleagues, suppliers, family ties and other organisations, all of which affect business performance (Amoako and Lyon, 2014; Turkina et al., 2016; Turkina and Thai, 2013).

According to Anderson et al. (2010), networking is a socially constructed "premeditated association" for mutual benefits. It provides the root, the edifice and the process for entrepreneurial growth (Johnston et al., 2006). In social networks, the individual entrepreneur can effortlessly obtain resources, which would have been difficult otherwise, augmenting what they already have, hence expanding entrepreneurial effectiveness (Davidsson and Honig, 2003; Hite, 2005; Ozcan and Eisenhardt, 2009; Slotte–Kock and Coviello, 2010). Therefore, it is necessary to utilise those external resources from social networks to overcome the hitches caused by the absence of internal resources during start-up (Huggins and Johnston, 2012). Correspondingly, Choi (2010) suggests that an entrepreneur would gain more from establishing some external networks, which will enable them to obtain resources that are required.

Nevertheless, networking is not only restricted to physical resources but also involves acquiring information and skills by simply meeting other individuals who have similar or complementary expertise (Minniti, 2005). In addition, it could involve obtaining information like how to find competent employees, inputs at affordable prices and financial support. Intrinsically, the entrepreneur should consider their position in a network structure. For instance, becoming a member and attending devotedly social networking group meetings and events, where different individuals with various expertise are gathered (such as small business breakfast meetings, chambers of commerce, etc.). Such meetings provide numerous business support services, useful in fostering technological innovation (Akcomak, 2009), thus enhancing business growth. On the other hand, Klyver and Foley (2012) suggested another perspective on how culture interferes with entrepreneurial social networking. It was argued that the cultural norm and practices of a country are more of importance than differences between cultures in networking. The culture, according to Gorodnichenko and Roland (2012), is a set of values and beliefs individual(s) have about how nature and society work in terms of norms of behaviour derived from that set of values.

Aldrich and Zimmer (1986) argued that the entrepreneur is resolute and deeply rooted in a social network that plays a critical role in the entrepreneurial process. Since then, scholars have increasingly recognised that entrepreneurs embed their business decisions in social structures (Foley and O'Connor, 2013; Greve and Salaff, 2003; Mian and Hattab, 2013). Thus, both in theory and in practice, social networking is widely accepted as the lifeblood of entrepreneurship, critical to business growth (Agerdal-Hjermind, 2014; Antes and Schuelke, 2011; Cesaroni et al., 2017; Foster and Brindley, 2018; Klyver and Foley, 2012; Scarmozzino et al., 2017). For instance, in an in-depth narrative of study of women entrepreneurs in the marketing services sector, Foster and Brindley, (2018) evidenced how female entrepreneurs in a marketing sector use and valued networking activity throughout the lifetime of their business.

In the broadest terms, social networks are defined by a set of actors (individuals or organisations) and a set of linkages between the actors (Amoako and Matlay, 2015). These network relations provide emotional support and this in turn is thought to enhance persistence to remain in business (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010) argued. Given the rapid changes and advances in communication technologies, "the entrepreneur is therefore well advised to develop and promote networks of all sorts, particularly inter-firm and intra-firm relations, increasing feasibility of entrepreneurs to work remotely, paying careful attention to the promotion and development of social, network, and mentoring capabilities, which would seem prudent." (Davidsson, 2003: 4). Thus, informal and formal networking shows evidence that networking appears as one of the most crucial entrepreneurial activities for achieving growth in the business (Gurrieri, 2013; Weigl, 2008).

Practicing networking in project management enables the project manager to find solutions or get new ideas to improve the chances of project success. The project manager uses networking as a tool in project management in getting the right information when needed (Birgisson, 2014). Thus, the project manager can manage networking to improve project management performance. When project management team rely on a networking strategy, they build social ties with the

environment that enables the project and the environment to co-evolve. Furthermore, Birgisson opined that some research suggests that team members have a general knowledge about networking but lack the knowledge of how to use the networking tool in an effective and structured way. Kingston (2007) highlighted the importance of networking between the stakeholders and project teams both internally and externally (Kingston 2007 cited in Toomey, 2012). Hence, in project management the project management team can manage the entire networks to improve project management performance (Toomey, 2012).

2.8.6 Social Capital

Coleman, (1988:1) defines Social capital as "anything that enables individual or collective action, generated by networks of relationships, mutuality, trust, and social norms". In a conventional view, authors such as, Mustafa and Chen (2010), Ostrom (2009), Slotte–Kock and Coviello (2010) opined social capital involves dealings of trust and reciprocity that exist in social networks. In line with these views, some previous studies likened specialised networks norms and trust with social capital according to Lyon (2000 cited in Amoako and Matlay, 2015). Social capital helps entrepreneurs to overcome resource constraints and this is especially important in small communities where we often see a lack of market-oriented institutions such as venture. Generally, social capital is seen as the resources available to individuals through their social connections (Coleman, 1988), as well as of the networks and the norms of behaviours that underpin them (Cope et al., 2007).

According to Anderson and Miller (2002), social capital whether present or absent is likely to influence the nature of an entrepreneurial venture. Its involvement as a social interaction between individuals or groups makes it a relational phenomenon. Therefore, a contextual complement to human capital, from the perspective that individuals who do better are somehow better connected (Dubos, 2017). Certain people or groups are connected, in trust, obligated to support, and dependent on exchange with others. Holding a certain position in the structure of these exchanges can be an asset and the asset is social capital.

Kim and Aldrich (2005) claim that an entrepreneur's dream is to grow in the business; by skilful use of their social ties, entrepreneurs can apparently acquire considerable profits on their social capital, which in return increase their chances of business success. However, Burt (1992) opined that benefits gained from rivalry in social networks can be applied in the relationships between individuals, organisation or other entities, analysing how different entities tie to each other in terms of benefits (Goyal and Vega-Redondo, 2007; Obstfeld, 2005). The entrepreneurs with deep structural holes in their clique reduce absence of direct contact with network and increase their chances of successfully spotting and optimising entrepreneurial opportunities because they are central to and well positioned to influence a structure that is more likely to generate higher levels of information (De Carolis and Saparito, 2006; Petrou and Daskalopoulou, 2013).

In project management, social capital centres on project, relevant knowledge, resources among project teams to achieve a common goal. It is defined in terms of relationships, and collectivised (Ecclestone and Field, 2001). Project social capital, according to Di Vincenzo and Mascia (2012), is the overall web of inter-personal and inter-project relationships in which single project units are embedded, and through which important resources can be accessed. The inter-personal and inter-project relationships depend on how strongly interconnected project members are, which is referred to as the level of cohesion (Fernandez and Gould, 1994), and how diverse they are, i.e., the 'network range' (Burt, 1992). Project social capital is thus as broad as the extent to which project members spread their social relationships across multiple areas of expertise (Di Vincenzo and Mascia, 2012).

The primary idea of project social capital is that social networks have value (Tansley and Newell, 2007). In addition, after a while, interaction and connections result in shared norms, trust and reciprocity, which in turn fosters cooperation to achieve common goals (ibid). Correspondingly, Hoecht (2004) and Newell et al's (2004) position on the collaboration and the need to integrate knowledge and expertise

suggests that social capital, founded on trusting relationships, will be essential for project success (see also Evans and Carson, 2005; Mehra et al., 2006). Nevertheless, recurrent relationship among diverse project teams results in increased information exchange, mutual knowledge-based trust, and reduced network instability (Polidoro et al., 2011), all of which combine for the development of deterrence-based trust by increasing the visibility of norm-breaking behaviour (Coleman, 1988; Gulati and Gargiulo, 1999).

The importance of project social capital relies upon a number of studies which have stated that projects are more than just temporary systems (Sydow and Windeler, 1998), considering the complex web of network relationships which they create to perform project tasks and from which they mobilise essential resources (Sydow and Staber, 2002). Network relationships are project-specific since they are formed around project boundaries and serve as a form of social capital that, being exploited, may produce a wide range of benefits at the project level. Conversely, in certain cases, excessively high levels of diversity can be problematic even though relations across disciplines are beneficial (Di Vincenzo and Mascia, 2012).

2.8.7   Communication

It has been suggested that communication plays a vital role in entrepreneurship (Abbasi et al., 2011). Entrepreneurs who establish effective communication within and outside their business tend to become more successful (Adejimola, 2008) because it helps create trade relations (Abbasi et al., 2011). According to Basu and Goswami (1999), educational qualifications contribute to growth by improving the entrepreneurs' communication skills with different parties including banks, which may in turn help to lift external financial resource constraints and lower barriers to business development. Altinay (2008) claimed that higher level of education develops both the analytical ability and the computational skill of the entrepreneur as well as communication skills. Supporting the argument, Casson (1991) emphasised that entrepreneurs who attain a higher level of education communicate better with

customers, gather market intelligence and develop appropriate strategies, which then lead to a higher growth in their businesses.

In agreement, Coleman (2005) and Young (2002a) claimed that with good language communication skills, the entrepreneur has higher level of confidence to seek advice from financial institutions such as banks, venture capital, or even angel investors and mainstream business advisers. Thus, securing and improving the start-up process requires corresponding communicational strategies with business support objectives and situations (Redien-Collot and Lefebvre, 2015). In that respect, Burleson and Rack (2008) see communicative action as a means of individuals trying to achieve goals. Therefore, it implies a positive significant relationship between communication and business success (Chatterjee and Das, 2016). In this study, there is little or less consideration for the educational level of the entrepreneurs to achieve growth in their business. The study focuses on the number of years in business.

In project management, communication is of great importance to everyone involved in and influenced by projects (Emmitt, 2010). The practitioners see communication as the lifeblood of any project (Awati, 2010; Furnell and Scott, 2014). According to Zulch (2014) communication in projects is a process of acquiring all relevant information, interpreting the information and effectively disseminating the information to individuals who may possibly require it. To understand the requirements of a project communication plan, two needs should be known: the need to understand what the project would require from its communication system and the need to know what communication methods and communication styles might be used to effectively address these requirements (Steyn, 2008). Absence of these two requirements leads to failure. The project manager should be able to communicate clearly, what these requirements are. Failing to do so, is unlikely to achieve the expected results (Silva et al., 2017). Transparency in communication can act as facilitator or a barrier in project success (Lloyd-Walker and Walker, 2011; Pinto and Slevin, 1987).

Managing a project requires constant selling and reselling of ideas, explaining the scope and methodologies of the project to diverse groups of people (the public, management, functional departments and other stakeholders), threatening or bargaining with service providers and suppliers, or negotiating to settle disputes or interpersonal conflict between project team members or other stakeholders. Improved communication by the project manager may lead to less failure, innovation and technical solutions, positively influencing the quality and leading to better decision-making (Hoezen et al., 2006). It is the project manager's responsibility to develop not only the project's organisational structure, but also the project's communication plan and lines of communication (Zulch, 2014). A formal communication plan should be compiled to identify how stakeholder opinions and actions will be managed (Engelbrecht, 2010). It is important that the project manager engage effectively with all stakeholders including senior management, business unit managers, suppliers, contractors and any other people involved with the project (Larson et al., 2014).

2.8.8 Human capital

There have been many debates from the entrepreneurship scholars on how human capital relates to entrepreneurial success (Unger et al., 2011). Most scholars conclude that human capital is related to success based on previous work experience of the entrepreneur (Bosma, et al., 2004 ; Van der Sluis et al., 2005), for instance, according to Unger et al., (2011) success is dependent on length of experience in an industry including the level of general education of the entrepreneur. It implies that entrepreneurs who have longer industry experience and a high level of general education are more likely to be successful than entrepreneurs who have less extensive industry experience and a low level of general education (Unger et al., 2011). Accordingly, these skills achieved in the industry experience and knowledge gained in the general education contributes to human capital, compensating for a lack of financial resources, which is one of the major constraints for start-up (Kato and Honjo, 2015). Davenport and Prusak (1998: 49) added, "Human capital include the abstract resources of abilities, effort, and time that employees bring to invest in

their work". Others argue that the relationship is commonly overemphasised (Baum and Silverman, 2004).

In another view with human capital, entrepreneurs develop social capital (Mosey and Wright, 2007) and social skills (Baron and Markman, 1999), both of which offer access to critical resources for business success (Semrau and Werner, 2014). In entrepreneurship, human capital not only increases individuals' ability to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities successfully to create businesses, but also enables them to successfully, exploit such opportunities (Gulaliyev et al., 2019). Human capital, according to Haber and Reichel (2007), constitutes one of the core factors in the entrepreneurial process. It comprises the start-up experience and entrepreneur's experience such as formal education, work experience and family background (Unger et al., 2011). For Bosma et al. (2004) human capital is classified into three types:

a) General human capital, which comprises of the knowledge, skills and attributes developed by an individual through education and work used as either an employee or an entrepreneur, and can be developed in any sector of the economy;

b) Venture-specific often referred to as industry-specific human capital – this is experience gained either as an employee or as an entrepreneur in the same sector as the new start-up;

c) Entrepreneurship-specific human capital - the knowledge, skills and attributes developed by an individual that are specifically useful to be an entrepreneur, business ownership experience.

Findings show compelling evidence that human capital is critical to providing aspects of entrepreneurship success (Martin et al., 2013). Even though a positive relationship has been achieved between human capital variables and success, the degree of this relationship remains uncertain. Nevertheless, human capital increases the ability of the entrepreneur to undertake the broad entrepreneurial tasks of discovering and exploiting business opportunities and enhancing alertness to identify these

opportunities (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Hence, the entrepreneur could plan and strategise those tasks being undertaking which in turn impacts positively on business growth (Baum et al., 2001; Frese et al., 2007).

On the other hand, in project management the importance of human capital in project management and projects cannot be overemphasised (Suhonen and Paasivaara, 2011). They added that human capital in project management is viewed as resources possessed by individual 'employees', as well as to project teams working on a project (ibid). They further said that the Individual human capital perceptive involves the individual's own abilities, knowledge, character qualities exhibited during project operation to achieve set objectives. In addition, culture-related issues, such as trust, interaction and employee well-being within the team can influence these characteristics (Suhonen and Paasivaara, 2011). The project manager's abilities and qualities play a key role in promoting human capital in project management. The emotional competence of the project manager makes a significant contribution to project success (Müller and Turner, 2007). Project managers' knowledge and experience are considered important in determining project outcomes and these facets are assessed using a human capital framework (Brown et al., 2007).

In the aspect of performance, human capital and performance have been verified in different project industries, particularly in the perspective of project management and project performance (Brown et al., 2007). In their study suggests that investment made in project management human capital through education and explicit project management experience, results in better-quality performance. For example, in the construction industry, a lack of specific project management education or experience through apprenticeship will affect the potential for successful performance. Having skilled and competent employees is an essential requirement for the organisation, because human capital influences and shapes the other resources of the organisation and is at the same time affected by them (KoC et al., 2014).

2.9   Project management processes

This study sheds some light on the three project management processes, which are more instructional and tool-oriented. According to Stewart (1939), process group cycle represents these processes with the terms: *plan*, *do*, *check*, and *'act*. The 'plan' phase indicates project planning; 'do' indicates project execution, while 'check' and 'act' indicate monitoring and control (Stewart, 1939 cited in Saier 2017). Although these processes present themselves as separate components, they are performed interactively. In practice, each process overlaps with the others in every project, regardless of the similarities and difference. However, the management and implementation of projects also differ due to the diversity of factors, which affect the processes, and results of the projects (Besner and Hobbs, 2008).

Project management models and practices guide many projects, which comprise different tools and agreed-upon documentation (Sun et al., 2006). In contrast, (Martinsuo and Vuorinen, 2016), explored alternative types of variation in the practice of project management, as compared to an official project management model. It is the role of the project manager to fulfil the project objectives and goals through usage of the project management processes. The researcher will consider the project management processes of planning, execution, monitoring, and control in detail below. Note that monitoring and control are concurrent in this study and are treated as a single process.

2.9.1   Project Planning

Project planning is an important contributor to project success (Serrador, 2015), planning strengthens the likelihood of project to succeed (Merino and de los Ríos Carmenado, 2012). Time spent on these activities will reduce risk and increase project success (Atkinson, 1999). On the other hand, inadequate analysis and planning will lead to a failed project (Boge et al., 2018; Thomas et al., 2008). Most authors agree that a project is a unique endeavour, a special task that has not been done before (Desouza and Evaristo, 2004; Dvir et al., 2003; Müller and Turner, 2007). In the initial planning phase, the activities and resources required for project

implementation are identified. Based on these inputs, an implementation plan for the project activities and effort, a more detailed project schedule, a resource, and cost structure, can be completed.

At the planning stage, unforeseen circumstances could disrupt the implementation of the plan. Thus, should be acknowledged and considered. Subsequently, the specification document for the planning stage remains incomplete since the activities involved at this stage, including cost and duration, are indefinite. The individual responsibilities are identified at the final stage of this phase, which does not include the project manager and the project team members (as these are selected earlier, often in the specification phase). However, if there are little or no unforeseen circumstances perceived, a more detailed project plan would be produced, and challenges minimised.

The issue becomes even more complicated when the proposed activities depend on the outcome of earlier activities. For that reason, some might even conclude that planning is not necessarily helpful or even desirable (Andersen, 1996). Therefore, there has been a call to replace the standard planning approach with milestone planning (Andersen, 2006). Milestone planning is linked to determining what to be done rather than what should be done. It is believed to promote result-oriented thinking rather than activity-oriented thinking. Based on the preceding, it has been suggested that the traditional approach of planning and control of projects tends to fail because of too much precise control. The approach typically hinders creativity from playing a crucial role in the execution of the project (Bart, 1993). Even if we agree with Bart and reduce planning to a minimum, one could argue that there is still no guarantee that a project will be completed successfully. The reason is that the output of the requirements analysis stage will most likely determine the output of the entire development process.

Correspondingly, it is reasonable to distinguish between three levels of planning. Firstly, the end-user level, where planning focuses mainly on the functional

characteristics of the project product. Secondly, the technical level, which creates the technical specifications of the project deliverables that are needed to support the functional requirements. Finally, the project management level, where the focus is on planning the activities and processes that are required to allow the technical work to proceed effectively.

2.9.2 Project Execution

Project execution is the third phase in the project life cycle, and at this stage the actual work of the project is performed (Pinto and Covin, 1989), and through to completion (Tatikonda and Rosenthal, 2000). Furthermore, before the execution phase, there is usually no detailed understanding of the project task, such as the sequence, at which implementation is structured, the interdependency of each stage, as well as timing (Tatikonda and Rosenthal, 2000). The issue is that in a project there are small tasks in between the major ones, which are often not detailed during the execution. Additionally, some of these small tasks tend to become major tasks, which create a problem during implementation. This often occurs due to the limitation inherent in the project-planning phase, and attention is focused during the execution phase on uncertainties as they emerge (ibid). During implementation, tasks with greater uncertainty require more information for processing than those with lower risk.

Project managers are responsible for the outcome of the project, and they work closely with the project team members who also understand the project's development, while exercising the art of 'managing the unexpected' parallel to executing the project plan (Söderholm, 2008). Thus, they should have a choice in implementation and adjustment of the project management processes, as they need target values to control execution (Albert et al., 2018). It has been argued that there is a need to include a contingency implementation plan of action during the project planning phase in order to avert the need for contingency methods during the project execution phase (Tatikonda and Rosenthal, 2000). The planning document should

contain a detailed plan of action during execution phase because of the existence of uncertainty during the implementation of the project.

It is the responsibility of the project manager to convert detailed project plan into execution (Marion et al., 2014) through the utilisation of tools and techniques for execution (Besner and Hobbs, 2006). This suggests that the project execution phase should be straightforward. This is because the execution phase is the most critical stage of a project's life cycle as it is where specific materials and resources are procured, the project carried out, and performance capabilities verified (Pinto and Covin, 1989). However, the method of achieving some project objectives are still undefined at the commencement of the execution phase (Turner and Cochrane, 1993).

2.9.3   Project Monitoring and Control

Project management scholars have different interpretations of project monitoring and control. According to Tom and Paul (2013), the monitoring and controlling of a project is the process of collecting, recording, and reporting of information regarding project performance. "Monitoring comprises observing the improvement of the project against time, performance schedule and resources during actual implementation of the plan" (Polekar and Salgude, 2015). Project monitoring and control process provides the required checks and balances for ensuring that the plans and complete project objectives are achieved (Idoro, 2012). Plans, complemented with monitoring and control, enables the necessary goals to be achieved.

On the other hand, project monitoring and controlling process are defined (PMI, 2013a), as "processes required for tracking, reviewing and coordinating the advancement and performance of the project; identifying areas in which changes to the early project plan are made necessary". Despite planning the project to the infinitesimal detail, a project manager will come across changes during the project implementation. These changes are additions to the projects. They may also be changes to the existing policies and procedures used on the project. The project

manager at this stage identifies all aberrations from the project plan and undertakes remedial measures to accomplish the proposed outcome. To ensure gains and completion of goals under the menace of many uncertainties (Hazir, 2015; Herroelen and Leus, 2005), and engaging in active project monitoring and controlling is at present essential in the project-based organisation (Shtub et al., 2005). The processes in project monitoring and controlling according to (PMI, 2013b) include:

- Monitoring and comparing the ongoing project tasks against the earlier documented project plan and the performance measurements
- Recommending corrective or preventive measures while controlling changes in the assumption of possible problems
- Influencing those factors that could circumvent integrated change control or configuration management so only approved changes are implemented (PMI, 2013)

According to Yang et al. (2015) project-monitoring takes account of tracking project-level information, direct observations, surveys and interviews for monitoring operation-level information.

2.10 The relationship between entrepreneurship and project management

Entrepreneurship and project management have existed as practice-driven fields. Consequently, both fields increasingly receive interest and support from a wide variety of horizons (Fonrouge et al., 2018). In economic development, the two fields adopt similar start-up aimed at creating or achieving a new venture or project objectives (Ajam, 2011). However, both fields proceed from unique vantage positions. Whereas the project manager focuses on traditional planning, the entrepreneur relies on decision making. In achieving project objectives, both fields engaged in behaviour associated with innovativeness and risk taking (Rauch et al., 2009; Vicentini et al., 2019).

In contrast, Trokić (2016) argues that start-up in entrepreneurship is viewed as a permanent endeavour while an alternative viewpoint is that a start-up is a temporary organisation in project management undertaken to create a unique product. Conversely, Lindgren and Packendorff (2011), because they apply process thinking to entrepreneurship, and through treating entrepreneurial processes as temporary, link entrepreneurship with project management. Using the term "project metaphor" they avoid a possible pitfall – to "squeeze entrepreneurial processes into the project management toolbox" (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2011: 52). Therefore, by linking entrepreneurship and projects via processes, this research direction has emerged.

In accepting risk of failure, Mikkelsen (2018) suggested that we have one of the biggest factors that distinguishes entrepreneurship and project management, i.e., who accepts the risks? In entrepreneurship, the entrepreneur does the risk taking. The risk approach of project management, according to PMI (2013), is the process of identifying, analysing and planning the risk responses in order to control the risk. In other words, the project manager does not bear the risk, but makes the steering committee do so by presenting risk analyses and the planned responses to them.

Nevertheless, Stevenson and Jarillo (2007) view entrepreneurship as a process by which an individual pursues opportunities without regard to the resources they currently control. In project management, project manager will instead try to gain control over resources before committing to opportunities. From this broad range of activities, some scholars define entrepreneurship as a process (Moroz and Hindle, 2011), which led Kuura and Lundin (2019) to perceive entrepreneurs as key actors in the process of new venture creation. The expectations of every project initiated are conveyed in the form of project objectives or product specification. In this regard, the focus of the project manager is normally on the deliverables, not the financial circumstances of the project. The culture of project management seems to suggest that "failure is not an option". Extant literature has not investigated the project entrepreneurial challenge, either in the entrepreneurship or the project management literatures. According to Ferriani et al. (2009), ventures are created by individual freelancers who are usually embedded in networks of collaborative

relationships that convey the information and resources required to carry out new projects. Networking in project management is targeted towards finding solutions or get new ideas to improve the chances of project success. The project manager uses networking as a tool in project management in getting the right information when needed (Birgisson, 2014; Manning, 2010, 2017). Thus, the project manager can manage networking to improve project management performance. On the other hand, Individual entrepreneur can effortlessly obtain resources through social networks, which would have been difficult otherwise, augmenting what they already have, hence expanding entrepreneurial effectiveness (Ferriani et al., 2009; Ozcan and Eisenhardt, 2009; Slotte–Kock and Coviello, 2010).

2.11 Summary

This chapter has presented a critical review of the literature in relation to entrepreneurship and project management and its components, thus defining the extent of this study. Entrepreneurship and project management are said to be vital to economic growth. The literature review discussed so far in this thesis presented the major subject matters that are central to the study, entrepreneurial growth drivers, project management processes and entrepreneurial success. Although the similarities that exist between the two subject entrepreneurship and project management is that both have been researched and acknowledged, there are still gaps in the literature on project management processes been applied to entrepreneurial activities to influence business growth. This rationale has enabled the researcher to embark on this study to help fill the gap in the literature and contribute to professional practices and academic knowledge.

Even though there are quite a number of researches that have been conducted on similarity that exist in both entrepreneurship and project management, this study will be exploring therefore, how entrepreneurs could exploit project management processes to pursue entrepreneurial activities could have implications for practice on improving firm's growth and therefore economic development. There is no general definition of either project management or entrepreneurship as academic fields or

in practice. Both fields are a driving force for the economic development and growth. Entrepreneurship like project management contains several different basic perspectives and schools. To date, entrepreneurship is still studied within several disciplines such as economics, sociology and psychology, whereas project management categorised into two as science or as an art.

However, even though the two fields have been viewed separately in the literature. There is evidence of emerging similarity in the economic and growth drivers in the two fields. The growth drivers have been identified and discussed, highlighting their similarities and differences. These growth drivers are evident in the three areas entrepreneurship and the art aspect of project management. However, the science aspect of project management presented a systematic approach towards accomplishing project objectives. It followed a laydown rules, which is absent in entrepreneurship and the art aspect of project management.

Since, the aim of this research is to explore entrepreneurial growth drivers (leadership, planning, innovation, networking, etc.) involved in business growth and to examine whether project management process (Planning, execution, monitoring, and control) are relevant within such context. These growth drivers can be uncovered using the theory of planned behaviour. It is therefore important to explore the effectiveness of the theory of planned behaviour on the extant literature of both fields. The next chapter highlights the theoretical framework undertaken in this research, which provides a grounding base for the literature review supports the rationale for the study, clarifies the problem statement, the aims, the significance, and the research questions.

Chapter 3   Theoretical Framework

3.1   Introduction

The previous chapter presented a review of relevant literature on entrepreneurship and project management and identified growth drivers and project management process often utilised for business growth. The literature provoked some salient features that made entrepreneurship very divergent. These divergent views led to different entrepreneurship definitions and different ways of studying entrepreneurship. In this study, the emphasis is on the definition that involves behaviour of the entrepreneur, hence the need to employ behavioural theories to understand the experience of the entrepreneur. The aim of this chapter is to identify which of the behavioural theories fits into the narrative of this study, which is probing working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England. The objectives are achieved by reviewing key behavioural theories in the literature and identifying the behavioural theory that is appropriate to aid understanding of the entrepreneurs and their behaviours. The behavioural theories under consideration are as follows social cognition, attribution theory, heuristics, theory of reasoned action and theory of planned behaviour.

3.2   Social Cognition Perspective

The current study explores the behaviour of entrepreneurs in relation to the working practice and experience of the entrepreneur. The behavioural theory will serve as a lens to understand how the life experience of the entrepreneur has facilitated the business start-up and growth. The entrepreneurs are social actors who play a role (entrepreneurial activities) in the economy through social influence and in a particular social context within their environment to achieve set goals. To understand these social influences, one must first examine those activities, and to do so involves the understanding of social cognition. Social cognition is a broad social and psychologically based approach that focuses on individuals' capability of interpreting, analysing, recollecting, and using information about the social world (Baron and Henry, 2015). The highlighted processes performed through a cognitive structure and

cognitive processes of optimal brain activities exert determinative influence (Sánchez et al., 2011) via social interaction within an environment. The cognitive structure represents knowledge, while cognitive processes relate to how that knowledge is received and utilised (Busenitz and Lau, 1996; Sánchez, 2010a, b). Therefore, entrepreneurial behaviour stems from both structural and process cognisance.

On that note, one could argue that individuals do not replicate every social influence they encounter; they determine which course of actions to take through self-reflection. Thus, understanding, explaining individual thoughts, feelings, and behaviours concerning social situations are of interest. In that respect, viewed more narrowly, social cognition refers to an understanding of social entities like people, including oneself, the social situation in which one experiences them and the relational behaviours that transpire in those situations. Therefore, a social cognition perspective can be adapted to studying topics as wide-ranging as person perception, attitudes, and attitude change, decision-making, self-concept, social communication, and influence (Hamilton, 2005).

It is entirely relevant to this current study as it facilitates exploration of entrepreneurs' behaviour and how it relates to the identified entrepreneurial activities that gave rise to creation of businesses and growth. In addition, it aids understanding of individuals and their behaviour by considering their mental processes when they interrelate with other people and the environment in which these mental processes and interactions take place (Mitchell et al., 2002). This chapter also discusses the rationale behind the utilisation of the theory and relevant application areas presented.

3.3   Social Cognition in Business Management

The cognitive approach to the study of entrepreneurs emerged as an alternative to the trait orientation (Sánchez et al., 2011). Although the latter has produced positive results, many of these have been inconsistent, generating the displacement of researchers to other personal aspects of the individual (Baron and Markman, 1999;

Bouckenooghe et al., 2005; Vecchio, 2003). These include the view that entrepreneurs react differently from non-entrepreneurs and exhibit wide gaps in their ability to cognitively reduce complexities to a manageable level (Markman and Baron, 2003). Thus, there are individual differences in cognitive processes. This means the success of a business depends on the ability of the entrepreneur to discover opportunity, and then convert the opportunity into a profitable venture in a given environment. Therefore, although most individuals could scan their environment, successful entrepreneurs identify opportunities embedded in the same given environment and transform the opportunity into a successful business. The cognitive approach is characterised by the study of certain types of cognitions that, among other aspects, could help to explain entrepreneurial behaviour, success in business, the definition of entrepreneurs, as well as help in distinguishing entrepreneurs from other individuals.

There are several theories of social cognition, which have been proposed in the literature, but only few have been applied to understand the experiences of successful entrepreneurs in terms of either managing a successful project or creating a successful business. For this study, a few of the theories that have been applied to entrepreneurship and project management will be discussed. Relatively little time will be spent discussing those cognition theories, while the focus will be on the theories that are most appropriate in this study. The theories under review include:

- Attribution theory: (Heider, 1958; Jones and Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1967; and Weiner, 1985)
- Heuristic ((Shah and Oppenheimer, 2008)
- Theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980)
- Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991, 2002)

3.4 Attribution theory

Attribution theory is a social psychology theory that is built up of main classical ideas around the formation of attributions (Fiske and Taylor, 1991) and focuses on

understanding how and why people create an opinion about the reasons for an event or observation (Winkler, 2010). Accordingly, individuals, groups, and organisation develop explanations for the behaviours of others in consideration on how they perceive the behaviour and events occurring in their environment. In that respect, the theory is based on the idea that perception is the foundation of human understanding, sense making, and behaviour (Alony et al., 2014). Individuals develop explanations for the behaviours of others in consideration on how they perceive the behaviour and the reality surrounding it (Allen, 2010).

According to Malle (2011), the word attribution has two primary meanings. The first is an explanation of behaviour (giving answers to 'why' questions) and the second inferences or adscription (e.g., inferring traits from behaviour, ascribing blame to a person). Also, individuals frequently attribute performance outcomes to factors of ability, effort, task difficulty, luck, achievement, striving (Graham, 1991; Weiner, 1985; Weiner, 1986). These and other attribution factors vary along several underlying dimensions such as locus of causality (internal/external to Attributor), stability, controllability and globally (Martinko and Thomson, 1998). The three most common dimensions of causal attributions are the locus of causality (internal/external to Attributor), stability and controllability (Russell et al., 1987; Silver et al., 1995; Weiner, 1986; Weiner, 2010).

Researchers have developed several theories to explain attribution processes and these theories are empirically connected and share several commonalities. These attribution theories are Naïve psychology of action (Heider, 1958); Correspondent inference theory (Jones and Davis, 1965); Co-variation principle (Kelley, 1967); Attribution theory of motivation and emotion (Weiner, 1986) (all cited in Malle, 2011). Despite their differences, each of these theories attempts to explain how people arrive at causal inferences, what inferences they make, and the behavioural and attitudinal consequences of those inferences.

3.4.1 Application of Attribution theory

Although Attribution theory has been in existence over a period, it has been applied mostly in the field of psychology and only slightly in other areas such as project management and entrepreneurship. In the field of management, attribution theory has been used to understand what causes an employee's aggression in an organisational set up (Spector, 2011), measure an applicant's interview success (e.g., Ashkanasy, 1989; Silvester et al., 2002), a leader's behaviour (e.g., Campbell and Swift, 2006; Green and Liden, 1980). In addition to many other organisational phenomena, (see Martinko et al., 2006 for a review). Causal attributions are often used to explain the reasons for underlying observed behaviours, events, and outcomes (Rozell and Gardner, 2000) and can provide fundamental insight into the effects attributions exert on users' efficacy expectations, affective states, effort, and performance (Rozell and Gardner, 2000).

In business, applications of attribution theory focus on corporate accounts of specific events. These corporate accounts of events tend to be self-serving and characterised by a person's willingness to take credit for success while denying responsibility for failure (Rogoff et al., 2004). This type of attribution refers to as self-serving attribution bias. The various causes for this bias propounded, including cognitive needs, such as the desire to present oneself in the best light, and emotional needs, such as ego protection. It was argued that an entrepreneur who had a previous failure and attributed this failure to his/her poor decisions might reduce her entrepreneurial activity in the future. However, attribution of success and failure to individual or environment can be problematic when it is not balanced. For example, over-attribution of failure to self can lead to pessimism and depression. In addition, entrepreneurs are likely to experience stigma in this situation and suffer from a loss of reputation, image, and status, and experience diminished labour market opportunities (Wiesenfeld et al., 2008).

Similarly, a study by Coleman (2011) has suggested that there is often a tendency for people to attribute success to themselves and failure to others. Critical thinkers such

as Gough et al. (2013) have suggested individual and cultural differences could lead to the wrong attribution. Furthermore, over-attribution of success can result in distorted assumptions about the ability of individuals and the necessary facilitating conditions for project success. Research findings have shown that fear of punishment for project failure is a significant reason why biases arise in project evaluation as a result. Adequate assessment of individuals thus requires it to be separated from rewards and punishments (Udo, 1993). This is important when organisations are innovative and remain globally competitive (Garcia-Morales et al., 2006). It is equally necessary for those that are involved in projects to evaluate their contribution in a balanced way, which benefits the organisation rather than securing the identity of individuals.

The application of Weiner's attributions theory (1986) to entrepreneurship and management is still in the embryo stage. Weiner's attributions are critical to management because perceived causes of behaviour may influence managers' and employees' judgments and actions (Weiner, 1982). For instance, managers must often observe employee performance and make related decisions. Attributions also may affect motivation. The person who perceives the cause of their success to be outside of their control may be reluctant to attempt new tasks and may lose motivation to perform well in either workplace or business (Weiner, 1986). Conversely, the person who attributes their success to themselves is more likely to have high motivation to develop business. Thus, understanding attributions that people make can have a strong effect on both people's performance and managerial effectiveness. Weiner's attribution theory is used in demonstrating that salesperson performance-based attributions influence a variety of critical outcomes such as motivation, expectancy estimates and behavioural intentions (Dixon et al., 2005).

The limited application of attribution theory to entrepreneurship and project management compared to the field of psychology could be traced to earlier criticisms of attribution theory in the literature. Mitchell (1982) argued that attribution accounted for only a small portion of the variance in causal explanation. He asserted

that attributions might be of interest, but probably not very much. Rational information processing model proposed by attribution theory is impractical. Besides people, generally, rely on more efficient cognitive plan and implicit assumptions when forming causal perceptions (Lord, 1995). The premise is supported by underutilisation of attribution theory in management and business, as reported in (Martinko et al., 2011) who demonstrated the number of times attributional articles in psychology are published journals as were found in management journals.

Additionally, Kelley's (1967) and Weiner's (1986) search of Google Scholar shows over 7,000 citations, but only very, few are found in business. Although it is somewhat speculative to propose, the under-utilisation of attribution theory in the management/organisational sciences as compared to social psychology is traceable to these critiques and their subsequent interpretations by other scholars. It is notable that the use of attributional perspectives has not gained much ground in the management field. However, according to Gough et al. (2013), despite attribution theory being criticised for being seemingly psychology based, it lacks empirical evidence. Therefore, suggesting that more quantitative theories should acquire supporting evidence throughout the development and remain prominent theories.

Given the debate about whether attributions matter and whether attribution theory has been under-utilised in the management sciences, there are lingering questions about the effectiveness of attribution theory. Furthermore, most business-related applications of attribution theory focus more on corporate accounts of specific events (Rogoff et al., 2004). The corporate accounts of events tend to be self-serving, with negative results downgraded or omitted and often attributed to external factors such as the economy, competition, or government regulation, they argued. Therefore, attribution theory does not fit into the proposed study, since it will not be able to explain entrepreneur or project manager behaviour toward achieving business growth.

3.5   Heuristics

According to Crisp and Turner (2010: 386), Heuristics are "time-saving mental shortcuts that reduce complex judgments to simple rules of thumb". This implies that heuristics comprise principles with broad application that are not intended to be strictly accurate or consistent for every situation (Laver and Sergenti, 2012). These rule-of-thumb strategies shorten decision-making time and allow people to function without always stopping to think about their next course of action. Research on heuristics has afforded important insight into our understanding of the cognitive functioning of human beings in general and entrepreneurs in particular. For Tversky and Kahneman (1974) heuristics is an abridged strategy that individuals use to manage information and reduce uncertainty in decision-making.

According to Kvam and Hintze (2018) and Maxwell et al. (2011), heuristics refers to the mental shortcuts individuals resort to enabling them to make sense of a huge amount of data quickly, although often at the expense of accuracy. In contrast, heuristics allow for adaptive responses to the characteristics of an uncertain environment (Baum and Wally, 2003; Khatri and Ng, 2000). The three most commonly used heuristics are availability, representativeness and base-rate heuristics, in this study they would not be discussed, but necessary it is mentioned. Several scholars have focused mainly on the use of heuristics in uncertain circumstances (Guercini, 2012; Bingham and Eisenhardt, 2011; Maxwell et al., 2011; Wubben and Von Wangenheim, 2008) and include the entrepreneurial domain where timely decisions often have to be made without being able to rely on data from experience (Busenitz and Barney, 1997).

Heuristics allows quick dealing with amount of information that go beyond our social cognition capacity by evolving strategies that individuals use to make decisions. Hence, often employ shortcuts to make decisions by the entrepreneurs (Baron, 1998; Busenitz and Barney, 1997; Busenitz, 1999). They are subjective, depending on informal processes, experience, and influenced by internal beliefs. These processes contribute to the reason why most of our social thought is occurring on an automatic

basis. More or less, heuristics are considered a mental shortcut that one may employ to allow them to solve issues and make decisions (Gigerenzer and Gaissmaier, 2011). They work by drastically cutting down thinking time and will enable one to proceed in their situations without having to think about their next actions. The use of heuristics often comes in place when the individual needs a quick solution to a problem. While they may be useful in some decision-making cases, they may also be erroneous. Thus, it is safe to say that the fact something worked in the past, does not guarantee that it will indeed work again in the future.

Seeking the same heuristic outcomes as previous experience makes it even more difficult for an individual to come up with alternate ideas or solutions to their problems. Arguably, heuristics are believed to be a sub-standard method for making decisions, however, in a world where there are many unknowns; they are often more accurate than complex methods for inference (Gigerenzer and Gaissmaier, 2011). Heuristics are not rational, as they are based on invalid or imperfect information. However, this does not mean that the decision will result in a negative outcome (Mousavi and Gigerenzer, 2017). On the other hand, there are dangers that could arise from the uncritical use of heuristics, but then again, they can be useful when difficult decisions are required (Elms and Brown, 2013).

According to Mousavi and Shabnam, (2014: 1673), heuristics can be understood as a "decision making strategies that is based on experience." From this point of view, (Gilovich and Griffin, 2002) opined that heuristics are to some degree like strategies that people use consciously and deliberately to simplify judgmental tasks that would otherwise be too difficult to solve. In the other hand, could be used subconsciously, in that way referred to intuition: reduced thinking time, proceed in situation without thinking about next actions (Mousavi and Gigerenzer, 2014). Whether consciously or subconsciously, they are utilised with the intention to reduce the amount of effort required to make decision exclusive of part of the information available (Gigerenzer and Gaissmaier, 2011). Previous reviews have provided a list of heuristics applied in different domains (Raab and Gigerenzer, 2005). Heuristics have been applied in

various fields of studies such as, marketing, sports, management, business to mention few and its application also cuts across interdisciplinary literatures. The application highlighted below but more particularly, focus will be more in its application in entrepreneurship and management

Research has shown that entrepreneurs with a logic based on heuristics can make sense of complex and cryptic situations more quickly and take conventional approaches in making decisions (Mitchell et al., 2007), as opposed to project management processes, where detailed planning and monitoring are carefully considered before the start of a business. Heuristics are quite useful and allow us to cope with the complex environment surrounding our decisions, but sometimes they lead to severe and systematic errors (Tversky and Kahneman, 1974; Baron and Markman, 1999). The well-known 'heuristics and biases' emphasizes the limitations of heuristics (Ayal, 2009; Carlson and Shu, 2007), while the 'fast and frugal heuristics rule' focuses on the superiority of heuristics (DeMiguel and Garlappi, 2009; Gigerenzer, 2008). These biases are created by the tendency to short-circuit a rational decision process by relying on some simplifying strategies, or rules of thumb. Some of these biases are only going to be mentioned but not detailed in this study. They include:

- **Counterfactual thinking**: This is an afterthought in decision-making in which the flawed procedures followed to perform the task are discussed, and various options that could have been developed are considered (Wadeson, 2006).
- **The planning fallacy:** The planning fallacy is a cognitive aspect related to errors in planning, that is, the possible tendency that one can achieve more in a given period than expected. The planning fallacy is the result of people failing to break down multifaceted mental tasks into their different components (Kruger and Evans, 2004). Based on the above argument, it is suggested that heuristics is not a good fit for the present study because it cannot be used to understudy people's behaviour but is primarily related to

only decision making and information processing to explain how people make estimates or choices.

3.5.1   Application of heuristics

Research on heuristics has afforded important insights into our understanding of the cognitive functioning of human beings in general, and entrepreneurs in particular. In entrepreneurship, different aspects of heuristics have been applied to achieve a positive outcome in performance. According to an empirical study by Berg (2014) on local economic development over entrepreneurs' location choice, the entrepreneur makes high-stakes decisions about where to locate businesses or new branches of existing businesses based on threshold conditions.

In an inductive study using a case method, Sun et al. (2018) applied heuristics through simple rules to build business models of three Chinese Internet and technology firms, focusing on business creation and sustainability in a competitive advantage while simultaneously identifying and exploiting new opportunities. The authors generated three key findings: (a) business models emerged from simple rules learned from entrepreneurs' experience, (b) simple rules help entrepreneurs exploit and actualise opportunities in the marketplace, and (c) simple rules helped businesses expand and evolve business models through market feedback, especially internalisation. In the study, the authors depict a more realistic picture of the behaviour of successful entrepreneurs and their business development process.

In project management, Zufferey et al. (2012) performed a Tabu search and algorithm study to solve project scheduling under uncertainty for which assignment costs and incompatibility costs are considered. Tabu search being a higher-level heuristic procedure for solving optimisation problems, it is designed to guide other methods (Glover, 2014). The goal being to assign a time to each job while minimising the total costs, considering that the duration of the project is also a decision variable. Proposing some variations of the problem such as the consideration of prohibited times for some jobs as well as precedence constraints by using heuristics (Tabu

search), resulted in providing good solution in a reasonable amount of time. Similarly, Van Den et al. (2019), integrated study of scheduling resource constraint and personnel problem using heuristic procedure to solve scheduling flexibility to improve the overall performance.

The situation under study comprises a strategic problem that simultaneously decides on the project schedule and the personnel budget. The project schedule determines the required number of resources per time unit to perform the scheduled activities and the personal staffing problem determines the personnel budget, which gives insight on the required personnel size. By considering the project scheduling decision in the staffing decision, Van Den et al. incorporated demand flexibility such that they were able to determine the best staff composition in terms of personnel cost to perform a single project by considering different dedicated decomposition techniques. Results show that although the proposed decompositions strategies focused on one problem, i.e., the project scheduling problem or the personnel staffing problems, considering information from the other scheduling problem improves the performance of the algorithm showing the added value of an integrated approach.

Based on the various applications of heuristics in entrepreneurship and in the project management, decisions were made on limited information or resources. Hence, decision is made under uncertainty. As mentioned earlier, heuristics are illogical, based on invalid or imperfect information. However, decisions made in such circumstances are either positive or negative (Mousavi and Gigerenzer, 2017). While they may be useful in some decision-making cases, they may also be erroneous. Thus, it is safe to say that the fact something worked in the past, does not guarantee that it will indeed work again in the future. Seeking the same heuristic outcomes as previous experience makes it even more difficult for an individual to come up with alternate ideas or solutions to their problems.

3.6 Theory of Reasoned Action

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a behavioural theory initially developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) and acknowledged as one of the most influential theories of human behaviour. According to this theory, the intention to employ a behaviour is a good predictor of the behaviour itself (Engle et al., 2010). Thus, behaviour is dependent on the intention, while intention for behaviour depends on the attitude and subjective norm. The premise of the theory is that the behaviour is under the volition of the subject, meaning that the subject has control to perform or not to perform it (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977). This means that the theory assumes that individuals are usually entirely rational and make systematic use of information available to them. The implications are that "people consider their actions before they decide to engage or not engage in a given behaviour" (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980: 5; Thompson and Panayiotopoulos, 1999).

The immediate determinants of the intent to carry out a given behaviour is the individual attitude towards executing the behaviour in question, and the influence of perceived social norms upon execution of the behaviour. Attitude towards the behaviour is the first determinant, which reflects a person's beliefs that the behaviour leads to specific outcomes and the person's evaluation of those outcomes as favourable or unfavourable. It can be said that the more positive the attitude, the stronger the behavioural intention and, ultimately, the higher the probability that the behaviour would be realised. Thus, attitudes toward a specific behaviour exert their impact via intentions (Conner and Armitage, 1998). Hence, behaviour is solely under the control of intention. It implies that within the domain of applicability of the theory of reasoned action, there is no consideration for behaviours that requires skills, resources, or opportunities that are not freely available or are unlikely not to be predicted by the theory (Fishbein, 1993).

The second determinant is perceived subjective norm, which captures individual perceptions of the extent to which his social environment (e.g., family, friends, co-workers, authority figure or media) influences such behaviour to be normal and

desirable. The more strongly this pressure is experienced, the higher the behavioural intention and, indirectly, the probability that the behaviour will be realised. In a study carried out by Carr and Sequeira (2007), the theory was applied on start-up of a family business. Theory of Reasoned Action examined the relationship between attitudes and behaviours. It was suggested that attitudes towards behaviour are evaluated within the context of subjective norms. These norms, which are the individual's perception of social pressure to engage or not engage in a particular behaviour, are predictive of behavioural intent and ultimately whether the behaviour is exhibited or not.

However, the Theory of Reasoned Action is well rooted in social science (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) and there are some limitations (Godin and Kok, 1996). A critical flaw of theory of reasoned action reported in the literature is that the theory only predicts voluntary behaviour. This assumption fails to acknowledge that individuals' behaviours may be directed, for example, by systemic constraints (external factors). In addition, it is difficult to gain an objective measure of the degree to which behaviour is under a person's voluntary control. Due to the lack of ability of the Theory of Reasoned Action to predict behaviour that was not under complete volitional control, when there were constraints to action, intentions alone were not enough to predict behaviour accurately.

3.6.1   Application of Theory of reasoned action

The theory of reasoned action has been applied in various areas such as sports and exercise, online shopping customer behaviour, small business domain, etc. For example, Chuchinprakarn (2005), in the bid to capture the exponential growth rate of online shopping, applied the theory of reasoned action to on-line transactions between e-sellers and consumers in Thailand, utilising a multiple regression analysis and the ordinary least square (OLS) method to test the hypotheses. According to the theory, two components are expected to influence behavioural intention. These are attitude and the subjective norm, which have significant effects on the intention to shop on-line.

Thompson and Panayiotopoulos (1999) conducted a study to access the predictive capacity of reasoned action theory in a small business environment. This was pertinent considering that small businesses are not so complex, and a single individual frequently takes decisions, which suits the theory's specific concern with behaviours where individuals consider the implications of their actions before deciding whether to act. The overall aim was to establish the efficacy and relative importance of the two predictors (attitude and subjective norm) which derive from theory of reasoned action, in a small business purchase decision. The attitude to the behaviour was found to be a more important predictor than subjective norm.

Moreover, the relative importance of attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control in the prediction of behavioural intentions are expected to vary across behaviours and situations (Ajzen, 1991). Another limitation is the focus of the theory of reasoned action on the individual as opposed to the group of which they are a member (Dutta-Bergman, 2005; Kashima et al., 1993). The theory ignores the context in which individuals exist, and places emphasis solely on the individual actor. Dutta-Bergman (2005) suggested that although proponents of the theory of reasoned action might argue that a subjective norm explains the role of the collective in an individual's decision-making, it is still motivated by an individual's motive orientation. Thus, it keeps the locus of decision with the individual.

Confronted with these inadequacies and limitations, it became apparent that theory of reasoned action is not fit for this research owing to the critical role of the entrepreneur's behaviour. There was a need to include the behavioural aspect, which led to an updated extension to the model, called the 'Theory of planned behaviour.' This follows from the fact that it is a theory that is based on cognition (think and act), and behavioural is utilised.

3.7   The Theory of Planned Behaviour

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) with new determinants of behavioural intention, perceived behavioural control is based on Bandura's concept of self-efficacy (Ajzen 1985). It assesses the degree to which people perceive that they have control over enacting the behaviour of interest. It suggests that individuals are more likely to engage in behaviours they perceive to have control over and are likely not to perform the behaviours over which they perceive to have no control. In addition, Ajzen argued that in a situation where behavioural intention alone would account for only small amounts of the variance in behaviour; it would result in problems of volitional control. In that case, perceived behavioural control should be independently predictive of behaviour. The justification is based on the increase in feelings of control will increase the extent to which individuals are willing to exert additional effort in order successfully to execute a particular behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

The significance of focusing on the theory of planned behaviour, is based on the fact the theory composed of the three determinants, attitudes, subject norm, and perceived behaviour control, which is lacking in theory of reasoned action (Kolvereid and Isaksen, 2006). The theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) is a cognitive-based behavioural theory which argues that behaviour is dependent on the behavioural intention and behavioural control (Amireault et al., 2008; Azjen, 1985, 1991; Collins and Carey, 2007). The approach used to describe human behaviour has been criticised for not connecting cognition with action. This has been bridged by the work of researchers such as Ajzen (1991), by introducing the notion of planning via the theory of planned behaviour. Furthermore, research on entrepreneurs' psychological traits has been disappointing (Delmar and Davidsson, 2000). These authors opined that the route to understanding the career choice of self-employment involves the analysis of both "the individual's value system and cognitive mechanisms with social context" (Delmar and Davidsson, 2000: 5). As such, these authors advocate the use of the following cognitive theories toward a better understanding of the complex phenomenon of entrepreneurship:

- The theory of planned behaviour,

- The theory of self-efficacy (perceived behavioural control, based on Bandura's concept of self-efficacy, one of the components of Theory of Planned Behaviour)

Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (TPB) was developed from the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen, 1991). It is based on the notion that people are rational and that "they take account of available information and implicitly or explicitly consider the implications of their actions" (Ajzen, 2005: 116). This theory is not constrained to predicting human behaviour but is also important in explaining why people behave the way they do. The theory combine concepts from both social and behavioural sciences and is a very useful tool for providing information that is both important and relevant in understanding behavioural performance (Ajzen, 2011). In the theory, according to Engle et al. (2010), an individual's behaviour can be understood and predicted from that individual's intentions to execute that particular behaviour. Furthermore, the main strength of the theory is that it has been utilised across a large number of different disciplines such as nursing, information technology, social policy, social psychology, health psychology, and sociology (Armitage and Christian, 2003; Tavallaee et al., 2017).

The theory of planned behaviour utilises a cognitive framework in developing a model of planned behaviour that gives a special attention to the intention that a person has when executing a particular behaviour (Ajzen, 2011). From the cognition framework, intention is a function of three intentional antecedents which are identified as behavioural belief (influencing attitudes toward a behaviour), normative (influencing one's subjective norms) and control (impacting one's perceived behavioural control) (ibid). These beliefs affect an individual's intentions, and by extension, the individual behaves in a way that is specific to the situation (Engle et al., 2010). An intention results to action (behaviour) if that action is under volitional control, that is, if a person is free to choose whether to perform a particular action or not.

Nevertheless, most actions do not depend solely on volitional control and are dependent on the availability of important resources and opportunities. Therefore, an individual's real control is the result of combining volitional control with certain important prerequisite conditions (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Prerequisite conditions like personal experience and skills (Brasseur et al., 2003) that can help the individual (entrepreneur) organise the resources and identify opportunities. Ajzen, (1991: 182) stated that, "To the extent that a person has the required opportunities and resources, and intends to perform the behaviour, he or she should succeed in doing so."

3.8   Importance of the Theory of Planned Behaviour

In the entrepreneurial context, the theory of planned behaviour thus enhances our understanding of the emergence of entrepreneurial behaviour prior to the onset of any observable action (Kautonen et al., 2017; Kulik et al., 2014; Linan and Chen, 2009). Thus it has notable implications for policy, for example, if the objective is to promote enterprising activity by fostering a culture conducive to entrepreneurship For Thompson (2009), intention is a self-acknowledged conviction that is an individual's intention to start a business venture, is consciously planned and at some point in future carries out the behaviour, which is business start-up. Similar to Kautonen et al. (2011), who posit that an individual that intends to start up a business venture and deliberately plans to do so at some point in the future sees intention in the entrepreneurship context. Research shows that the theory has been broadly applied in empirical studies investigating business creation intentions (Kolvereid and Isaksen, 2006).

Previous applications of the Theory of planned behaviour in the entrepreneurship literature suggest that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control typically constitute variance in intentions (Autio, 2001; Kolvereid, 1996; Krueger et al., 2000; Linan and Chen, 2009; Van Gelderen et al., 2008). It is argued that these factors constitute people's actual control of the behaviour in question and to the extent that perceived control is realistic, it can serve as a substitute for actual control

because entrepreneurial behaviour is not totally under the individual's volitional control (Ajzen, 1991). For instance, dealing with regulations, obtaining financing and acquiring customers introduces contingencies to the process of new venture creation that are beyond the aspiring entrepreneur's complete control. Perceived behavioural control is likely to contribute to the prediction of behaviour over and above its mediated influence via intention. Hence, it solves the problem of the theory of reasoned action regarding explaining behaviours in which the actor does not have full volitional control (Fen and Sabaruddin, 2008).

The perceived behavioural control based on Bandura's concept of self-efficacy assesses the degree to which people perceive that they actually have control over enacting the behaviour of interest (Friedkin, 2010). It is suggested that individuals are more likely to engage in behaviours they feel to have control over and are prevented from carrying out behaviours over which they feel to have no control. As a result, a person who believes himself capable of certain behaviour will exhibit correspondingly a behavioural intention to exhibit a particular behaviour. In a situation where there are problems with volitional control, perceived behavioural control should be additionally and independently predictive of behaviour. The rationale is that individuals will exert additional effort given increased feelings of control and that action not only depends on intentions but also on non-motivational factors such as the availability of opportunities and resources.

Almost all entrepreneurship scholars that have incorporated the theory of planned behaviour into their research establish the foundation that starting, growing a business and various other behaviours related to entrepreneurship are planned behaviours; (Kolvereid and Isaksen, 2006; Krueger et al., 2000; Shook et al., 2003). Krueger et al. (2000) explained that much of human behaviour is planned; therefore, it is difficult to predict starting a business where the emerging firm is launched simply as a conditioned response to a stimulus. In social and behavioural science context, the theory combines concepts as a useful tool, which provides essential information and is relevant to understanding the behavioural intention. In the field of

entrepreneurship, the model considers internal (knowledge, ability) and external (relationship of others, opportunity) control factors that are essential in performing a behaviour (Ajzen and Madden, 1986).

3.9   The model of Theory of planned behaviour expounded

Theory of planned behaviour expounds intention through a simple framework, based on three antecedents as depicted in Figure 3.1.
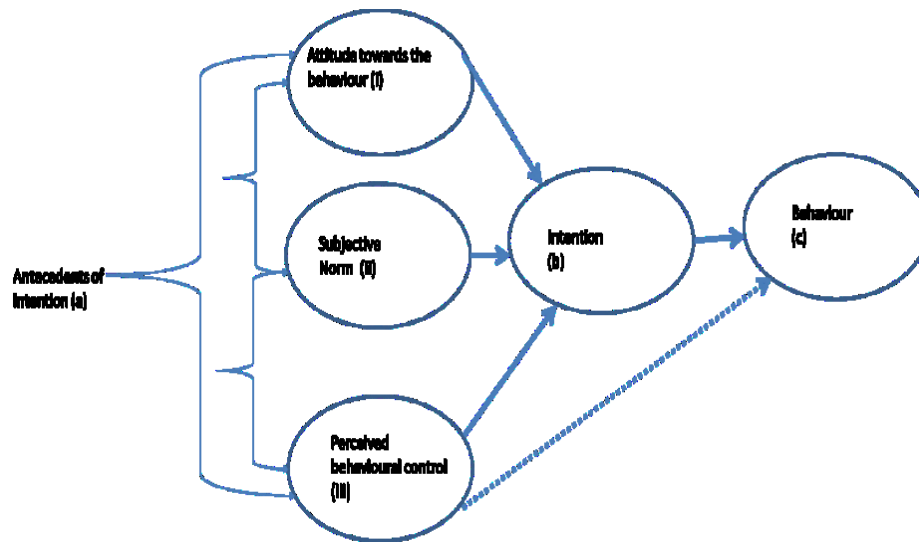
Figure 3.1: Guide to how the Theory of Planned Behaviour is adopted in this study. Source adapted from Ajzen (2005).

The constituents of the theory of planned behaviour framework are discussed in the following order for enhanced clarity: (a) The antecedents of intentions: which encompasses (i) Attitudes toward the behaviour, (ii) subjective norms, and (iii) perceived behavioural control; (b) intentions; and (c) behaviour.

i)   Attitude towards the behaviour (ATB)

The first antecedent is the attitude toward the behaviour, which deals with an individual's favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour. It involves the extent to which a person judges a behaviour as being positive or not. Attitudes are influenced by an individual's behavioural beliefs (personality, values, general attitudes, education, and experience). The entrepreneur's evaluation of engaging in

starting a business leading to growth is the attitude towards the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

ii) Subjective norm (SN)

Subjective norm is the second antecedent of intention referring the perceived social pressure from the society. In this case, it is the pressure that the individual feels is influencing his/her decision to carry out a particular behaviour. Subjective norm is influenced by normative beliefs, that is, whether people who are important to the individual's view the individual's intended behaviour either in a positive or negative light. The important people are families and friends of the individual, which are the social reference groups. The amount of social pressure from salient referents such as family and friends that the entrepreneur perceives regarding the adoption of this behaviour is the subjective norm (Ajzen, 1991).

iii) Perceived behavioural control (PBC)

The third antecedent, which is perceived behavioural control (PBC), is the perceived ease or difficulty of performing a behaviour under a difficult situation (self-efficacy) (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). A strong controlling believe about the enabling factors of a behaviour leads to an increase in the perceived control over that behaviour (ibid). It implies that in certain circumstances, perceived behavioural control could also directly predict behaviour irrespective of intentions, which comprises of attitude and subjective norm and it plays a double role in the theory of planned behaviour. In situations where the degree of control is high over the behaviour, intention precedes and predicts the individual exerting effort and taking action to achieve the goal (Webb and Sheeran, 2006). In such condition, intention completely mediates the effect of perceived behavioural control. However, in situations where there are issues with control, then PBC contributes to the prediction of behaviour and mediates effect via intention, by serving as a substitute for actual behavioural control (Azjen, 1985, 1991).

Perceived behavioural control is influenced by control beliefs which are closely linked to the individual's experience, experiences of others, and available information about a particular behaviour. The perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour is based on the availability of resources, opportunities, experience and anticipated barriers such as government policy (Ajzen 1991). However, the existence of specific resources or barriers is likely to influence the occurrence of a particular behaviour, which means that existent control is not alone in influencing future behaviour.

The influence of a particular behaviour is fundamental to the theory of planned behaviour since the integration of the concept of perceived behavioural control is what differentiates theory of planned behaviour from the theory of reasoned action (TRA). Perceived behavioural control builds on the idea of self-efficacy (Ajzen, 1991; Bandura, 1977), the probability of a behavioural intention (Peterman and Kennedy, 2003). Perceived behaviour control refers to the perception and confidence in an individual's ability to perform a particular behaviour, which fits with Bandura's (1977), concept of self-efficacy (Ajzen, 1991).

3.9.1   Intention

In the framework, an intention is a function of three antecedents: behavioural belief (influencing attitudes toward a behaviour), normative (influencing one's subjective norms) and control (impacting one's perceived behavioural control) (Ajzen, 1991). These beliefs affect an individual's intentions, and by extension, the individual behaves in a way that is specific to the situation (Engle et al., 2010). For example, in entrepreneurship context, it emerges that the entrepreneur's intentions are "important mediating variables between the start-up and external factor influences present" (Krueger et al., 2000: 413). An intention leads to behaviour if an action is under voluntary control, that means if an individual voluntarily chooses whether to perform a particular action or not and is in control to do so. However, most behaviours do not depend entirely on volitional control and are dependent on the accessibility of important resources and opportunities (Sommer, 2011). For that reason, according to Ajzen (1991: 182), "When a person to an extent has the required

opportunities and resources to have the intention to perform the behaviour, he or she should succeed in doing so," which is the perceived behavioural control (PBC).

3.9.2   Intention to Behaviour

Many times behaviour is the most interesting phenomenon for personality and social psychologists (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005). It takes more than intentions to engage in a particular behaviour in order for that behaviour to happen. The intention is temperamental, and intentions remain at the level of a disposition until the moment when an individual decides that the circumstances are reasonably ripe for translation of disposition into action (behaviour). Thus, in a situation where the individual has complete volitional control over the action, the probability of succeeding in carrying out the intention is high. Although Ajzen's (1991, 2005) emphasis is on the predictive value of the theory of planned behaviour model in forecasting future behaviour centred on intentions, he also underlined the explanatory value of his model in illustrating how intentions are formed and how intentions can impact future behaviour. Intentions, however, are susceptible to change over the course of time, particularly when unforeseen events change the circumstances under which the original intentions were formed (Ajzen, 2005). He also explains situations where the passage of time due to unanticipated events, uncovers disruptively new information and mandatorily made the individual to reconsider intentions.

The above highlights the case of an individual with volitional control over the behaviour, which means the person has the resources, opportunities and intention to carry out successfully an intended behaviour, which is the case in this study. The study focuses on entrepreneurs that even in the presence of some degree of uncertainty had total control over the behaviour and successfully carried out their intentions, which is business creation and growth. Furthermore, in Ajzen's works, he listed a number of internal and external factors that can influence how much control an individual has over an intended behaviour. Internal factors comprise (a) Information, skills and abilities; and (b) emotions and compulsions. External factors, which are more situational or environmental, includes (a) the availability of an

opportunity, and (b) dependence on others. Taken as a whole, these internal and external factors represent an individual's 'total control' over a given behaviour.

3.10 Criticism of the theory of planned behaviour

There has been no shortage of criticisms of the theory of planned behaviour, but the theory has received profoundly more praise than criticism. Nevertheless, scholars, including Ajzen himself, have identified some weaknesses in the framework. In effect, Ajzen (1991, 2005) highlights a few of the weaknesses that the TPB framework does not address:

- The inability of the theory to capture cognition change
- The inability to know which antecedent (or combination of antecedents) has impacted the intention of carrying out a particular behaviour
- The intention of carrying out a particular behaviour is not an indication that the behaviour would take place

However, there have been counter views on the above criticisms. For example, regarding behavioural change, it should be noted that the theory of planned behaviour is not a theory of behaviour change. It is meant to help explain and predict people's intentions and behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Evidence from this research tends to counter the critiques (b) and (c), in view of the chosen methodological choice for this study. Nevertheless, the theory can serve as a useful framework for designing effective behaviour change interventions (Ajzen, 2011).

3.11 Justification for TPB application as a lens to review the extant literature

Ajzen (1991) theory of planned behaviour is a well-known social psychological theory of human behaviour. It assumes that the activities of an individual in a given context (a behaviour), the formation of an intention to perform the behaviour, posits that intentions reflect three motivational influences, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Renzi and Klobas, 2008). The control could be because of internal or external factors: internal involves skills, experiences, abilities, and information, while external is more situational or environmental and includes the availability of an opportunity and dependence on others (Ajzen, 1991). The

intentions are believed to capture those motivational factors that influenced the behaviour, in this case (starting and growing a business) following that an intention is an indication both of how hard an individual is willing to work, and the amount of exertion the individual utilised to perform the behaviour (ibid).

According to the theory, the stronger an individual's intention to engage in a behaviour, the more likely the behaviour is accomplished (Ajzen, 1991). Underlining each of these intentional antecedents, respectively, are the individual's beliefs about the outcome of performing the behaviour, opinion of relevant people regarding performing the behaviour, and the individual's ability, and the availability of resources to perform the behaviour. The theory is usually utilised to define the predicted behaviour, and a central concept is the intention to perform the behaviour. In this study, the concerns were not with prediction, but by exploring the role project management processes play in the entrepreneurial activities to achieve growth in their business. For this study, the behaviour of interest centres on business growth by probing the working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England, which situates on entrepreneurs' behaviour in the perspective of project management processes.

In this study, the entrepreneurial activities that led to growth are explored from the perspective of project management processes. The intentional antecedents in the theory of planned behaviour were used as a framework to explain the identified entrepreneurial activities from the literature review and character traits regarded as soft skills in project management. These entrepreneurial activities and project management processes, also known as the growth drivers, are driven by the personal attitudes, but also by social pressure and sense of control towards the behaviour (achieving project objective/ obtaining growth in the business). By applying the theory of planned behaviour, it is possible to explore how successful entrepreneurs use their cognitive abilities to create and manage businesses. The theory helped provide an understanding of how entrepreneurs could exploit project management

processes for business start-up, the implications for the practice on improving business growth, and, ultimately, economic development.

The understanding obtained from the application of the theory of planned behaviour helps to establish a baseline for the analysis and answer the question raised in this study. Therefore, the theory of planned behaviour best fits as a lens for understanding those entrepreneurial activities because the choice made by individual entrepreneurs to grow their business is not entirely under the entrepreneur's volitional control. Thus, rational considerations govern the choice and behaviour of an individual (Ajzen, 1985, 1991; Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005). In the entrepreneurship and project management context, the theory of planned behaviour thus enhances our understanding of the emergence of entrepreneurial behaviour before the onset of any observable action. In this regard, as a notable implication for policy, for example, the objective is to promote enterprising activity by fostering a belief conducive to entrepreneurship (Kautonen et al., 2013; Linan and Chen, 2009).

The chapter will proceed by presenting a summary of the findings, from the entrepreneurial activities and project management processes, which are the growth drivers in the form of a table from the reviewed literature. The entrepreneurial activities and project management processes are the sub-main themes while the intentional antecedents are the main themes. By doing this, the researcher can make a case for the gap in the literature by exploring how successful entrepreneurs use their cognitive abilities to manage business activities.

Table 3-1: Application of Theory of Planned Behaviour on Entrepreneurship and Project management Reviewed literature

Main themes (Antecedents)	Sub-Themes	Entrepreneurship	Project management
Attitude towards behaviour	Risk taking	Entrepreneurs' propensity to take risk lie in the distinction between two kinds of risky situations, namely, between purely chance-related and skill-related risk (Macko and Tyszka, 2009).. The difference between the two kinds of risk is the extent to which the entrepreneur has control over the outcome (ibid).	Many projects fail to achieve project objectives because of insufficient risk assessment by the project manager, thus leading to inadequate anticipated project success. Project managers' responsibility is to assess risk before start of the project (Fabricius and Büttgen, 2015).
	Decision making	The decision to grow the firm is the 'first and foremost strategic decision all entrepreneurs must make in starting a business (Gilbert et al., 2006). The decisions entrepreneurs make in the venture's early years have profound long-lasting implications for performance (ibid: 929).	In a project context, the project manager has to make decisions in order to achieve a set goal or project objectives. The process of decision- making in projects involves many stakeholders, that is, decision —making is a collective process rather than purely individual (Valinis et al., 2005).
	Leadership	An entrepreneur as a leader, combines leadership potentials and entrepreneurial skills such that he combines both managerial skills of giving instructions and leadership potentials (Esmer and Dayi, 2017))	The project manager has to deal with external organisations including varied groups and stakeholders having a special interest or conflicting interest with respect to the project at hand (Pandi-Perumal et al., 2015).
	Innovativeness	The entrepreneurial activities such as innovation leads to the creation of new industry and generating jobs from the established industries (Ribeiro-Soriano, 2017)	An organisation's attitudes toward risk will heavily influence a project manager's ability to drive innovation forward (Gallagher, 2015).
	Communication	Communication skills are vital for the process of entrepreneurship, as it helps to establish trade relations (Abbasi et al., 2011). There is need to emphasised the importance of inculcating communication skills and it has also been identified that entrepreneurs who establish effective communication within and outside their enterprises to become more successful (Adejimola, 2008)	Project managers need to exploit a range of tools and methods to communicate effectively with their team, clients and subcontractors. (Furnell and Scott, 2014). It is the project manager's responsibility to develop not only the project's organisational structure, but to develop the project's communication plan and lines of communication (Zulch 2014).
Subjective norm	Networking	The focus has been on how entrepreneurs' social networking impacts on business growth (Turkina, 2018). According to(Anderson et al., 2010), networking is a socially constructed "premeditated association" for mutual benefits but then again for inaugurating change and evolving growth.	Practicing networking in project management enable the project manager to find solutions or get new ideas to improve chances of project success (Furnell and Scott, 2016).

Table 3-1: Application of Theory of Planned Behaviour on Entrepreneurship and Project management Reviewed literature continued.

	Social Capital	(Kim and Aldrich, 2005) posit that every entrepreneur's dream is to grow in the business; by skilful use of their social ties, entrepreneurs can apparently acquire considerable profits on their social capital, which in return increase their chances of business success.	The importance of collaboration and the need to integrate knowledge and expertise suggests that social capital, founded on trusting relationships, will be essential for project success (Hoecht, 2004; Newell et al., 2004).
Perceived behavioural control	Human capital	Human capital increases the ability of the entrepreneur to undertake the broad entrepreneurial tasks of discovering and exploiting business opportunities and enhancing alertness to identify these opportunities (Tang et al., 2012).	Successful project management relies almost entirely on the human capital that is embodied within the project manager as an individual (Brown et al., 2007).
	Planning		Project planning is widely thought to be an important contributor to project success (Serrador, 2015). Inadequate planning and analysis will lead to project failure (Thomas et al., 2008). In project management, Companies seek the best practices in project management that aid the planning, execution and control of their resources. (Kerzner, 2013)
	Execution		The activities related to actual execution are linked to individual experience, training, capabilities and personal style. Since it is the project manager and project team who execute the project, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the project manager must play a significant role in converting project plans into execution (Marion et al., 2014).
	Monitoring and Control		The project manager at this stage identifies all aberrations from the project management plan and undertakes remedial measures to accomplish the proposed outcome. To ensure gains and completion of goals under the menace of many uncertainties (Aytug et al., 2005; Herroelen and Leus, 2005)

3.12 Summary

In summary, applying theory of plan behaviour on the identified growth drivers and project management processes from the reviewed literatures revealed the commonalities and differences in the two fields. These growth drivers and project management processes are the sub-main themes and while theory of plan behaviour intentional antecedents as the main themes. There was evidence that the entrepreneurial activities and character traits regarded as soft skills in project management are led by intentions driven by the attitudes towards the behaviour, which is business start-up or growth. Similarly, it shows how project management processes supports business start-up and growth and how they key into the narratives of intentional antecedents and behaviour were heighted. By applying the theory of planned behaviour, it is possible to explore how successful entrepreneurs use their cognitive abilities to create and manage businesses. The theory gave an understanding, how entrepreneurs could exploit project management processes for business start-up, the implications for practice on improving firms' growth and therefore economic development. The understanding obtained from the application of theory of planned behaviour will help to establish a baseline for the analysis and answer the question raised in this study. The next chapter of this thesis deals with the overall application of the methodological approach.

Chapter 4   Research Methodology

4.1   Introduction

Following from the literature reviewed in the preceding chapter, the conclusion of which was the identification of a defined research area. What then was required was a strategy of inquiry, which utilised underlying philosophical assumptions to aid any research design, and data collection strategy formulated. Bell et al. (2018) explained that the selection of a suitable research methodology is governed by several factors including the issue(s) to be researched, the key research questions to be answered and the availability of resources. This chapter presents the fundamental concepts and principles related to the research design and methodology. It also outlines the strategy adopted for this research to achieve its aim and objectives. In broad terms, the methodology employed for any research is of critical importance as it largely determines the entire process of answering the research questions.

4.2   Philosophical Perspectives

This research sits within the worldview that believes individuals develop subjective meanings from their experiences "formed through interaction with others" following (Creswell, 2012: 8). Accordingly, this research gave primacy to participants' views, experiences and understanding, because the research was directed at understanding people's business experiences, perceptions and practices, qualitative methodology is the most appropriate choice in keeping with (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) view of suitability of qualitative when aims is to gain understanding. This research philosophy in the domain of entrepreneurship and project management and has also incorporated a behavioural theory to explore the entrepreneurial activities involved in business growth, and to examine whether project management processes are relevant within such context which is business growth.

These activities are uncovered by probing the working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England, using the theory of planned behaviour. The researcher endeavour to understand the subjective experiences of

the individual entrepreneurs therefore requires having a philosophical stance. The study is based indirectly or directly on philosophical perspectives. According to Jackson (2013) all research is based on some underlying philosophical assumptions about what is valid research and which research methods are suitable. Therefore, to successfully conduct research, it is vital to identify these perspectives. Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) as well as others (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln et al., 2011; Saunders et al., 2012) have enumerated the usefulness of philosophical understanding.

4.2.1 Ontological Perspective

Ontology is concerned with the researcher's perspective about how the world operates (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln et al., 2011; Saunders et al., 2012). According to Yin (2016: 338), ontology is the "individuals' philosophical beliefs about what constitutes social reality, and specifically, whether realities are singular or multiple." There are four major ontological positions, such as realism, internal realism, relativism, and nominalism. In this study, focus will be on the ontological perspectives that best fits and support the achievement of the aim and objective, rather than focusing on a discussion of each individual ontological perspective.

The ontological position underpinning this study is relativism. The position of relativism identifies that there are many truths, arguing that scientific laws are not simply out there but there to be discovered. This position also ascertains that these truths are determined by the views of the social actors. Thus, rejects the existence of any possible correct reality (Dieronitou, 2014). Therefore, the relativist ontology assumes that different social actors may have different viewpoints and that what tallies as truth can vary from time to time and place to place (Collins, 2010). Thus, multiple truth. Views are relative to differences in perceptions and considerations, therefore, there is no universal truth (Pojman, 1995), particularly those of the social sciences (e.g behaviour of individuals), could be defined and experienced differently by different individuals (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). In addition, describes the researcher's viewpoint on how truth can be identified, its position and experience of

it (ibid). According to this view, there are multiple realities since there are differently experiences. Nevertheless, ontological position can be a single (objectively) or multiple reality (subjectively) when investigated (Ansari et al., 2016).

This study centres on multiple realities and identifies that social actors concerned with their existence (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012) unarguably create social phenomena. The key consideration for ontological positions is "whether social entities have a reality that is external and independent of the social actors or whether reality can and should be considered as social constructions formed from the perceptions and actions of social actors"(Bryman and Bell, 2015: 32; Saunders et al., 2015). Whereas the former is referred to as objectivism, the latter is called subjectivism (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Cohen et al., 2007). Therefore, human interests are the main driver of science and the interest in most cases results to behaviour (Zhao et al., 2013). Nothing exists outside of human thoughts. Thus, reality is a human experience, and human experience is reality. It believes that experience is based in relation to some other aspect of reference such as education, environment, family background and society. Having said that reality is considered socially constructed, built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

Thus, social phenomena and categories not only are produced through social interaction but also in a constant state of change. It implies that the social world and its categories are not external to individuals but are built up and constituted in and through interaction. For this research, the entrepreneurs' activities in the society or environment is to participate in it, at the same time shaping and experiencing it (Heron and Reason, 1997). In the study, the entrepreneurs, through their experiences, construct meaning of their experiences differently (Crotty, 1998). Entrepreneurs, being human, likewise interact with their environment. These entrepreneurs, through their experiences, construct meaning of those experiences differently (Crotty, 1998). Entrepreneurs, being human, likewise interact with their environment. It can be argued that although entrepreneurs are capable of acting freely, their behaviour and actions are often influenced by interaction with their

environment (Nind and Todd, 2011; Willis, 2007; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Social actors, such as the successful entrepreneurs, may interpret their experiences differently, therefore, individual entrepreneurs perceives different situations in varying ways as a result of their views of the world (Denzin, 2017). The researcher thus gains understanding by interpreting the perceptions of the entrepreneurs (Lincoln et al., 2011).

The researcher's views of the entrepreneurs in this study are subjective, and they are the social actors because they work in a particular social context. Therefore, their experiences have shaped the perspectives of things and the world. The researcher's interaction with the entrepreneurs, from a relativist-ontological perspective, is through a face-to-face discussion while sitting and listening to their narratives and their stories. (Remenyi et al., 1998) draw attention to the importance of studying the details of the context to understand the reality or possibly a reality working behind them, and this is often associated with the term 'constructionism.' Thus, the following relates to the interpretive epistemology. Hence, it is necessary to explore the subjective meanings and motivations behind the actions of social actors to enable the researcher to understand these actions (Saunders et al., 2015).

4.2.2   Epistemological perspective

Epistemology mainly concerns with what constitutes acceptable knowledge and what information a researcher considers to be significant in a field of research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln et al., 2011; Saunders et al., 2012). Epistemology according to Easterby-Smith et al. (2012: 18) is a "general set of assumptions about ways of inquiring into the nature of the world." It is one of the main areas of philosophy that is concerned with the theory of knowledge (Grix, 2002). Knowledge on entrepreneurship is thus produced through articulating and understanding how these individuals (entrepreneurs) and collectives – subjectively and inter-subjectively – construct those activities as unfolding processes (Downing, 2006). The main philosophy behind the researcher enquiry is to explore entrepreneurial growth drivers (leadership, planning, innovation, networking) to mention few, involved in

business growth and to examine whether project management process (Planning, execution, monitoring, and control) are relevant within such context in the North West of England and contribute to academic knowledge and professional practice. Therefore, the epistemological position for this study is 'Interpretivism'. This is because the subjects (successful entrepreneurs) ascribe meaning to their experiences that led to different interpretation (Willig, 2013).

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), Shah and Al-Bargi (2013), the ontological stand of Interpretivism is relativism which has a position that reality is subjective and varies from person to another person. In some reference made about reality, it is considered truth, which is, constructed individually (Frowe, 2001). Interpretivism implies social constructionism in some studies and has an ontological position that explains social phenomena as being socially constructed (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Given that entrepreneurship and project management are socially constructed concepts it is therefore meaningful to create knowledge on the interaction processes in which the concepts are produced and reproduced (Dailey and Browning, 2014) by employing the theory of planned behaviour. Social constructionism centres on how people make sense of the world around them by sharing their experiences with others (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002). Therefore, the primary aim of Interpretivism is to understand the reason individuals have diverse experiences in social interaction and the continued changes.

Crotty (1998) believes that consideration of ontological questions should go simultaneously with epistemology, claiming the two are mutually dependent and difficult to distinguish conceptually when discussing issues related to research (Scotland, 2012). Comparatively, the ontological question involves the philosophy of reality, while the epistemological question concerns how the reality is known: that is, the study of knowledge, the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the knowledge to be obtained (Collis and Hussey, 2014) and, most fundamental, what is considered to be evidence for that knowledge (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). From the point of view, Crotty (1998) argument was based on construction of meaning

(epistemology) which is to discuss about construction of a meaningful reality (ontology).

Epistemology offers a universal set of assumptions about ways of inquiry into the nature of the social world. From a social constructivist perspective in this study, knowledge about entrepreneurship is knowledge to understand how those entrepreneurial activities those factors that drive business growth from the perspective of project management processes. Similarly, successful entrepreneurs as the social actors in this study play their part through their working practices and experiences in achieving business growth, and they interpret their daily social roles in accordance to the meanings they give to those roles. They also interpret the social roles of others with their own set of meanings. In other words, the researcher interprets the social roles that conform to the individual's own sets of meaning through multiple lenses of viewing the world (Cooper and Schindler, 2011; Saunders, 2012). Knowledge in this perspective is derived from the meaning of occurrence (Richardson, 2012). This position relates to relativist ontology, which assumes that realities exist in terms of multiple mental constructions (Guba, 1990; Guba and Lincoln, 2005).

Consequently, the goal of this approach is to obtain knowledge by interpreting the perceptions of individuals (Lincoln et al., 2011). According to this perspective, universal, absolute knowledge is impossible. The image perceived is dependent on the individual perceiving—there is no right or wrong image. The researcher being a relativist with the Interpretivism perspective adopts an empathetic stance, enters the social world of the entrepreneurs, and understands the world from their point of view. From the foregoing, the relativist ontology and interpretative epistemology best fit the philosophical stance for this research because truth is a construction of realties, so the world can be interpreted in many similarly reasonable ways. From the relativist or social constructivist perspective, in this study, it is necessary to explore the subjective meanings of the actions of the successful entrepreneurs towards

venture growth in the perspective of project management processes for the researcher to be able to understand these actions (Saunders et al., 2016).

4.2.3 Axiological Perspective

Axiology as a branch of philosophy concerns ethics, aesthetics, and values that play an important role in forming a part of the fundamental philosophical aspects of paradigms (Lincoln et al., 2011). It indicates that people's values are the main reasons for encouraging them to participate in a particular action (Heron, 1996). Axiology also focuses attention on the concerns about the role values and ethics play within the research process (Saunders et al., 2016) taking into consideration the values is very crucial. These values and ethics simultaneously are applied, in that it considers what is right (Mingers, 2003). Thus, the philosophical perspective of axiology relates to judgements about value in the context of the research.

This research aims to explore the phenomenon under investigation, which is the entrepreneurial activities (leadership, planning, innovation, networking, communication) involved in business growth and to examine whether project management processes (Planning, execution, monitoring, and control) are relevant within such context. In this regard, this research lays strong emphasis on the personal interactions with the individual entrepreneurs who construct and shape the phenomenon. Thus, the researcher in this study is part of the research process because the researcher interprets the social roles that conform to the individual's own sets of meaning through multiple lenses of viewing the world (Cooper and Schindler, 2011; Saunders, 2012).

In connection with this view, the axiology in this research is value-laden. The view is compatible with the axiological position of the constructionist, who believes researchers cannot be separated from the sense-making process (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). According to Lincoln et al. (2011), these values have a significant effect on the research process to a certain extent, such as developing the research question, the theoretical framework, deciding methods of both data collection and analysis,

choosing the research context, dealing with values already established within the research context, and making a choice of presenting findings. It can be argued that there is a strong link between axiological assumptions and the other two philosophical assumptions, ontology, and epistemology. It can be extended by claiming that this relationship is completed only when axiological reflections are considered (Aldawod and Day, 2017).

Studying the values of knowledge and how these values are gained is important to this study. The question lies on what is valuable in exploring on those entrepreneurial activities that drive growth in a business from the perspective of project management in the North West of England. This question takes on the reflection of exploring potential synergies between entrepreneurship and project management through connecting academic research to practice in the context of business growth. The entrepreneurs' intentions affect growth of the micro, small and medium businesses (businesses with 0-249 employees) (Ioniţă, 2013; Gherhes et al., 2016). Utilisation of the valued theoretical framework (theory of planned behaviour) serves as a lens in which the extant literature and data was analysed, drawing out how the entrepreneurial activities (risk-taking, decision-making, innovation, etc.) drives growth in business through the perspective of project management processes.

In addition, the axiological position in this study is value-laden and Interpretivism by its nature encourages the value of qualitative data in search of knowledge. Axiology considers that values and beliefs helps to shape what is recognised as facts and various interpretation that are drawn from them (Collis and Hussey, 2014). It implies that the researcher cannot be detached from the phenomenon studied while trying to make sense from the subjects' interpretation, which confines to the nature of the subject being explored in this research.

4.2.4   Methodological perspective

Similar to the research philosophies, methodological consideration is a crucial aspect of a research study that relates to how research should be undertaken, including the

theoretical and philosophical assumptions upon which research situates and the implications of these for the method or methods adopted (Saunders et al., 2012). In view of this, this section of the research is related to uncovering the various steps of the research carried out by the researcher with the aim of reaching a solution to the research problem. Therefore, it enables the researcher to maintain and construct mechanisms to an action plan and make informed choices about the design of the research, which guides her through different stages of her research (Saunders et al., 2016). Understanding research methodology is critical because it allows the researcher to analyse the presented knowledge critically.

In this respect, Quinlan et al. (2015: 397) describe the methodology as: "the entire approach to a research project; the process by which the research is undertaken; a means of supporting the philosophical assumptions that underpin the research project." Therefore, methodology covers all research considerations from generating a research question to presenting the research findings. The choice of methodology depends on the type of knowledge to be gained. The researcher has a relativist worldview with multiple perspectives of reality (the notion of an Interpretivist) and draws near to the participants under investigation to understand their world. Thus, the method chosen should allow the participants being investigated to disclose their nature during the enquiry process. In contrast, to the positivist researcher, where emphasis is or the process of testing hypothesis and is exemplified in the methods adopted by natural scientists, thus, a quantitative approach. In this study, there is a need to make the distinction between a method and a methodology. Method describes the techniques researchers utilise, such as qualitative interviews, observation, and focus groups to obtain and analyse data.

As a relativist with an Interpretivism perspective, the methodological choice for this research is a qualitative approach, the information gathered is mainly in textual form and this fits best for this study. The reason for undertaking a qualitative research is that it promotes the idea of accepting multiple realities (Creswell, 2013). In this regard, Saunders et al. (2012) argues that interpretivists prefer to adopt qualitative

research for answering their research questions. The above argument is relevant for this study because a gap in knowledge between entrepreneurship and project management in the perspective of project management processes towards business growth requires to be correctly understood through in-depth enquiries. Such enquiries can be guided by undertaking qualitative research (Flick, 2014).

Qualitative research is often described as a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible (Creswell, 2013) and aims to understand how people experience events and make sense of the world (Willig, 2013). In addition, qualitative research seeks to understand social phenomena regarding the meaning people bring to them (Boeije, 2010). It suggests that there are multiple realities because there are various meanings to social phenomena as mentioned earlier, being the stance of a relativist worldview. The researcher draws near and establishes a close relationship with the participants to make sense of their world through personal interaction (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008).

Additionally, qualitative research has exceptional value for investigating complex subjects, and it is exploratory study utilised when there is limited knowledge about a topic. It is exemplified in the works of some scholars (e.g. Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Domegan and Fleming, 2007; Henning et al., 2004) argued that human learning is best researched via qualitative data. The researcher attempts to become more familiar with the phenomenon of interest, achieve a deep understanding of how people think about a topic, and describe in detail the perspectives of the research participants. Hence, qualitative research is most appropriate. Therefore, qualitative approach being the methodological choice selected for this study should allow the participants being investigated to unveil information during the enquiry process and enable the researcher to interpret the unveiled information. Doing so allows the researcher to close the gap between entrepreneurship and project management, particularly from the project management process perspectives, in a way that shapes or changes the way entrepreneurs practice project management processes to enhance business growth in future.

In business and in management put in context, the researcher aims to contribute to existing knowledge and be a change agent. The part of utilisation is to effect change. Consequently, the research findings would be mostly subjective (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). The researcher will be interpreting the social role that conforms to the individual's own sets of meaning in the topic of this research.

4.2.5   Justification for chosen methodology

Qualitative methodology is chosen to understand the phenomenon under investigation. The aim is not to count but to see the bigger picture. Thus, this study is exploratory in nature and seeks to tap into the lived experiences of the participants. Its purpose would be realised only through direct conversation with the participants. Therefore, quantitative methodology and method would not be appropriate. The qualitative methodology recognises modes of enquiry particularly in social and behavioural perspectives (Hammarberg et al., 2016). The justification for this selection is that qualitative research would help the researcher in explaining the participants' experience more explicitly based on their storytelling (Daher et al., 2017; Yilmaz, 2013).

Arguably, in terms of methodology, the researcher attempts to explore the entrepreneurial activities (leadership, planning, innovation, networking, communication, etc.) involved in business growth and to examine whether project management processes (Planning, execution, monitoring, and control) are relevant within such context. Few exploratory studies have been conducted in this area. For this study, the researcher adopted qualitative exploratory research design (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Easterby-Smith et al., 2008, 2012; Saunders et al., 2009).

The researcher would allow herself to be immersed within the world of the participants to make sense of their narratives (Pietkiewicz et al., 2014). It would also provide the researcher with a more holistic view of the reality contained in the participants' behaviour towards growth. Notwithstanding, scholars like (Newman and Benz, 1998; Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998)

suggest that qualitative and quantitative research may not stand in isolation. The purpose of this research, which is strongly related to exploring human social perspective and experiences, indicates that a mono-method research choice, particularly a qualitative research methodology (Arbnor and Bjerke, 2009) is required to answer questions and meet the research objectives.

4.3   Research Processes

According Ritchie et al. (2013), the general philosophy of enquiry, underpinning the social scientific method consists of two processes: inductive and deductive. The explicit roles the inductive and deductive processes play as regards each other depends upon the unique and unfolding dynamics of any research. They can be used independently or concurrently by the researcher within a study (Saunders et al., 2016). Conversely, despite the exact degree of influence of the two procedures, there tends to be a mutual interplay of influences rather than a single directional flow predominantly or most circumstances (Layder, 1998). Therefore, some highlights on the two processes are considered and the one process domineering is chosen and a justification for selection discussed.

4.3.1   Inductive Processes

The inductive process is characterised as a move from the specific to the general (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Typically, in this process, it is generally believed that the observations are the starting point for the researcher, and patterns are looked for in the data (Beiske, 2007). In this type of process, there is an absence of framework that initially informs the data collection and the research focus can thus be formed after the data has been collected (Flick, 2011). While this imaginably, seen as the point at which new theories are generated, however, most times the analysed data is found to fit into an existing theory (Bryman and Bell, 2011). This method is commonly employed in qualitative research, where the absence of a theory informing the research process is of benefit by reducing the potential for research bias in the data collection stages (ibid).

4.3.2   Deductive Processes

According to Ketokivi and Mantere (2010) and Saunders et al. (2012), the deductive process indicates that the conclusion drawn logically from a set of premises would be true if all the premises were true. Thus, it shows that the logic of an argument relates with the premises to its conclusion Ritchie et al. (2013). In respect to that, the process is built to direct research studies Saunders et al. (2016). In the deductive process, researchers develop hypotheses or propositions (research questions) related to a theory from the academic literature and design a research strategy by which to examine it (Saunders and Lewis, 2018). The research question is related to the theoretical perspectives, which explains the concepts and relationships under study. Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007); and Saunders et al. (2009) claimed that in some cases a theory is established before the collection of data. To provide replication to ensure reliability, the inductive process needs to adopt highly structured methodology (Gill and Johnson, 2010; Saunders et al., 2012).

4.3.3   Selection of appropriate process for this study

This thesis expands on an inductive approach to qualitative research within a relativist worldview. As mentioned earlier in this section 4.2.2 in this chapter, that the researcher explores the subjective meanings of the actions of the successful entrepreneurs business growth in the perspective of project management processes to understand those actions and interpret them. Hence, follows the scientific tradition of '*Verstehen*,' whose fundamental aim is to understand the contemporary social world from the action and subjective experience of the research object (Chowdhury, 2014; Dudovskiy, 2018; Welch et al., 2011). Therefore, building on these premises, the benefit derived by the successful entrepreneur from project management towards achieving business growth is explored. The researcher's adoption of an inductive process to qualitative data does not primarily rest on the state of previous theory but on a fundamental interest in the subjective perspectives of individuals. It is important to mention that Saunders argues how qualitative methods are a good fit for inductive processes (Saunders et al., 2009). He further claims that while the researcher often makes a conscious choice about whether to

use inductive or deductive process, in practice, there are usually elements of both (ibid).

This argument was supported by Graebner et al. (2012), to some degree, concurs with Saunders et al. (2009) but asserted that some interpretive studies tackle phenomena with prior theory, which is the case in this research. Some researchers begin with no specific constructs or theories in mind but realise during data analysis that some definition or framework can be drawn from the existing literature (Graebner, 2009). Such an approach is referred to as inductive and is often adopted by qualitative researchers for their data analysis when there is no prior existing theory (Graebner et al., 2012), thus theory building. However, Graebner et al. counter this view. They argued that in an inductive approach the researcher can begin with existing theory. ie theory is used to unravel the research question and down to data analysis (Graebner et al., 2012). The posit is in agreement with Dudovskiy (2018) who suggested that existing theories can still be involved during formulating research questions and objectives.

The general and intrinsic characteristics of the inductive process are evident in this study (Liu, 2016). Firstly, the researcher employed existing theory to formulate the research questions explored (Saunders et al., 2012). In an inductive process, patterns, resemblances, and regularities in experience are identified to reach conclusions (Dudovskiy, 2018). The belief that all qualitative research is purely inductive originates from the fable that all qualitative research is theory building. Thus, a need to specify the reason for utilising the particular research approach (Graebner et al., 2012). Thus, an inductive research process entails using qualitative data and diverse data collection methods to explore different views of phenomena (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2012).

Secondly, the researcher adopted small sample data, which is again an indication of the inductive approach. It is generally believed that the inductive approach requires a small sample of research subjects as it deals with contexts and events that have

already occurred (Saunders et al., 2012) and is mainly associated with the qualitative research design (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Saunders et al., 2012). The above mentioned are the characteristics of an inductive process that evident in this study. Applying them provides the researcher an insight into the social world. This was achieved by using different methods, such as in-depth interviews and conversations.

Finally, the theoretical framework in this study, to extract themes from the literature and interview transcripts, is associated with an inductive approach that has been reported in previous works (Anfara and Mertz, 2015). The inductive process to qualitative research adopted in this study is such that the theoretical framework selected has been used and tested in prior works. The themes were drawn from existing literature before data collection (Anfara and Mertz, 2015; Collins and Stockton, 2018), and this is associated with an Inductive approach. Therefore, the theory serves as a framework to guide this research. The benefit of this process is that it gives a regular basis from which to study an individual's subjective experiences by analysing data based on emerging themes from the literature review. This approach will enable this study to obtain an holistic picture and help understand the phenomenon under investigation (Maxwell, 2013; Merriam and Tisdell, 2016) with a focus on experiences and practices of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England.

4.4   Research Strategy

Research conducted under the Interpretivism paradigm has a wide choice of strategies (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017), and it involves a comprehensive arrangement on how the researcher attempts answering the research question(s) (Saunders et al., 2016). The adoption of strategies depends on what the researcher intends to achieve in the study. This study emphasises the need to understand the background, experiences and working practices of the entrepreneurs in a way that may assist in the formulation of suitable policies beneficial to the entrepreneurs' practices in their business towards achieving growth, as well as improving the practice and enhancing the process of entrepreneurship. In that respect, the researcher employs a

qualitative exploratory research design to research strategy (Cope, 2014; Creswell, 2009; Hanohov and Baldacchino, 2018; Sarantakos, 2013).

As the term suggests, exploratory research strategy deals with exploring into the phenomenon. The qualitative exploratory research strategy of this study is adopted from the qualitative research methodology. The methodological bases of this study focus on how the researcher and subjects interprets their world and attempts to fuse their perspectives of meaning (Silverman, 2013). Few studies have utilised this strategy such as (IJeghede, 2018) in the research.

Employing an exploratory research in this study intends to explore the research questions and does not intend to offer final and conclusive solutions to existing issues, rather contributes to an existing knowledge. Thus, tends to tackle new issues on which little or no previous research has done (Brown, 2006) or there is an initial understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Sarantakos, 2013). Concerns have been raised regarding the lack of detailed knowledge and understanding by some social scientists of the nature and procedure of an exploratory study (Manson et al., 2010). In social science, the great majority of exploratory research involves a qualitative approach (Stebbins, 2001; Creswell, 2009). The exploratory approach, thus, facilitate in the researcher's attempt to unravel the way successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England view the context of business growth in the perspective of project management processes.

It is worth mentioning that to the best of the researcher's knowledge, before the present research undertaking no concerted attempt has been made to examine entrepreneurship in the context of business growth with the explicit application of project management process. Thus, the researcher attempts to have a best capture of the lived experiences, views and background values of the research participants (Fejszes, 2017; Saunders et al., 2012; Silverman, 2013) via exploration of individual experiences (Cope, 2014). This is in line with the relativist/interpretivist belief that the research subject constructs reality and this needs understanding (Crotty, 2003).

According to Sarantakos (2013) a qualitative exploratory research design is employed in a study when there is an initial understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. There has been an initial research regarding literatures that considers synergies between entrepreneurship and project management exclusion of business growth through the perspective of project management processes.

This study explores those entrepreneurial activities that drives business growth in the perspective of project management processes. The utilisation of the qualitative exploratory research design aids a better understanding via exploration of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England views on business growth, which are difficult to measure with quantitative studies (Kalu and Bwalya, 2017). The broad purpose of this exploratory study is to gain new insight into the phenomenon under investigation (Brink and Wood, 1998). This qualitative research emphasises the exploration of individual experiences (Cope, 2014). It will allow the researcher to discover the meaning seen by those who are being researched and to understand their view of the world (Willig, 2013). Hence, enables the researcher to see events through the eyes of the participants.

4.4.1 Justification for chosen strategy

The choice of research strategy depends on what the researcher intends to achieve in the study. For this research, the situation of the moment is in focus: exploring synergies between entrepreneurial activities and project management processes that support business growth in the North West of England. It is argued, in practice, that the entrepreneurs are using many of the same project management processes as are used in project management, but often without conscious awareness or acknowledgment. The qualitative exploratory strategy requires understanding the perception of the successful entrepreneurs in their social world of business, which is of great concern and directs towards uncovering new sight (Qu and Dumay, 2011). The researcher, from a relativist perspective which believes that reality is not distinguishable from the subjective experiences of individuals, embraces the premise

that multiple realities and meanings exist, and these depend on and are co-created by the researcher (Lincoln et al., 2011; Yin, 2014).

This philosophical versatility allows the researcher the opportunity to decide the methodological orientation employed in the undertaken qualitative exploratory research design, given its evolving research design and flexibility. Qualitative research seems especially appropriate for exploratory studies in entrepreneurship research. Its use could help in exploring new insights to help make the changes at which entrepreneurs practice project management processes to enhance business growth in future, as mentioned earlier. In addition, it could help to formulate better policies for the future. Applying it in this study, is to gain an in-depth understanding of a real-life phenomenon that includes important contextual conditions, i.e., to explore, seek understanding and establish the meaning of experiences from the perspectives of those involved (successful entrepreneurs) (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Merriam, 2009). It implies that the researcher will explore, understand and present the subjective views and experiences of the successful entrepreneurs and get close to them in their natural setting (Creswell, 2013). Even though the participants are the social actors and work in a particular social context, this does not mean they have the same perspective in the same social environment.

Therefore, the qualitative exploratory strategy is thus more appropriate in achieving the aim of an understanding of the connection between entrepreneurship and project management literature by using the theory of planned behaviour. It intends to give rise to a situational model, based on the successful entrepreneurs' perceptions, that enriches current research by offering new insights with rich information on the factors that tend to be perceived as associated with project management processes by extension, business growth that has not been done before in this geographical context. Thus, exploratory research suits the aim and objectives of this present study.

4.5   Research Sampling

Selection of participants for an interview is a critical issue influenced by the research question and needs of the study. As mentioned earlier in chapter one, the geographical context in which this study is based is the North West of England and focus on the micro, small and medium industries. To enable the reader to have a detailed knowledge of the size of business that had been considered in this study, the researcher chose to expound on and provide a clear definition of these different sizes of businesses. The first criteria for choosing the sample was based on the official definition of Small and Medium Business Enterprises adopted from a statistical analysis of firms in the United Kingdom in 2017. The standard definition of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is any business with fewer than 250 employees, while micro businesses are from 0-9 employees (Rhodes, 2017).

Therefore, the present study focuses on companies with fewer than 250 employees, as well as micro enterprises. Further to Rhodes's statistical studies, in 2017, the number of enterprises in the North West of England increased by about 2% to 530 from 522 in the previous year (Rhodes, 2017). The present study is not constrained to a particular industrial sector. Instead, it explores data from various industries in the North West of England. This research study seeks to explore entrepreneurs of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), their working practices and experiences in utilising project management processes towards achieving business growth. Therefore, the essence of the study is to explore potential synergies between entrepreneurship and project management by adopting a qualitative approach to uncover whether and how project management processes are being used by entrepreneurs (through entrepreneurial activities) in successfully running their businesses.

This study is restricted to the geographical region of North West of England. The scope of this study is also limited by applying the theoretical framework, which is the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) derived from already established studies in different contexts rather than seeking an understanding of the factors affecting

business growth from scratch. Although the theoretical framework centres on several studies in different contexts, the present study does not compare between entrepreneurs from other geographical regions. Hence, the study can be applied as a benchmark for other geographic areas while researching into business growth. Given the fundamental role of entrepreneurs in micro, small, and medium enterprises, most previous studies consider them as the key stakeholder within the firm (Freeman et al., 2007). Thus, the study explores the experiences of successful entrepreneurs, and not as an employed manager in an organisation (intrapreneur). The research focuses on businesses established for at least three years.

4.6 Sampling criteria/selection

The choice of a sample selection in a study depends on the overarching aim and objectives of this research (Denscombe, 2010). Obtaining a contextual knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon was an important part of this research, finding this deeper knowledge and understanding can be achieved by means of non-probability sampling of the population (Saunders et al., 2012; Fejszes, 2017). It implies that participants within this study was applicable to those who fulfilled a specific criterion, possessing knowledge on the research phenomenon (Babbie, 2010; Fejszes, 2017). In this qualitative study, the samples are chosen in a deliberate manner and the reason of selecting the specific instances is to have research samples that will yield the most relevant data. In essence, they must be information rich, given the topic of study (Yin, 2016). In this study, a non-probability sampling technique is employed focusing on purposive and snowball sampling technique adopted as most appropriate sampling strategies.

4.6.1 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling of participants and conducting in-depth interviews as applied to this research involves the selection of each sample element for a purpose, because of the unique position of the sample elements (Schutt, 2014; Yin, 2016). Therefore the purposive sampling of individuals is based on the assumption that the individuals possess knowledge and experience with a phenomenon of interest (Palinkas et al.,

2015) and on the researcher's choice of a potential participant with regards to specific criteria or experience of the examined phenomenon (Cresswell and Clark, 2011). Likewise, availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner are also essential (Bernard 2002, and Palinkas et al., 2015). Hence, the sample technique uses the distinguishing features of the target population as the basis for the selection of research samples. Furthermore, research participants are chosen in this study as needed rather than as predetermined. The selection processes, therefore, require an initial clarity in terms of the criteria for sample selection to control the impact the participants may have on the scope of this study.

The purpose of selecting successful entrepreneurs for this study is because they are experienced and knowledgeable about entrepreneurship, have been running their businesses for up to three years and contributes to economic growth. Criteria for the successful entrepreneur in this research include the number of years in the current business. In this case, the entrepreneurs are assumed successful if their business has been in operation for up to three years. The notion is supported by Vesper (1990), who revealed that only 10% of business survive after three years of operation. They can provide in-depth information of interest.

4.6.2 Snowball Sampling

The exploratory nature of this study also entails the use of the snowball sampling strategy. In this sampling method, the sample elements are selected as they identified by successive participants (Yin, 2016), thus, referrals from one participant or source to another (ibid). For instance, at the end of each individual interview session, the researcher on having conversation with the interviewed, sometimes learned about other prospective research participants who can be interviewed through the previously interviewed participants, on which left on her own would be unable to identify or contacted. Hence, snowballing occurs, as researcher follows such lead resulting to new research participants (Yin, 2016).

Therefore, snowball sampling is useful for hard-to-identify population for which there is no sampling frame, but then again, the members of the population are interconnected or familiar with each other (Schutt, 2014). In that respect, provide to some extent, certain degree of completeness since the most readily available data sources are more likely to be the most informative ones. In this research, the successful entrepreneurs provided useful information from the start-up to the growth of their business. This information allowed the researcher to conclude on those growth drivers and project management processes often utilised for business growth.

In practice, it became apparent that it is impossible to achieve an equal gender split in the sample because very few successful female entrepreneurs were interviewed who met the sample criteria. In a qualitative study, it is not obligatory to achieve statistically balanced samples based on a demographic such as gender (Dickinson et al., 2012). Preferably, the emphasis on who is chosen should be to provide the greatest breadth of experience among participants who meet the sample criteria (Abrams, 2010; Etikan et al., 2016). The differences in gender among successful entrepreneurs are evidenced in this research. The sampling strategies chosen within these target participants are depicted in Figure 4.1
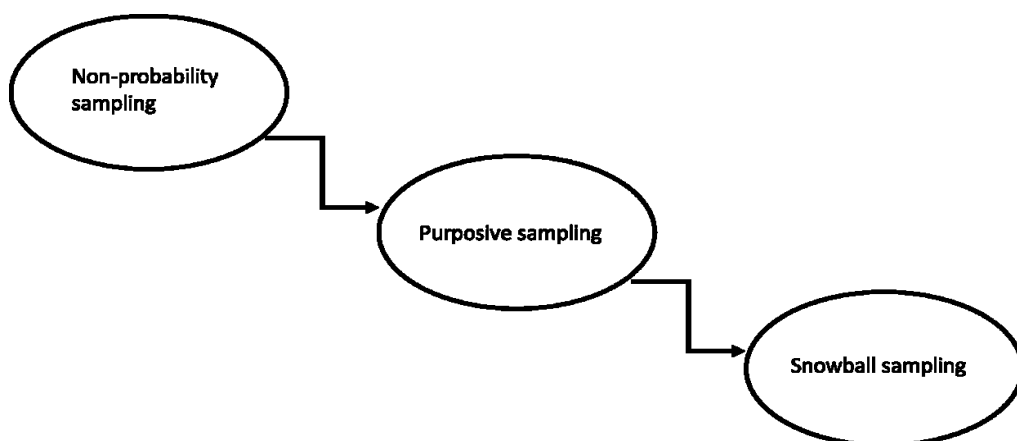
Figure 4.1:The sampling strategies chosen within these target participants

4.7   A Brief background profile on the individual participants

With the view to examining those entrepreneurial growth drivers and project management processes responsible for the success of the entrepreneurs in their business within the business growth context, a brief profile of the individual entrepreneurs is highlighted. The entire 40 of the entrepreneurs had successfully established their businesses at least three years before the interview. The sample draws from diverse sectors of the economy. The table below provides detailed profile of the forty entrepreneurs that were interviewed. It contains the gender, age, number of employees, of each entrepreneur and pseudonym used to maintain anonymity as agreed by the researcher. Table 4.1 Summary of interview participants

Table 4-1: Summary of interview participants

No.	Participant (P)	Gender	Age range	Level of Education	Number of employees	Business Sector	Year of business at interview
1	Jamie	Male	55-59	A levels	14	Distributor	13
2	Paul	Male	45-49	A levels	27	Financial	14
3	Lizzie	Female	50-54	University Graduate	150	Information system technology	25
4	Pete	Male	35-39	University Graduate	1	Marketing	7
5	Jonah	Male	40-44	University Graduate	5	Social Media	4
6	Julie	Female	40-44	University Graduate	30	Cleaning Services	9
7	Olly	Male	40-44	University Graduate	12	Recruitment	13
8	Zac	Male	45-49	University Graduate	4	Digital Transformation	4
9	Susie	Female	50-54	University Graduate	2	Wine testing event	3
10	Joe	Male	55-59	University Graduate	17	Software development	3
11	Alex	Male	40-44	University Graduate	44	IT Services	6
12	Sandi	Female	50-54	University Graduate	10	Childcare	4
13	Ng	Female	45-49	University Graduate	10	Food	5
14	Mick	Male	70-74	University Graduate	4	Service	22
15	Jack	Male	35-39	University Graduate	5	Systems design	7
16	Lauren	Female	45-49	University Graduate	1	Childcare	5
17	Kemy	Female	45-49	University Graduate	1	Event service	7
18	Dave	Male	40-44	University Graduate	2	Consultancy	5
19	Steve	Male	50-54	University Graduate	2	Consultancy	14
20	Collin	Male	45-49	Master's degree	3	Recruitment	3½

Source : The researcher

No.	Participants	Gender	Age range	Level of education	Number of employees	Business sector	Year of business at interview
21	Aby	Female	45-49	University Graduate	20	Food	15
22	Willie	Male	45-49	University Graduate	8	Health	11
23	Debs	Female	45-50	University Graduate	3	Food	6
24	John	Male	50-55	University Graduate	15	Manufacturing	15
25	Bradley	Male	30-34	A levels	20	Building maintenance	12
26	Harry	Male	40-44	University Graduate	4	Automobile	8
27	Josh	Male	35-39	University Graduate	5	Fitness and health promotion	10
28	Wilson	Male	50-54	University Graduate	12	Health	5
29	Sally	Female	55-59	University Graduate	1	Marketing	22
30	Cox	Male	50-54	University Graduate	65	Recruitment	10
31	Danny	Male	54-59	Not mentioned	2	Consultancy	11
32	Barry	Male	30-34	University Graduate	8	Accountancy	5
33	Anthon	Male	30-34	University Graduate	6	Fashion	3
34	Carl	Male	50-54	A levels	70	Investment	14
35	Jacob	Male	30-34	University Graduate	1	Food	9
36	Felix	Male	45-49	University Graduate	1	Legal	7
37	Chuma	Male	45-50	University Graduate	1	Voice Analysis Technology	12
38	Simon	Male	65-70	Master's degree	3	Consultancy	20
39	Eddie	Male	45-40	Master's degree	15	Training and Consultancy	3
40	Christie	Female	45-50	University Graduate	6	Educational	8

Source : The researcher

4.8 Data Collection Method (Semi- Structured Interview)

In this study, in-depth interview was the main qualitative data collection method. Interviews are everyday situations in contemporary social life (Dörnyei, 2007). Demonstrating its significance to qualitative research, Silverman (2017) posits that we live in an interview society. According to Seidman (2013), interviewing provides access to the context of people's behaviour and thereby provides a way for the researcher to understand the meaning of behaviour, subjective opinion and believe (Percy et al., 2015). A semi-structured interview was undertaken using the Interview protocol (Creswell, 2013) that was refined following the pilot study (Castillo-Montoya, 2016) (see Appendix 5). The main aim for the employing a semi-structured interview was for rich insights on the drivers of business growth, entrepreneurial activities and project management processes that influence the working practices of the entrepreneurs to achieve business growth.

A semi-structured interview specifies the issues to be explored within a flexible structure. This allowed the interviewer to change the sequence of the question (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013). The aim of in-depth interview, as used in this study, is to achieve the breadth and depth of the qualitative interview coverage, across key issues that are of paramount importance in exploring the phenomenon under investigation (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013). Through open-ended questioning and iterative probing, the researcher in this study is able to listen to what the individual participant are narrating, and rich data gathered focusing on to the contextual distinctiveness of the phenomena being studied (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013).

4.8.1 Justification of the chosen data collection method

This study adopted a qualitative research approach consisting of semi-structured interviews with successful entrepreneurs. The reason for this was the exploratory nature of this research and in consideration of the previously published research of (Kautonen et al., 2011, 2013; Kolvereid and Isaksen, 2006) they empirically adopted a theory of planned behaviour employing a quantitative approach. Despite the meaningful outcomes of the quantitative studies, those studies reduce individual

entrepreneurs to a simple statistical and measured outcome (Mehralizadeh and Sajady, 2006). They do not provide information beyond confirming that intentions are involved in entrepreneurship. The interview, as an instrument for collecting data in this study, was appropriate in relation to the research objectives.

In addition, it was chosen for its flexibility and ability to provide rich and comprehensive data about the research area under exploration (Birn et al., 2000; Creswell, 2009; Fejszes, 2017). The responses of this research subjects are of importance; hence, reflecting on the relativist stance adopted in this research, interviews were face-to face so as to take full advantage of the opportunity for interaction (Fejszes, 2017; Silverman, 2009; Stake, 2010; Quimby, 2012). Therefore, semi-structured interviews suggest that the questions were prepared in advance; nonetheless, there was an opportunity for open discussions (Fejszes, 2017; Packer, 2011; Silverman, 2009).

4.9   Interview Protocol

The interview protocol is a necessity for research involving the collection of data through the interview process (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). It served to initiate, develop, and maintain a collaborative conversation where shared meaning emerged, enabling the researcher to collect relevant data for addressing the research question (Jacob and Furgerson, 2012). In this research, emphasis was made on ensuring inteview questions align with the research questions, the conversation was an inquiry- based, piloting the interview protocol and receiving feedback on interview protocols.

The interview protocol for this study was informed by the research questions and by the review of the literature on entrepreneurship and project management identifying the entrepreneurial activities such as (risk taking, decision making, innovation, social networking etc) and project management processes (planning, execution, monitoring and control) together with specific gaps in understanding. The purpose of the in-depth interviewing in this study was not to get answers to questions; rather, is an interest in understanding the lived experiences of the

participants in growing their business and the meaning they make of that experience (Seidman, 2013). Therefore, the development of the interview protocol was aligned with the study's purpose.

With the understanding that interviews are joint developments (Castillo-Montoya, 2016), and because of the interdependent negotiation of the conversation, questions were asked for specific information relating to the aim of the study (Patton, 2015). The questioning was not dogmatic; instead, it was flexible, attuned to what each of the entrepreneurs said, beginning with easy to answer questions then moved to questions that are more difficult. Intrinsically, In essence, entrepreneurs had a 'voice' freely expressing their experiences (Anderson, 2000). The researcher encouraged the relaxed attitude and did not restrict interviews to predetermined concerns, mainly as any information shared provides a valuable route toward the discovery of the interviewees' working practices (Martinez-Inigo et al., 2007; Murdoch, 2010).

The researcher employed open-ended questions, some of which were included in the guide, and some were not, to pursue the development of further understanding into the ideas emerging from the conversation. This process of 'intersubjective interviewing' enabled the researcher to gain insight into the unfolding events in entrepreneurs working practices. Throughout the interview, the interpretative format entrepreneurs used in undertaking sense making was elucidated with the researcher observing and listening to the behaviour the interviewee was talking about (Yin, 2009). This observation formed part of the researcher's notes. Revelations and reflexivity throughout the interview enabled the entrepreneur to make sense of for granted assumptions representing the naturally occurring aspect of the interview process.

The entrepreneurs' reasons for participation and sharing their experiences has implication for their action and the information they share (Helyer, 2015). The researcher has not previously known all the interviewees before the interview, yet there appeared to be rapport and trust throughout the interaction. The environment

was conducive and relaxing. Besides, the entrepreneurs perceived me the researcher as a research expert. They were enthused to ask if their experiences reflected or in line with the responses expected and asked whether there are areas that required developing. This provided the participation framework for the interaction between entrepreneurs and the researcher throughout the interview.

The interview protocol design developed related to the activities of the entrepreneurs such as the characteristics and performance of the business at respective times in the development of their business, motivation, and personal reflection on the future. Secondly, the social context related to the social structures, such as the pressure of family and society on whether to start the business or not. Third, business context, which includes the start-up and operational stages and all the activities involved, along with their perception of growth in their business. The interview guide consisted of an introduction, leading questions, additional questions, and clarifying questions. The topics covered in the interviews followed the sequence of the different stages of the business life cycle, which are start-up, operation, and future. What motivated the entrepreneurs when they decided to start their business?

- Their personal and professional experience during the development of the business: the setting up phase and the operational phase;

- The difficulties, challenges, and opportunities encountered when developing and operating the business,

- How they see themselves in the context of growth and success and their criteria

In summary, the interview schedule followed a well-though design to elicit robust information on business growth from the participants (See Appendix 5).

4.9.1 Pilot Survey

The pilot study allowed the research to establish, recognise and be able to understand any issues that might arise from the interview questions. For instance, the misunderstanding of the questions from the participants, replication of questions and the duration of answering questions (Cooper and Schindler, 2011). Conducting pilot interviews is essential for any researcher, particularly a novice researcher with no previous experience (Rowley, 2012), since interviewing is a demanding task that requires a considerable amount of abilities and skills (Majid et al., 2017). For that reason, piloting for this research was not just about the content of the interview, but was for building the ability and confidence to deal with the participants and to solve any problem that may arise before the questions are used with the particular study (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Nonetheless, conducting the pilot study enabled the researcher to establish an initial understanding of the entrepreneurial activities (leadership, planning, innovation, networking, communication to mention but few) involved in business growth and to examine whether project management processes (Planning, execution, monitoring, and control) are relevant within such context.

Embarking on the pilot study also enabled the researcher to avoid and prevent costly mistakes that might occur because of lack of clarity in the interview questions, which helped to improve the accuracy of the interviews and research findings (Majid et al., 2017). To assist the researcher in deciding the most appropriate methods for this study, a three-month exploratory pilot study was undertaken in 2016. At first, the researcher wanted to conduct six pilot interviews but was unable to reach the remaining two successful entrepreneurs. The pilot study involved four successful entrepreneurs of micro, small and medium business in the North West of England. Members of chambers of commerce situated in Crewe and in Manchester. Convenience and accessibility to research participants were the main drivers for choosing the two initial geographical zone. Contacts made to the individual entrepreneurs was via emails with an introductory letter stating the purpose of the research. After receiving a positive response, the ethical procedures outlined by (Miles and Huberman 1994) were followed. The four have more than six years of

experience in operating their businesses. They understand the subject matter as evidenced in the pilot study. Each pilot interview lasted between 45-60 minutes. However, the researcher encountered some difficulties while conducting the pilot study, which were as follows:

- The first entrepreneur requested a phone call from the researcher via email to make acquaintance before the interview. The participant was knowledgeable and understood the subject matter but requested a telephone interview. The researcher explained to the participant the reasons for opting the use of a face-to-face interview rather than a telephone interview. The participant was persuaded and eventually agreed to a face-to face interview for the primary data collection.

- The second entrepreneur in the consent form refused to have the interview to be recorded and declined direct quotes to be used from the interview in the project and in publications/presentation resulting from the project. A signed copy of the consent form showed that the participant agreed to be interviewed. The entrepreneur was also knowledgeable and understood the focus of attention. The participation information sheet was read out, explaining reasons for the study. Unfortunately, that did not change anything. On that note, the researcher conducted the interview, but it provided limited information, which made the researcher unable to use the participant's responses.

- No reply to reminder email from the third participant after consent was made. Thereby no interview was conducted.

- The fourth participant delayed the interviewing scheduled time for almost an hour.

Feedbacks from the pilot study

After the pilot interviews, a request was made to the participants to give their feedback. One of the participants replied that some of the questions from the interview guide asked were not explicit. As such, they could not answer appropriately and with more detail. Another participant replied that the sequence of the questions

was not adequate. Therefore, after reading through and examining the interview guide from the pilot study, the researcher reframed some of the questions to make it clearer and easy to understand. In addition, while some of the questions were removed from the interview guide to avoid misinterpretation, some relevant questions were added. The interview guide is in the appendix four section of this thesis. For the case of the researcher during the interview, there was transition from the world of theory to the real world. This meant dealing with the reality of behaviours, emotions, reactions, and being able to control the process. The experience was very advantageous since it identified weaknesses in particular skills and techniques, which were avoided in the actual interviews. It also enhanced the researcher's self-confidence in being able to conduct such interviews in future (during main data collection for writing the thesis).

For the case of the researcher, during the interview, the researcher experienced a shift from the world of theory to the real world. It meant dealing with the reality of behaviours, emotions, reactions, and being able to control the process. The experience was very advantageous since it identified weaknesses in particular skills and techniques, which were avoided in the actual interviews. It also enhanced the researcher's self-confidence in being able to conduct such interviews in future (during main data collection for writing thesis).

Furthermore, the researcher's experience throughout the pilot interview was informing in that consideration was made to review some things (Kvale, 2007) such as (a) the number of participants to be interviewed, (b) expansion of geographical region, and (c) less importance on membership of chambers of commerce and many more. Upon reflection, on the relational nature of the evidence from the pilot study, the researcher required extending the geographical region to the North West of England to receive an in-depth and broader view and knowledge of various entrepreneurs who met the criteria for sample selection for this study. In addition, to explore other places in North West England rather than only Manchester and Crewe. For the number of participants, the researcher interviewed forty successful

entrepreneurs from the North West of England and did not lay emphasis on membership in the chambers of commerce as a criterion.

Again, a focus group was considered initially, but then the researcher realised that it was impossible for the six selected entrepreneurs to meet at the same time and venue. This was because of their busy schedule and different timings. As a result, the focus group was considered an inappropriate research instrument. The researcher then chose to use a face-to-face semi-structured interview to examine the experiences of the six successful entrepreneurs individually. The literature on entrepreneurship and project management were reviewed (chapters two) as the secondary data for the research. This review of literature enhanced the researcher's understanding of the aim and activities of the entrepreneurs and assisted in identifying participants to be interviewed. These issues as identified in the pilot study helped to re-design the data collection adopted in this research, to capture the information necessary to answer the research questions. For this study, between January and December 2017 the researcher conducted forty interviews with successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England in various industrial sector.

For the main interview in this study, the researcher arrived at the venue for the interview early before the scheduled time on the days for the interview to set up the audio recorder along with laptop voice recorder; this is to prevent likelihood of having unforeseen disruption caused from the recording device during the interview. The second recorder serves as a backup recorder but recording simultaneously. Audio recording, as adopted in this study, provides an accurate, verbatim record of the interview, capturing the language used by the participants, including their tone and hesitancies (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013). To ensure successful interview the researcher created a friendly and relaxed environment that allowed the free flow of ideas, the researcher and the participant, predominantly, sat opposite each other to allow eye contact. Interviews took place at different locations to suit the wishes of the participants.

Some of the meetings took place at the participant's workplace environment - mainly in their conference rooms or offices. Some took place at the café, while others offered to have it done at the researcher's school environment. The researcher had to secure a venue in the school through the necessary process for those meeting in the school. Those interviewed at the café found it a less relaxing environment. There was background noise, including sounds of customers coming in and out buying hot drinks, as well as background music in the shop. Nevertheless, the researcher did not show any resentment since arrangement was made for any potential disturbance or incident.

In this study, the researcher played before the start of the interview, three key processes were performed. First, an introduction was made by the researcher to establish and create a trusting environment with the participant. Second, the researcher reminded the participants about the aim and intended output of the research, all written in the Participation Information Sheet sent to the individual participant (see Appendix 3). Third, confirmation was made that individual participants signed the consent form before the actual interview (see Appendix 4 for consent form). Some of the participants agreed on a date for the interview but preferred to sign the consent form prior to the interview. The interview began with an initial question: 'Please can you tell me a little bit about yourself, education, family and what you do?' This question is required to be particular to the areas that the researcher wanted answers, and the responses led to other questions. On that occasion, the researcher introduced follow up and probing questions. These were followed with other types of questions, including indirect, direct, structuring and specifying questions.

Following up with related questions prompted a collection of data and new insights (Crang and Cook, 2007; Kvale, 1996). Probing provides a means to obtain more information. It could be through silence, a nod, a hum, or a further question. During the interview, the researcher avoided closed-ended questions, because in-depth interviews centre on open-ended questions to get rich information (Webber and

Byrd, 2010). Furthermore, the researcher asked the participants questions requiring examples to access more information and to clarify specific points. Making sure that relevant topics were covered, the researcher would ask a final question before ending the interview to confirm whether participants had any other information about the research topic that would be beneficial. All through the interview, the researcher adopted a neutral stance. Neutrality was required so that the interview was not influenced by the researcher's reactions and body language (Mack et al., 2005). Very few of the topics were sensitive, and any facial expression could transfer emotion or reaction to the participant, which could influence the flow of information being obtained. However, being neutral did not mean that the researcher was emotionless. Instead, required relaxing, listening attentively, and having a friendly appearance (Mack et al., 2005).

Finally, the interview guide included questions designed by the researcher, but not all were covered. Only the important topics were used in the research. Consequently, each interview was unique but common themes appeared within the transcripts when analysing the data (Daymon and Holloway, 2011). Second, majority of the interviews were comfortable to conduct because (a) the environment was encouraging, and the participants generous in providing information, (b) Majority of the participants the language used (English language) was their first language. Some of the participants were very excited that they were sharing their story and lived experience and requested that their real names and company's name be mentioned. In this case, it was against the ethics of this research to mention real personal and company names.

The face-to-face nature of the interview was intended to help interviewees raise and discuss a variety of additional related topics, by probing their understanding of entrepreneurship in the aspect of business growth-related issues in question. In addition to that, it helped participants familiarise with the researcher, which helped the development of rapport on both sides, as mentioned earlier. Face to face semi-structured interview also provides reliable empirical evidence as it remains close to

source (Qu and Dumay, 2011). This approach to interview is consistent with the researcher's philosophical stance as the interview is a performance that is negotiated, localised and interactional where both interviewer and the participants are necessarily and inevitably active (Aaltio, 2002; Goel and Karri, 2006; Raz, 2005). Therefore, to understand entrepreneurs' social world, in-depth interviews were employed.

The researcher utilised open-ended questions to prompt participants to think about specific values and provide answers in their own words. It enabled participants to give detailed experience and allow a follow-up question from the researcher, offering new insights into the social phenomenon as they were allowed to think about and make sense of a variety of subjects in a different way (Folkestad, 2008). One of the primary goals of this study was to know how the participants made sense of their experiences by telling stories. It sought knowledge as expressed in ordinary language; it did not aim at quantification (Brinkman and Kvale, 2015). The in-depth interview approach linked the making of meaning to the behaviours that participants exhibited as they expressed how they viewed experiences. Since the overall study is to uncover how various activities by individual entrepreneurs emerge into successful outcomes, gathering narratives of their experiences towards business growth will help to answer the core questions of this research.

4.10 Data Analysis (the interactive process)

Data analysis is the process of separating data into its constituents' components. This enables the characteristics elements and structure of the data to be revealed. The aim of this section is to describe the process of analysing the data. This including for example, the data transcription, description of the data collection process, coding of the data and identifying relationships within codes.

4.10.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis as a generic approach is employed in this qualitative data analysis. The process of using thematic analysis is for analysing data when the researcher's

aim is to extract information to determine the relationship between variables and to compare different sets of evidence that pertain to different situations in the same study (Alholjailan, 2012). Thus, identifying recurring data and unifying situations is the basis of thematic analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006:78), "thematic analysis is a foundational method for qualitative analysis". It is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes within data (ibid:79). Thematic analysis can be utilised in other approaches to qualitative analysis. The essential purpose for employing thematic approach in this study is to find the themes or patterns that occur across a data set e.g. series of interviews being analysed (Namey et al., 2008). In that respect, the researcher gains a clear logical understanding of the participant's thought to convey their experiences (Crawford et al., 2008). In addition, the analysis was driven and informed by the research question and theoretical framework of this study, thus it can be called theoretical thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Boyatzis, 1998).

The use of thematic analysis has both advantages and disadvantages. With reference to its advantages, it is an accessible approach to analysing qualitative data, with no concrete agreement about what it is and how researchers engage in it (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It goes in line with this study's holistic approach that embraces how people make sense of the world and how they experience events (Willig, 2013). In addition, it provides a logical way to analyse qualitative data (Saunders et al., 2016), leading to rich descriptions, explanation, contribution to knowledge, and recommendations for best practice. The approach taken during the thematic analysis in this research was inductive (Willig, 2013), as it utilised a theoretically informed pattern through which the data was coded and further themes derived from it (Crabtree and Miller, 1999). In this way, the researcher codes the transcribed data to identify themes for further analysis.

The decision to use thematic analysis to analyse the data appeared to be in keeping with other qualitative analysis methods (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). It is the most common technique for qualitative analysis of

transcribed data Bryman (2008) and Jennings (2010) and offers researchers a flexible research tool through which they can identify themes that emerge from the literature and data that are important to describe the phenomena under study (Nowell et al., 2017). Thematic analysis can be approached in different ways to qualitative analysis (Alhojailan, 2012; Boyatzis, 1998; Javadi and Zarea, 2016). However, this variety means there is also some confusion about the nature of thematic analysis, including how it is distinct from qualitative content analysis (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). In this research, adopting thematic technique is influenced by the researcher's theoretical and epistemological position. In this study, the researcher's thematic analysis broadly followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines, which consists of 6 steps. The six steps are

1. Familiarisation of the dataset
2. Generating initial codes and creating codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Review themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

The guide was employed to facilitate the process of moving from one data analysis stage to another. Finally, a common critique of thematic analyses is that the overall picture is lost because codes are separated from their context, and it is suggested that thematic analyses sometimes could benefit from being combined with a person-centred approach (e.g. Zhou et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the researcher argues that a pure thematic approach is the most appropriate method for analysis in the present study.

4.11 Data Analysis Interactive Process

According to (De Vos et al., 2005:333), the process of interactive data analysis involves "reducing the volume of the information, sorting out significant from irrelevant facts, identifying patterns, trends" and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what was revealed by the data. The researcher began

the process by transcribing the recorded interview into text. In view of this, the data was analysed in three stages (Neuman, 2014). First, following the in-depth, semi-structured interviews, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim (Bryman and Bell, 2011) by the researcher in order to familiarise and build intimate knowledge of the data, with the exception of greetings, ice breakers, and plans for subsequent meetings. The non-verbal and emotional elements of the conversation, e.g., laughter and pauses were excluded. In doing so, the researcher lost the emotional overtones along with other nuances of the spoken interaction (Potter and Hepburn, 2012) of which there was an awareness and this prepares the platform for organising the transcribed data for analysis. This process was an excellent means of data familiarisation.

The researcher already decided to use thematic analysis, which means focusing only on 'what' instead of the 'how', while understanding that the two are indistinguishably interwoven. For that reason, the researcher considered Allwight and Bailey's (1991) principle of Law of Least Effort, which states "Use only the conventions that are necessary for your particular purposes, to record the information you are sure you will need" (ibid: 223). The researcher, at different intervals referred to the recorded interviews during analysis stage to confirm the accuracy of the transcripts and to immerse herself in the spoken interactions, taking time to listen carefully and listen once more as "conversation is designed to be heard, not read" (Richards, 2003:180). The researcher at no time moved straight from recording to transcribing, time spent was on listening to the recorded carefully and repeatedly. In that way, more meaning was obtained which implies easy interpretation and fragmentation into parts to generate codes. After all data was transcribed, the researcher used manual coding for the analysis. The researcher acknowledges there are computerised programmes such as QSR, NVivo, ATLAS.ti, and HperRESEARCH, which are available to conduct qualitative data analysis (Bazeley, 2007; Gibbs, 2014; Silver and Lewins, 2014). However, manual coding was chosen because the researcher feels uncomfortable with the mechanical nature of the mentioned computerised programmes for analysing qualitative data instead

wants to have 'full knowledge,' 'full access' of the content, and pleasure in handling data. (Gibert, 2002). The full knowledge is being close to the data and able to recover the sights, sounds, and experiences of being in the field (Fielding and Lee, 1998). For instance, Nvivo involves various steps. According to Adu (2016), Nvivo comprises different steps, which includes.

1) Data cleaning

2) Importing data into Nvivo software

3) Reorganising the data

4) Conduct data exploration

5) Coding relevant information in the data.

Performing all these steps, which is necessary when using Nvivo importing, cutting the data into small fragments disconnects the researcher with the data. Working with the original transcript manually, keeps the researcher closer to the data and creates a more reliable interpretation of what the participants are saying. Therefore, computerised qualitative software such as Nvivo is not adopted in this research. The researcher adopts manual thematic coding process in this research. The next section discusses coding processes

4.11.1 Thematic Coding Process.

The next stage of the data analysis, following transcription in this study, was an open coding approach (Saldaña, 2013, 2015; Neuman, 2014). The analysis began with the process of thematically going through the transcript line-by-line, question by question highlighting, ascribing codes to portions of text, where the ascribed codes were chosen in such a way that they reflected the contents of that portion of text. Thereby building as many categories as possible, segmented into units associated with a specific label. Any similar data, in the segmented categories, were given the same label. This enables the identification of the link between the theory (theory of planned behaviour antecedents), sub themes (entrepreneurial activities and project management processes) from the literature review. Thus the process started with inductive coding, which means that sub-themes originated from the existing theory (Saunders et al., 2016; Braun and Clarke, 2006) when applied in the literature review.

On the other hand, the researcher was aware of the need to be alert to new themes in the interview transcripts. This can be seen through the emergence of new themes not originally identified from the literature review. It is important to point out that the analysis was not a linear nor tidy process, rather it was more of a twisted, recursive, iterative process that involved moving back and forth and in some cases being stuck. Thus, understanding the transcribed data and making sense of it (Creswell, 2009). The process presented a rich description of all the data gathered ensuring the reader a valid reflection of the entire data set. This process was completed for each of the forty transcripts. Although, the researcher is looking at the successful entrepreneurs' experiences, however, it is the specific drivers in the context of business growth that those experiences are judged. For example, in regard to the individual responses of the entrepreneurs during the interview, the researcher identified that all the successful entrepreneurs took risk, made decision etc. Thus, commonalities were identified from the discussion.

After conducting the forty interviews, the researcher concluded that further interviews were unlikely to generate profoundly new insights and therefore data saturation was obtained, hence, no further interviews were necessary (Saunders and Lewis, 2018). Utilising this, the researcher was able to reveal themes buried within the rich data (Neuman, 2014). These included the three antecedents of intention (attitude towards behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control) in the theory of planned behaviour, as well as the entrepreneurial growth drivers and project management processes (planning, execution and monitoring). An example of the open coding is illustrated in figure 4.2

Researcher: How many years is your business in existence?

Participant: it has been up and running for 15 years now.

Researcher: How did you get started with your business?

Participant: So erm.. I wrote to a number of universities because technologies were not just enough and Manchester University wanted a particular technology, so ==I worked with the academics for a number of years and formed a business then later on I took over in managing it.==

Researcher: working in Manchester University was it with in the same technology you mentioned before.

Participant: Yes, in chemical engineering and electronics.

Researcher: At Manchester university?

Participant: Yeah

Researcher: How long did you work with them at Manchester University?

Participant: 4 years that I worked with them. ==I helped them get the chronological swift.== Something that we brand. And then I ==project management the brand that was the bases of working with them==. Worried about the technology, worried about me.

Researcher: you mentioned that you project managed it. How did you project managed it?

Participant: I was the project manager for the project. ==Setting the management teams, set the objectives, and managed the budget as the project proceeded, we sort of made sure that we were addressing the objectives== and didn't spend too much. So is all about ==managing people, resources and the money.==

Researcher: can you recall the driver and key moments that led you to stat the business?

Participant: Strictly, there is nothing specific. There was always the intension and out of interest. When I was at Preston University, ==I thought it will be interesting to work computer phase between technology and business.== There was always that sort of direction to go. There wasn't a white dull moment I have always had the intention either to do the technology as an employee or do it myself.

Researcher: and you ones did it as an employee.

Participant: yeah consultancy role==, I wrote some business plan for the university spinoffs.==

Researcher: so at what point did you make the decision to become self-employed?

Participant: I left consultancy and went to work for firm of chattered accountants, so while I was with them there, joining was for me to develop some codes, Manage their spillage rather than consultancy and also get some financial understanding, people financial understanding through MBA. I worked with them 3-4 years then we reached a natural conclusion. ==I said am going off to do my own thing.== ==So I was just an independent consultant, looking for the right opportunity to work on==. So when I find it that's what I will do.

Researcher: You gained all these experience before starting up your own business.

Participant: ==yes I did gain a lot of experience from all the places I worked.==

Researcher: would you say that your business is successful?

Figure 4.2: An example of the open coding illustrated.

Another type of coding utilised in this research is selective coding (Neuman, 2014; Saldaña, 2013, 2015), to gather more detailed responses from the participants and facilitate a comprehensive overview of the themes from the project management processes (planning, execution and monitoring) that had emanated from the exploration of the data in the transcript. The identified processes viewed through the theory of planned behaviour lens and allowed the overall responses of the participants presented to answer the two research questions proposed in the study. It involved designing a matrix, through which comparisons of participants' responses could be made. Table 1 an example of selective coding where project management processes are applied

Table 4-2: An example of selective coding

Participants					
Project management approaches	Sandi	Lizzie	Harry	Jack	Zac
Planning	Setting up business plan. Gather funding together, coming up with a proper business plan with a cash flow forecast, profit and loss estimation and going to banks and investors to get funding is quite costly firm to set up, quite a lot of set forward, capital expenditure.	So you need savings, you need a business plan, you need to have an idea of at what point you gonna recruit staffs	Whatever target you set for yourself, have an idea of what you need to get to that target. Make it up like a plan.	Before starting up this business it was setting up a portfolio of work because the first thing a prospective client wants to see is what you've done, your portfolio.	Using some of the experience, I had and I understood some of the growth problems businesses have of certain sizes and really start to look at the various methodologies around what are the persisting growth barriers that businesses go through.
Execution	We try to keep improving what we do as well our website we refresh try to include video and things like that looking more attractive,	The first thing I did was, I got myself a service office. A little office. If you are going to run a serious business, I don't think you should do it from your own bedroom or from your dining table	By a year and half ago, this used to be a warehouse. Food storage for the company across the road. We later expanded into the next building beside this one. Converted the two to become one.	We did it on our own and went limited straight away. Found a good local accountant to make sure it was set up. We knew this business side of it from working in agencies and also how to set up client accounts,	so we developed a framework around those recurring themes and then delivering training and developmental programmes which help overcome those barriers for directors
Monitoring and Control	We kind of constantly kind of review what we do, we are looking to better ourselves as had an effect on it. I would say probably being able to adapt and change according to things that happen outside of our control	And I knew how to run a division so therefore it was just a measure of scale in that.	Study the market, keeping a good record, which we do very well. It helps you build a pattern and you watch that pattern, we set reminders as well.	Going back to 2008 '2009 when a lot of design agencies went out of business it was because their business model was built on not on the design.	Running a business can be quite lonely so having someone you can talk ideas through, connect with have really worked. We work really hard at assessing what's the right fit for us
					Source: Researcher

During the selective coding stage, the researcher was able to revisit the transcripts along with the theoretical framework to explore further relationships or connections in the data (Altinay et al., 2014). Particularly within the project management processes and their interpretations of their practices in their work context (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008; Yilmaz, 2013). The final stages of the analysis engaged the researcher in finding the similarities of the entrepreneurs' interpretation of the sub-themes across the analysis and discussion of the findings with extant literature (Chapter two) to uncover evidences; thus fulfilling a key objective of the research study. This involved identifying congruence and incongruity between adopted theory and theory in use (Altinay et al., 2014).

4.12 Validation of the research study

Rigor and truth are always of concern for qualitative research (Galdas, 2017). In this study, the researcher attempts to undertake a validation of the entire processes of the analysis to convince the reader and intended audience of the merit and validity of the analysis. This research utilises a qualitative methodology adopting semi-structured interviews with a social constructionist perspective. Through an open-ended question, the researcher listens to the experiences and working practices of the successful entrepreneurs, and gathers rich information, concerned to the distinct context being studied (Creswell, 2009; Sekara and Bougie, 2013). Nevertheless, qualitative research has this common issue of bias, mainly due to its subjective nature (Galdas, 2017: Neuman, 2014). The researcher and the interviewed participants both contribute their own values and prejudices to the research (Quimby, 2012). Aware of this, reducing biases is vital for the credibility and thus reliability and validity of the research (Sekara and Bougie, 2013; Silverman, 2013). In that respects some validation strategies were employed in this research to eliminate bias. The validation for this study focuses on credibility, transferability, and confirmability and is discussed in detail.

Credibility deals with compatibility. Credibility in this study answers how consistent the findings are to reality. In this study, there are several points to highlight showing evidence of consistency.

a) The researcher recorded the interview accurately by using a digital audio recorder and laptop audio recorder to avoid any form of setback, listening to the recording from beginning to end before transcribing. The method of analysis adopted in this study is manual qualitative data analysis using, in no small extent inductive thematic approach than the deductive. This is because as mentioned earlier, using Nvivo importing, cutting the data into small fragments disconnects the researcher with the data. Working with the original transcript manually, keeps the researcher closer to the data and creates a more reliable interpretation of what the participants are saying. The researcher initially invited participants to reflect on situations that led them to start their business and their journey to success in their business.

b) The early establishment of familiarity with the participants before and during the interview. Before the interview, considering diverse ethical issues, the researcher emailed an introduction letter (see appendix 2) to the participants introducing herself and her intentions. The researcher received positive responses from all the potential participants via signing and returning a consent form. During the interview, the researcher began with a general soothing question, which made the atmosphere relaxing, then followed up with flexible questions that allowed her to probe into the received responses. In doing so, the researcher had established a relationship of trust with the individual participants. Guba (1981) and Silverman (2001), drew particular attention to how researchers may be immersed in the narratives under scrutiny such that their professional judgements are influenced.

c) In this study, the research participants were selected adopting two sample strategies from the various non-probability sampling strategies - purposive and snowball sampling strategy. In purposive sampling, the selection of participants rests on the belief that the participants acquires knowledge and

experience in respect to the research interest (Palinkas et al., 2013). Likewise, availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner are also essential (Bernard 2002; Palinkas et al., 2013).

The snowball sampling focuses on qualified participants sharing an invitation with other subjects similar to them who satisfy the criteria defined for the target population (Berg, 2006). The technique is useful where a network of qualified study subjects is assumed to exist, and the researcher hopes to be linked into this network through social interaction with the initial subject in the network (Atkinson and Flint, 2001). The snowball strategy was evident in this study when initial participants referred to some participants whom they know that qualified based on the sample selection criteria for this study. The set criteria were important because they allowed successful entrepreneurs of different ages to be included in the sample. The types of businesses operated allowed for diversification of different kinds of experiences from individual entrepreneurs. They provided useful information for start-up and growth of their business. This information allowed the researcher to draw conclusions on the synergies between entrepreneurship and project management in the perspective of business growth.

d) Triangulation: This study involves the use of a wide range of successful entrepreneurs from different industrial sectors. It focuses on triangulation via data sources. Here individual viewpoints and experiences can be verified against others and, ultimately, a rich picture of the evidence on why these two fields should be interrelated. This research is constructed based on the contributions of a range of individuals in achieving business growth. The researcher was able to reach a reasonable sample size to allow generalisation from the sample and to reflect a significant range of experiences. Besides, focusing on a small sample to interview would have made it impossible to use

the findings from this research as a benchmark for other geographical regions and may be ignored.

e) To ensure honesty in participants during the interview, the researcher allowed declining involvement to ensure that only those willing to offer information without restriction participated. Prior information on withdrawal at any point without explanation was disclosed to the participants. Such an unconditional right for participants to recede is a requirement that must be accepted by the researcher when seeking approval for the research undertaken.

f) Iterative questioning was employed to uncover deliberate dishonesties, which includes the use of probes to elicit detailed data as well as returns to matters previously raised by a participant and rephrasing questions to extract related data. In both cases, where contradictions emerge, falsehoods can be detected, and the researcher may decide to discard the suspect data.

g) Recurrent debriefing sessions with the researcher and her supervisory team regarding the transcribed data. It helped draw attention to flaws in the proposed course of action, providing a sounding board for the researcher to test her developing ideas and interpretations. The process via probing from the supervisory team helped the researcher to recognise areas of biases and preferences, which then widened the vision of the researcher.

h) There was an opportunity for scrutiny of the project by colleagues, peers, and academics as feedback offered to the researcher at presentations (such as at conferences, annual reviews, supervisory team meetings) made throughout the project. The new perspective that such individuals brought allowed them to challenge assumptions made by the researcher whose closeness to the project frequently inhibits her ability to view it with real detachment. The questions thrown enabled the researcher at times to refine methods, develop a more significant explanation of the research design, and strengthen her arguments in the light of the comments made.

i) In addition to the external scrutiny, the researcher evaluated the project after a pilot study and changes made as the project developed. It was done through the researcher's reflective observation during the pilot study, part of which was devoted to the effectiveness of the techniques that have been employed. The commentary can play a key role in what Guba and Lincoln (1989) term "progressive subjectivity," or the monitoring of the researcher's developing constructions, which the writers consider critical in establishing credibility.

4.13 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the findings from the study can be transferred to other settings (Koch, 1994; Polit and Beck, 2012). The researcher may provide suggestions about transferability, but then it is eventually down to the reader's judgment as to whether the reported results are transferable to another context (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004). This research presents a thick description of not only the behaviour and experiences of the participants but also the context in which the behaviour and experiences became meaningful to another reader (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). The researcher facilitates the transferability judgement by potentially adopting a detailed description of the phenomenon. The process is conducted to enable the reader assess whether findings are transferable to their settings. In this case, the reader, and not the researcher, makes the judgment. The principles, criteria for the choice of participants and their profile was expounded in this study to allow possibility for transferability of the findings to other contexts (see Moretti et al., 2011).

4.14 Confirmability

Conformability refers to the objectivity, that is, the potential for congruence between two or more independent people about the data's accuracy, relevance, or meaning (Elo et al., 2014). The researcher identified consistency during the analysis of the transcribed data. On that account, it implies that the data accurately represents the information that the participants provided, and the researcher did not invent

interpretations of those data. Confirmability centres on the extent to which other researchers could verify the findings of the research study. Confirmability focuses on establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not fables of the researcher's imagination, but is undoubtedly derived from the data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Confirmability of findings means that the data accurately represent the information that the participants provided, and the inquirer does not invent the interpretations of those details (Polit and Beck, 2012).

4.15 Ethical Consideration

The issue of ethics was of particular importance in this study because human participants were invited and their voices recorded. It required an official ethical approval. A detailed ethical application, including a risk assessment, was submitted to the Manchester Metropolitan University Research Ethical Committee and was approved (Appendix 1). Some of the best practices in research include using a consent form, informing the participants about the research aim and objectives, informing the participants about the use of data, and assuring them of the confidentiality of names and transparency in reporting the data (Allmark et al., 2009; Jennings, 2012; Lin et al., 2011). These procedures were considered imperative as the interview covered some sensitive topics related to the participants' personal life experiences, which could be emotional.

The use of a consent form rather than through exchange of emails or via a telephone agreement is the best secured practice for obtaining the participants' approval to participate in the interviews (Juros, 2011). While some of the participants were happy to share their experiences with the researcher using their real name and company name, and were uninterested in the confidentiality of their narratives, others wanted assurance that confidentiality and anonymity are in place. Farrimond (2013) drew attention to the difficulty surrounding ethical research, as not every individual agrees to the same ethical principles and codes in a given situation. With respect to anonymity, the participants' real names were replaced by pseudonyms. Data from electronic and analogue sources were stored securely using passwords

and locked cupboards respectively. Furthermore, no form of pressure was placed on any participant to participate in the research. As indicated in the participation information sheet, participants were free to refuse participation, refuse to answer any particular questions. Follow-up emails were sent to the prospective participants who did not respond in time.

During the interview, two types of data collection occurred: notes were taken, and the interview conversation was recorded with a digital audio device. On completion of each recorded interview, the audio recordings were played and listened to before commencing with another interview. The interview process allowed the researcher to exchange information with the participants, which led to effective communication, as they were not under stress.

The researcher sometimes paused to allow the participants to express their views entirely. The researcher used an on-site paper and pen technique to identify data as the interview progressed and expanded on the jotted notes once the interview was done (Kieren and Munro, 1985). The notes included the content of the interview, coupled with feelings and non-linguistic data. The field note practice is significant because ideas and memories from interviews are probably going to be misplaced further down in the research process. Indeed, soon after the interview, the brain will already be re-ordering the material and making connections within and outside the interview (Wengraf, 2001). Therefore, recording memories and ideas from interviews is essential for subsequent analysis (ibid). Nevertheless, the note is securely locked away in a cupboard when not in use.

4.16 Summary

This chapter has discussed and drawn the extension of the methodological outline used in this study as presented in Figure 4.3
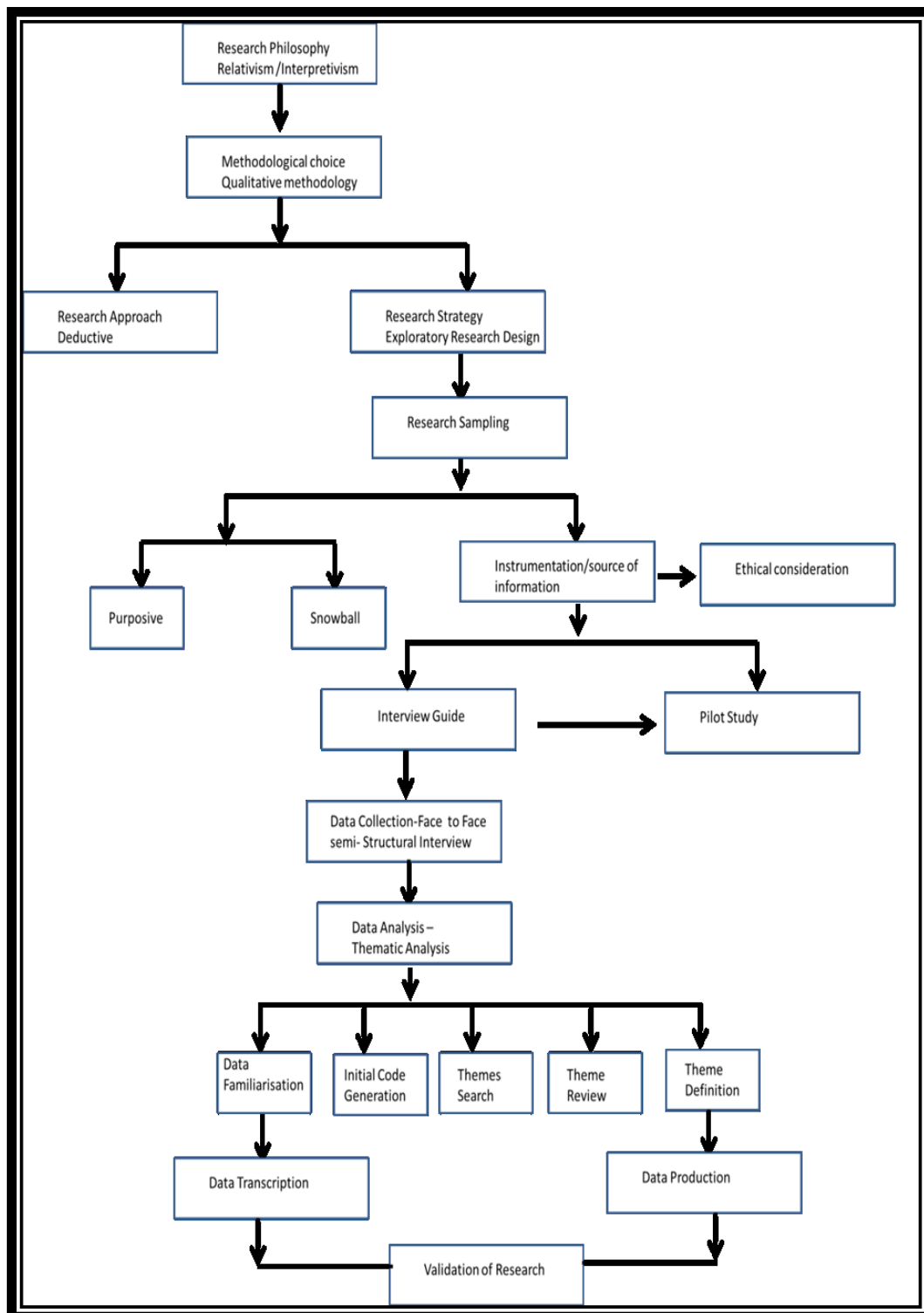
Figure 4.3: Research Methodology Approach

The methodology employed for any research is very crucial since it determines the entire process of answering the research questions. Consequently, the chapter

explained and justified the philosophical and methodological approaches adopted for this research. The underlying philosophical assumptions relating to ontology and epistemology were made explicit. It also presented the rationale behind the data generation and data analysis procedures and expounded the stages that led to the emergence of the study's findings. The chapter acknowledged the need of carrying out ethical research and provided an articulation for its accomplishment. The next chapter discusses the research findings.

Chapter 5   Findings and Discussion

5.1   Introduction

The previous chapter presented the methodology and the justification of the methodological approach adopted throughout this study. This chapter focuses on the findings combined with the discussion of the analysed data emanating from the face-to-face semi-structured interviews following the objectives of the study, in response to the theoretical overview outlined in the systematic literature review. The chapter provides evidence from the research analysis adopting the theory of planned behaviour as a lens to analyse the data inductively, the presentation in line with the methodological description detailed in the previous chapter. The findings identified originated from the perspective of micro, small, and medium businesses and that of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England from the perspective of business growth context. It presents the major aspects overview of this research. This chapter is structured around two main sections, all centred on thematic analysis, which serves to answer the two research questions. Finally, it summarises with a framework that promotes the synergy between entrepreneurship (entrepreneurial activities) and project management from the perspective of project management processes. At this stage, it is appropriate to re-introduce the two research questions:

- How have project management processes been applied to entrepreneurial activities to influence business growth?
- How can the theory of planned behaviour be applied to explain the success of entrepreneurial activities of successful entrepreneurs?

As mentioned in the previous chapter, this study was undertaken using qualitative methodology. In other words, findings are not rooted on the premise of numerical discovery that is, ascertaining the number of entrepreneurs' views on a particular issue. The researcher adopted a qualitative exploratory study and aims to enable the understanding of the entrepreneurial activities and project management processes

often used by successful entrepreneurs to achieve business growth. The evidence provided in this chapter is structured into three main sections as follows:

The first section uncovers the three antecedents of intention in the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), attitude towards behaviour (ATB), subjective norms (SN), Perceived behavioural control. The three antecedents are the main themes, and they focus on business start-up and growth embedded in the identified sub-themes from the transcript. In addition are other emerged themes from the transcript, which were discussed. The second section presents evidence of the project management processes in the transcript, which are project-planning, execution, monitoring, and control within the working practices, and experiences of the successful entrepreneurs. The third and final section presents a framework summarising the key findings, showing how entrepreneurial activities and project management processes interrelate with each other in the aspect of business growth in the North West of England.

5.2   Business start-up/Growth

Despite the focus of this work being on business growth, business start-up features prominently in the data analysis. Therefore, it is pertinent that the business start-up is acknowledged and discussed in conjunction with business growth. The following content presents the findings of the empirical research and discussion using the three intentional antecedents (main themes), which are: Attitude towards behaviour, Subjective Norm, and Perceived behavioural control. The sub-themes are entrepreneurial activities and project management processes. The findings also compare with that found in the systematic literature review chapter for entrepreneurship and project management. Initial set up of a new firm is very much an individual choice, which is why the individual qualities as an entrepreneur are central to the investigation of entrepreneurship. The choice to start a business builds on two aspects: purpose and stimulus (Bird, 1988; Katz and Gartner, 1988). The purpose focuses on objective reasons to adopt the task, including the environmental conditions that reinforce or penalise particular behaviour. The stimulus refers to the

subjective reasons, which reflect the individual's expectation, thus influencing the decision to start a business. The drive towards business start-up can be categorised into the three intentional antecedents of the theory of planned behaviour.

Intentions are the only best predictor of any planned behaviour. For example, in entrepreneurship context, the entrepreneur's intentions are "important mediating variables between the start-up and external factor influences present" (Krueger et al., 2000: 413). An intention leads to behaviour if the action is under voluntary control; that means whether an individual voluntarily chooses to perform a particular action or not. Understanding the antecedents of intentions increases our understanding of the intended behaviour. Attitudes influence behaviour by impacting on intentions. Individual Intentions and attitudes depend on the situation, such as redundancy, job dissatisfaction, family issues, etc., as well as personal factors like autonomy, independence, and need for achievement, to mention a few.

Attitude towards behaviour judges the degree to which the individual entrepreneur holds a positive or negative personal valuation about being an entrepreneur, consequently creating a new venture followed by the growth of the business. The higher the value an entrepreneur places on the result of performing a behaviour (in this case business start-up), the stronger the positive attitude, and the more likely the entrepreneur will carry out the behaviour (business start-up) with various entrepreneurial activities involved achieving growth in the business. Besides, the project management processes embedded in the quotes will be identified. Therefore, those entrepreneurial growth drivers will be discussed below based on the findings from the individual successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England focusing on start-up then growth

5.2.1 Risk- Taking

In every business, there is some degree of uncertainty or risk associated with starting and growing the business, which the entrepreneur can withstand. Baron (2004) opined that successful entrepreneurs can cognitively evaluate the actual risk in

ventures by making decisions through using his/her capabilities to assimilate, store, and retrieve information to achieving optimum performance (Baron and Henry, 2010). Previous work has shown that entrepreneurs' behaviour towards risk is based on the risk perception and strongly influences risk behaviour in general (Sitkin and Pablo, 1992; Sitkin and Weingart, 1995), which can drive the choice of business growth. According to Stewart and Roth (2001), risk taking focuses more on the entrepreneurs concerned with venture growth than those concerned with family income. The entrepreneur's tendency to take risk lies in the judgement to which the entrepreneur holds, whether positive or negative, about taking the risk. Individuals are much likely to take a risk when the outcome of the action depends on their skills rather than on chance (MacKo and Tyszka, 2009). From the context presented above and the interviews conducted and analysed, every entrepreneur interviewed stated what led to their starting a business and aspiring towards growth, thus identifying risk taking. This view was evident in the statements made by some of the individual entrepreneurs such as Steve, Zac, Collins, Aby, Harry, Paul, Lizzie, Dave, Jamie, Olly and Cox.

The following responses were recorded, transcribed and are as follows individually. Steve and Zac had a personal choice to leave their employment to start up a business. Steve and Zac leaving their jobs were considered risk taking, because of the uncertainty of the outcome. This is evident in their response during the interview:

> *"I left my employer and set up this business and that was a risk because I was coming out of a salaried position going into a business where there was not going to be a fixed salary. It was purely dependent on how much work that can be generated." (Steve). 'execution'*

Steve, aware of the risk involved in starting his own business, chose to leave behind a fixed salaried position and went into a business where there was no fixed salary and an unknown future. From Steve's response, it is clear that there was no risk assessment done before starting up the business. This suggests that risk taking was

Steve's own personal choice and skills rather than on chance which mattered here. The action of Steve taking risk based on personal choice and skills is quite in agreement with (Chavez, 2016), who suggested that risk-taking is dependent on the entrepreneurs' idea of situation and expertise. Steve's attitude towards starting a business was high, such that he could resign from his well-paid job to start his own business, considering experience gained. Similarly, Zac's response depicts personal drive, seeing a market opportunity that would be very rewarding:

"*So it was much of a personal driver and saw a market opportunity to do work that would be really rewarding* "*(Zac)*

Zac saw an opportunity which he perceived would be beneficial, and he took the risk to exploit it. Based on his experience, he envisaged the outcome that would be generated from the determined market opportunity (Alvarez and Barney, 2007). In line with this, Delmar and Shane (2003) argued that success achieved in business is not necessarily that the entrepreneur made a better decision. Rather, they saw an opportunity and exploited it which resulted in their success. While estimating how risky a situation is, the entrepreneur forms some beliefs about future outcomes. Collin's response to the drive and key moment that made him start his business expressed the importance of risk taking in business start-up.

"*I wouldn't say I enjoy it because it can be nerve racking. I think you've got to be at peace at taking a certain amount of risk. I definitely wouldn't say I enjoy it, but you got to understand that it is necessary.*" *(Collin) 'execution'*

Collin perceives risk taking as an important and unavoidable ingredient in starting and growing a business. Again, this is supported by Baron (2004), who says that in every business, entrepreneurs are capable of withstanding risk associated with starting a business. And Aby's experience in the food industry is the motivating factor to take the risk of starting her own business in food sector, which was her dream.

"We want to build our own business empire. That is the ultimate dream. We did Subway and along the line, we saw that franchise is franchise. It is not really your own thing. It was a good experience. I must say it has given us the confidence that we have today to take the risk that we are taking to open our own business" **(Aby) 'execution'**

The findings from the data analysis in all cases presented above revealed a strong association between risk taking and business start-up that led to business growth. Undeniably, risk-taking associated with entrepreneur is related to the personality traits. Although findings suggested that, all the entrepreneurs accepted the risk of starting their business, the perceived riskiness of the situation centres on experience. Most of the entrepreneurs acquired experience before starting their business, saw risk as an appealing challenge, and a way for them to prove themselves, thus they were perceived as risk takers.

Only very few had no experience in the particular business, but with the influence of their family, entrepreneurial background, and education, they were able to transfer those experiences in starting their business. For example, Aby had no experience in food and drink business but started with franchising, and gained experience before starting her own business. She relates:

"But because we did not have any experience whatsoever apart from my family business back in Nigeria we felt it was sensible to go into franchise. We felt we would be safe signing up for franchise, which we did. It was a great experience. We ended up having 4 stores as a franchise with Subway. Good experience, which actually has given us the confidence to venture into something we are doing now called Rollers."

There were very few of entrepreneurs who started business without any form of experience not even from an entrepreneurial background. An example is Jacob who had passion for healthy chocolate because he had an opportunity to taste it. He developed interest in it and from there started his own business in chocolate making.

The narratives from the findings indicated that majority of the entrepreneurs left their paid jobs because of various reasons to start their own business and achieved growth. For example, Paul took the risk to start his own business because of an ongoing divorce and some other responsibilities at the time. Presently, Paul has a different site which shows evidence of growth.

> *"but when you have got a mortgage and two kids, and other responsibilities, the gamble you will take to do that is very high. Why not take the gamble? Fresh start and that is what I did"* **(Paul).**

Only very few left because of personal drive. Although most had it in mind to start own business, waiting for the right opportunity to do so. For example, Olly felt it was the right time for him to take the risk to start his own business because his wife was pregnant, and he is starting a family.

> *"I thought it was the right time to take the risk to start a family and to start my own business. My wife was pregnant, and I was like why not do it"*.

Other like Zac felt a personal drive seeing an opportunity that he believed would be rewarding. The empirical findings above on risk taking corroborate the findings of chance (MacKo and Tyszka, 2009), who concluded that tendency of the entrepreneur to take risk relates to his/her perception of the risk. Therefore, the risk the entrepreneur deals with or must deal with is associated with his/her judgement.

The findings also revealed the extent risk taking impacts the entrepreneurs' business growth (Neneh and Vanzyl, 2014). The growth achievement associated with risk taking (Lenka and Agarwal, 2017) is evident in Jamie who started his business as a distributor of specialise tools. The difficulties Jamie witness was lack of opportunity identification and limitation within the United Kingdom and the perception from the supplier company on Jamie's credit rating was instrumental to lack growth in Jamie's business as captured in his quotes:

> *"So, I kind of got fed up with it and I thought right ok. So, I took a trip to the States and went to speak to all the distributors in the States"* **(Jamie).** **'execution'**

*So, we started to get US distributors ringing us saying yes well, we supply you. Now was that taking a chance? Err… yes. Was that taking a risk? Yes. But we got to a point where we had to take a risk. The manufacturers and suppliers were not talking to us. So, we went and spoke to their distributors in America. We wouldn't talk to the distributors in the UK because they wouldn't talk to us but the distributors in America would." **(Jamie).***

However, Jamie being an entrepreneur has high tendencies of taking risk, this is echoed in the quotes:

"They said where are you getting all these Bandy straps from? We get them from a company called A. Then they come knocking on our door saying would you like to be a distributor? You are very tempted to say no we're fine but the whole idea was to try to prove to them that we can deliver on what we said we can deliver"

The findings indicated that Jamie left United Kingdom distributors for American distributors. Two things were involved here, Identification opportunity and experience. This agrees with the widely held belief that successful entrepreneurs have triumphed against the odds by instinctively identifying opportunity at the right time (Mitchell, 1997; Randolph-Seng et al., 2014) . The experience of Jamie played a very vital role in terms of his confidence and belief that he is going to have a breakthrough. The experience of an entrepreneur as the driver for risk-taking has been reported in (Baron and Henry, 2010), who suggested that the tendency of the entrepreneur to take risks may also be related to risk perception and the perceived riskiness of the situation depends on experience. An essential aspect of these research findings is that the researcher has established that risk-taking characterises one of how business can grow.

Again, evidence shows that most of the successful entrepreneurs are risk takers concerning starting a business through situation and experiences such as skill and knowledge acquired through education, apprenticeship, or family background. In

that respect, the entrepreneur's risk taking was dependent on the idea of situation and expertise (Chavez, 2016). Thus, they are moderate risk takers (Westhead et al., 2011). In addition, MacKo and Tyszka (2009) argued that the risk a manager or an entrepreneur must deal with is associated with his control and skills and is undoubted, the same risk driver goes for running a business venture.

Correspondingly, in project management, before any project commences, there is a need for the project manager to carry out a risk assessment on the project before commencement. Risk assessment involves the identification and analysing of potential occurrence that may negatively impact individuals, assets, and the environment then makes a judgement on the acceptability of the risk based on a risk analysis while considering influencing factors (Loosemore et al., 2012). In the absence of proper risk assessment, leads to project failure (Rabechini Junior and Monteiro de Carvalho, 2013). From the findings in the transcripts, there was no evidence of the successful entrepreneurs undertaking a risk assessment before starting and growing their business. The risk taking was based on their various experiences.

Overall, both the entrepreneur and project manager acknowledged risk in the start-up and growth of the business or commencement of the project to achieve project success. However, the risk perception and approach in handling it might be different. Additionally, in entrepreneurial start-up intention, the behaviour and personal characteristics of entrepreneurs is of importance (Antoncic, 2018; Chell, 2008; Rauch and Frese, 2007), which is the foundation of entrepreneurship (Antoncic et al., 2015; Baum et al., 2007). It means that the entrepreneur with his attitude towards risk accepts risks as a cost of opportunity.

Viewing the identified risk-taking quotes from the interview transcript through the lens of the theory of planned behaviour suggests that three of the antecedents are evident in these quotes. The attitude towards behaviour is the attitude towards taking the risk to start and grow his business and the perceived behavioural control,

having the ability to start his business, such as experience and confidence. Skill-related risk is supported by the perceived behavioural control (PBC) as an antecedent for venture creation and growth because the entrepreneur is aware of the risk and how to navigate it based on previous experience. The third is Subjective Norn, which is driven by external pressure such as redundancy, job dissatisfaction, family matters.

The researcher identified commonalities in the various risk taking of successful entrepreneurs to start and grow their own business. However, risk in project management tends more towards subjective norm than the attitude towards behaviour. This is because risk must be assessed in project management before any task can be carried out, which means the project manager is aware of the risk (Muriana and Vizzini, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2013). It also involves stakeholders and team members. According to the project management literature, many projects fail to achieve project objectives because of insufficient risk assessment by the project manager, thus leading to inadequate anticipated project success (Kononenko and Kharazii, 2014). The project manager's responsibility is to assess risk before the start of the project (Fabricius and Büttgen, 2015). The attitude towards behaviour here involves the ability of the project manager to articulate risk assessment before embarking on any task.

5.2.2   Decision Making

Entrepreneurial decision-making has been characterised based on the activities of the entrepreneur during business start-up (Fisher, 2012). The rationale behind decision making during the start-up process is difficult to identify (Ilonen et al., 2018). This is because previous research called for 'field-based' observation of the phenomenon, which means carrying out a first-hand study and a clearer understanding of process step to decision-making rationale during start-up (Arend et al., 2015). However, the rationale being challenging to understand is because entrepreneurs have multiple subjective views, which can lead to difficulty. Moreover, in theory, there are three broad views on the entrepreneurial decision-making approach (Pina and Cunha, 2007). The approaches are intuition, improvisation, and

rational approach to decision making. Again, an entrepreneur's decision-making is seldom influenced by individual characteristics, environment, and cognitive antecedents associated with converting business ideas to business creation (Saatci et al., 2014).

With decision making in starting a business from the context above and interview undertaken and analysed, shows the evidence that all the successful entrepreneurs in one way or the other employed decision making towards achieving growth. The decision-making seems to be influenced by the entrepreneur's character, environment or even pressure from relatives, employers or friends as ascertained in Joe's remarks:

> *"For me it was kind of a personal decision. I always wanted to do something for myself anyway, but I had a very nice job in Holland and it was very well paid So there was not the perfect motivation to do it because I have lived in the UK but I haven't worked in the UK for about 24 years at that stage. So I didn't even know the business environment in the UK despite living here".*
> *(Joe)*

Joe's decision was to start a business in the United Kingdom, then grow the business. However, he had never worked in the United Kingdom, nor was he familiar with working in the UK. On the other hand, some of the entrepreneurs decided to start their own business because of an identified opportunity as shown in the quote:

> *"I decided that we wanted to start our business after identifying a niche opportunity in the delivery of technology to small business owners." (Alex)*
> **'planning'**

Alex got his experience during a gap year in university meeting large companies, and implementing internal auditing systems as part of his gap year. There he extended his meeting to small businesses and realised they do not have information technology departments, neither did they have a manager for an IT department. The

participant exploited that opportunity and developed an outsourced information technology department for the small businesses. This agrees with Kazanjian (1988) who posits that one of the firm's strategies for growth involves the idea, development of the idea using acquired resources and technology developed.

> *"The critical event for this was the fact that it was so obvious. I sat down with the business owners, they were telling me their problems, and I could sort this out for just a small amount of money. Yes, please. At that point you realise you got a market. The market research was done there and then. Face to face and the opportunity was cemented instantly and the scale kept growing over that period." **(Alex)** 'planning'*

The findings from this empirical study suggest that entrepreneurial actions towards behaviour are driven mainly by decision-making to business start-up and growth. The exploratory approach revealed that the participants widely considered decision-making. There were various reasons why the entrepreneurs decided to start and grow their business. This is evident from the responses provided by the participants, among which were the desire to be their own boss, manage their time, control the direction of their business, and be accountable to themselves. For example, Joe decided to start his business as he remarks:

> *"For me it was kind of a personal decision. I always wanted to do something for myself anyway, but I had a very nice job in Holland and it was very well paid." **(Joe)** 'planning'*

More so, same majority believed in the achievability of their decision to start and grow their business, in that respect a need for achievement, which is a personality trait. This was evident in Olly's comments:

> *"I was becoming stressed and tired and didn't own what I was doing. So I wanted to do it myself and it was that kind of thing where I wanted to prove it to myself."*

The findings of Shepherd and Patzelt (2017) support the assertion that an entrepreneur's business start-up and growth are largely driven by decision-making. It is assumed that entrepreneurs make their decision through judgement, which shapes the business towards the desired goal (Zhao and Smallbone, 2019), while believing in their business ideas.

The three decision making strategies were evident. Some participants show evidence of intuition (Delmar and Shane, 2003; Dencker et al., 2009) as captured in the quote:

"I decided that we wanted to start our business after identifying a niche opportunity in the delivery of technology to small business owners." **(Alex)** '**Planning'**.

Some showed Improvisation (Vera and Crossan, 2005; Hmieleski et al., 2013) as captured in the transcript, e.g., Josh. Josh a fitness and health instructor, decided to sell a funded gym made profit to establish his own gym. He remarked:

"We knocked down a few walls and made it bigger. And that was my first gym and I turned that into a 300-member club alongside with a personal trainer. And I sold that made a small profit. Nothing crazy. "Then I decided to set up on my own and that is where I am now with my gym" **(Josh**) **'planning'**.

In the case of rational decision making (Plehn-Dujowich, 2010), participants often made their decisions based on economic conditions, rationality, and by considering the pros and cons of starting a new business, deciding to remain in the same one or making a choice of wage employment. This is evident in this quote:

"I sat down in my living room with an idea and I thought I could do this and then I contacted a few friends that I knew that had their own business as to how I would go about registering the business. Obviously, from my financial background, I knew all the tax implications of businesses, so I made a

decision that I was going to set up a limited company right from the beginning based on my understanding." (**Kemy**) **'planning'**

Kemy's decision to start her own business was because of redundancy, which is in line with Van der Zwan et al. (2016), who stated that the motivation to start a business may arise from external factors such as unemployment, family pressure and general dissatisfaction with the current situation. Coming from a financial sector (accountant) and knowing all the tax implications of business gave her the confidence to start up her business. Despite her acquired knowledge, Kemy sought advice from friends on how to register a business and listened to other people's experiences before starting up, which helped her succeed in business. Also, in the research findings, there is a consensus among participants that decision making is an essential driver for business growth as recorded in the transcript. Julie decided to review the way she operated her business to grow it, when she responded that:

"When we decided to put lots of adverts on our company cards. Our cards are bright, colourful and very nice photos. It suddenly boosted clients again." (**Julie**) **'planning'**

This decision aimed at attracting more customers, which resulted in the growth of her business. The above decision making suggests a logical decision-making strategy. In that respect, it follows a conscious deliberation as reported in (Elbanna, 2006; Schwenk, 1984). Based on the preceding, one can suggest that the best way to explore an opportunity may be through a systematic approach. The entrepreneur will think first of an issue, then define it, diagnose it, and design a solution before deciding. The entrepreneurial material centres on facts and the mental process involved in the planning are of the sequential, systematic, and articulated types (Mintzberg, 1976, cited in Pina e Cunha, 2007). Harry's decision on growth is achievements in different stages of his business. He sets a target for himself, what to achieve in a particular stage in his business and worked towards achieving it.

"I moved in there paying for it and continued to grow. After about a year and a half, I said now is time to get to the next level. Then I got this place doing indoor sales. This could take like fifty to sixty cars. We then started using the compound." **(Harry). Execution**

Willie's decision on business growth was about standards and transformation. He was able to renovate the practice from an old to a new building. In addition, moving from the general way of GP practice to a training practice. He specified:

"So the business has grown from what it was 11 years ago to what it is now. We have been able to transform from the old building to a new one 7 years ago by demolishing the old one and putting up a new one and having a car park space. We have been in transformation." **(Willie)**

In addition, some of these quotes showed how some participants manage to grow their business based on the decisions they made. According to some of the participants:

"I have been able to grow the business from just standard GP practice to a training practice where we now train doctors as well." **(Willie)**,
"I was very fortunate; the company I worked for in Germany were helpful and generous when I said I needed to come back to UK am feeling home sick. They gave me some clients to start running so I hit the ground running. I got the business going. Then within about eighteen months I needed to expand, needed staffs, needed premises. In 2004, really the business was growing from there." (Paul). *'**planning**'*

The findings seem to reveal various angle of growth as can be seen in the quote: *"We have grown in terms of the number of staff we have now. It is a good thing we employ more people, pay more tax. We are doing the work better, revenue has increased, we make more profit than we used to. We've got several sites, before it was one site. We have a lot more enquiries, we get a lot more recommendation from people locally other than our business coming from google, we get repeat customers, and we get people that refer other people to us."* **(Sandi).**

It is obvious that the growth here is not only for the GDP of the firm; the staff strength of the firm is also considered as growth. Another important observation is the size of the firm, was also consider as growth.

"By a year and half ago, this used to be a warehouse. Food storage for the company across the road. We later expanded into the next building beside this one. Converted the two to become one." (Harry).

In all cases, the findings from the data analysis presented above revealed evidence of decision-making in business growth. Decision making with the entrepreneur is related to the personality trait and relevant others. Although findings suggested that all the successful entrepreneurs interviewed made decisions to start and grow their business. Nevertheless, the decision made was based on different individual motives. In support of this view, Orser et al. (1998), Orser and Hogarth-Scott (2002) argued that the decision to pursue business growth is because of a variety of motivations, which include: the value of the entrepreneur, opinion of significant others, and the entrepreneur's perception that growth is feasible.

The process is done through the utilisation of capabilities to assimilate, store, and retrieve information for achieving optimum performance (Saatci et al., 2014; Sengupta and Debnath, 1994). Successful entrepreneurs choose the decision process best suitable to reduce the risk level, intrinsic in creating and growing the business. In support of this view, (Gruber, 2007) and (Miller, 2007) suggested that systematic and rational decision-making could be useful in an entrepreneurial context, even though it is agreed that an entrepreneur regularly faces a decision situation branded, by additional ambiguity and uncertainty that is more considerable.

However, in project management, the process of decision- making in projects involves many stakeholders. In other words, decision-making is a collective process rather than purely by an individual (Valiris et al., 2005). For (Korhonen, 1992), decision-making is about choosing among many countable and uncountable

alternatives adopting two or more criteria. Most times, the project manager struggle in project decision-making (Deguire, 2010). The reason is that the process involves different stakeholders with variable interests in the project; thereby, a decision is made on an agreement and collectively. Decision making in projects goes through a process, which involves many stakeholders, making it a collective process rather than a purely individual choice. Typically, it is logical or rational decision making, which was observed during interaction with the participants. For example:

> *"I sat down in my living room with an idea and I thought I could do this and then I contacted a few friends that I knew that had their own business as to how I would go about registering the business. Obviously, from my financial background, I knew all the tax implications of businesses, so I made a decision that I was going to set up a limited company right from the beginning based on my understanding." (Kemy).*

It is obvious that this is rational decision making often observed in project management (Kørnøv and Thissen, 2000).

The application of the theory of planned behaviour on the decision-making in the interview transcripts quotes suggests that there is evidence of the three intentional antecedents in all cases. The attitude towards behaviour is the belief that the decision made in the business would lead to growth in the business. The subjective norm is the decision to consult an external factor that assisted in the growth of their business. The perceived behavioural control the confidence the entrepreneurs had, which comes from the knowledge and experience, obtained in making the decision that realised growth. The self-confidence is positively influenced by education and many years of experience. A few examples are presented here to illustrate evidence of the intentional antecedent in the participants' responses. There was evidence of subjective norm from Olly's employer trying to frustrate his leaving from the company as expressed in the quote:

*"I was on a 3-month notice period and I tell you it was hard. I got lots of legal letters because they didn't want me to leave because I was a good money earner for them." **(Olly)**.*

The pressure he felt from the employer is the subjective norm that influenced his leaving. However, the perceived social pressure is less relevance for individuals with a strong attitude towards behaviour and strong perceived behavioural control. Kemy's decision to start her own business as a result of redundancy, which came as a shock to her, coming from a financial sector (accountant), and knowing all the tax implications of business gave her the confidence to start up her business. Despite her acquired knowledge, Kemy sought advice from friends on how to register a business and listened to other people's experiences before starting up as she expresses during interaction:

*"I sat down in my living room with an idea and I thought I could do this and then I contacted a few friends that I knew that had their own business as to how I would go about registering the business. Obviously, from my financial background, I knew all the tax implications of businesses, so I made a decision that I was going to set up a limited company right from the beginning based on my understanding." **(Kemy)***

Similarly, Sally, like Lauren, was forced to start her own business because of redundancy, which is the Subjective Norm. The two women experienced redundancy from their paid employment. Their action agrees with Van der Zwan et al. (2016) who posits that motivation to start a business may arise from external factors such as unemployment, family pressure and general dissatisfaction with the current situation. This is expressed in the quote:

*"At the end of my tenure, which was October 1992… erm I decided I didn't want anybody else to make me redundant ever again, I had to set up my own business. It was really a traumatic experience." **(Sally)***

Sally's decision was of external pressure, but with years of experience, she was confident enough to start her business despite the entire ordeal she has passed through. Her attitude towards behaviour was her starting a business. The subjective norms are the redundancy and her friend's positive influence during the time she wanted to start her business by assisting Sally with an office for a start. Friends can play an external influence on the decision to start a business. The perceived behavioural control is the experience Sally gained during the paid job and experience of others.

The decision making in project management inclines more towards subjective norm to decision making. Decision making in projects goes through a process, which involves many stakeholders, making it a collective process rather than a purely individual choice (Valiris et al., 2005). Involving stakeholders may take different forms at different phases, which includes sharing information, consulting, dialoguing, or deliberating on decisions (OECD, 2015). It should be a meaningful part of formulating and implementing the project plan during the execution of the project. The perceived behavioural control, in this case, is low, even though the project manager has the acquired knowledge and skills. Nevertheless, he cannot ignore this group of people before or during the project undertaking; otherwise, it will lead to an unaccomplished project objective. The attitude towards behaviour is that the project manager must be able to make a proficient decision.

5.2.3   Innovation

Innovation plays a vital role in the success of any business (Tohidi and Jabbari, 2012). It is the ability to do something with a certain degree of originality or improvement to what is existing, which can be perceived as a unique identity in the market. Shane, (2012: 17-18) suggested that "entrepreneurship not only comprises of discovering opportunities but involves also devising new business ideas and ways to bring together resources to exploit those opportunities." A good number of successful entrepreneurs in this study embraced innovation in their businesses and narrated different ways in which they made a change in the business by being innovative.

Thus, a novelty in business involves developing new concepts from already existing businesses, and a few others adopted a technology process. They expounded on different ways in which they practiced innovation in their businesses to achieve growth, as identified in the narratives.

Aby narrated how she went to America to learn about cinnamon roll making. She gained the experience, then created her recipe to be different from her cinnamon roll bakeries. She narrates:

> "*I went to America and started to create my own recipe and that's how we created our own recipe for cinnamon rolls... Because at the end of the day we are a café that is very different in the sense that no matter what your experience is we are going to teach you something different... Then we started to change how our stores are designed such as having an open café concept where people see as we make and bake our food*". **(Aby)** **'execution'**

The quotes show a form of innovativeness, creation of own concept in an already existing business to create a competitive edge by engaging in innovation and improving business for the sole aim of achieving growth. The participant's view of changing the narrative of the business concept is entirely in agreement with Kapsali (2011) who refers to innovativeness as a level of novelty or originality by introducing new ideas or innovation.

Similarly, from Alex's perceptive:

> "*I said it is and it isn't because the industry has moved. If we remain in 2012 still doing what we did in 2010, by 2014 we're out of business so we need to evolve. So we evolved and the business then grew and probably doubled in size during that period from 2012 to 2017.*" **(Alex) 'execution'**

In respect to the assumption that the business environment is not static, and with constant abrupt changes in information technology, businesses are required to change the way the way they operate and avoid being annihilated, hence the need for improvement. Innovation in business is a continuous growth, creating and

keeping up to date your products, processes, or enhancing your business models. This opinion is supported by Schumpeter (1934), who opined that innovation creates new demand and entrepreneurs bring the innovations to the market destroying the existing markets and creating new ones, which will, in turn, be destroyed by even newer products and services (Schumpeter, 1934, cited in Okpara, 2007). The process is called 'creative destruction.' Also, Schumpeter (1942) highlighted the fast-changing environment with constant abrupt changes, which brings about innovation in business (Schumpeter, 1942 cited in Canh et al., 2019). The ideas on which innovation is based come from creativity in organisations (Goldsby et al., 2018), and it is growth and profit-enhancing (Galindo and Méndez, 2014).

Aydin and Parker (2018), and Miranda et al. (2016) claim that another way to assess innovativeness is through the level of diffusion and adoption of the technology. This concept of innovation was observed in the participants' narratives:

"We are very new technology so the whole concept of taking a technology and making it into a product has been a sort of complex to address." (John) and "the electronics, the physical manifestation of the product and then is now to find where that can be applied in the industry. And then connecting those application to financial payback of changing how you run your process using our technology." **(John). 'execution'**

In addition, there are evidence of project management processes in some participants narratives:

"What we started doing was get everybody's ideas on board and say we have two choices here. You can negotiate with the acquiring company to give you some time to stay on to work. And that will give you more opportunity or time to get retrained, go to another company for those that would be leaving". (Dave).

The critical thing is the entrepreneur assembling a team as done by the project manager, time, and opportunity. The view agrees with (Gemünden et al., 2018), who argued that work-time spent on projects correlates positively with innovation

success, which correlates positively to business success. This is also reflected in the submission of (Amaro et al., 2008), who claim that a successful innovation process requires effective controlling and alignment with project management.

Findings from the transcript showed that all the entrepreneurs interviewed considered innovation as one of the essential factors for business success both in the creation and in growth. This view corresponds with that of Tohidi and Jabbari (2012), who claimed that innovation is the key to any successful business. The entrepreneur, based on acquired skills on the business and his nature of opportunity seeking, creates a new industry and generate jobs from the established industry (Ribeiro-Soriano, 2017). According to Ajzen (1991), behavioural achievement depends on the availability of resources, opportunities, and converting them into a business. The entrepreneur's ability to recognise an opportunity and be able to transform the occasion into business and create jobs from the enterprise established. Drawing from Schumpeter (1934), research work highlights the value of creativity and innovation for an opportunity- and advantage-seeking behaviour.

Using the TPB as a lens shows that attitude and perceived behavioural control are two dominant antecedents towards intention. According to Alex:

> "I said it is and it isn't because the industry has moved if we remain in 2012 still doing what we did in 2010. By 2014 we're out of business so we need to evolve. So we evolved and the business then grew and probably doubled in size during that period from 2012 to 2017. **(Alex) 'execution'**.

This quote links to the participants' attitudes and perceived behavioural control. The perceived behavioural control is influenced by control beliefs, which are closely linked to the individual's experience, experiences of others, and available information about a particular behaviour. The perceived behavioural control and attitude of the participants was the key to innovative tendencies revealed by the participants. The entrepreneur's ability to recognise opportunity, ability to transform

the occasion into business, and create jobs from the established enterprise is linked to their attitude towards innovation.

"I did that, and I also realised the importance of writing blogging, I didn't have a website initially, but I have to open one, to send out email and the importance of writing an article and showing your expertise." **(Pete) 'execution'**

The ability of the entrepreneur to acquire skills depends strongly on the attitude of the entrepreneur towards intention and the behaviour to create business as highlighted in the participant's response during the interview:

"We just let people who are good at what they do and do it to the best of their ability and I think that is novel in the work we do because it quite attracts quite flamboyant type of people" **(Jack) 'execution'.**

However, there is evidence of subjective norm in innovative narratives

"If you really want to stimulate a change I think it is helpful if you have someone come in from outside. They can ignore you. They can disagree with you. That's fine but you are able to bring something more challenging and more helpful by being external." (Steve) 'execution'

Innovation in project management links to attitude towards behaviour, subjective norm, and perceived behaviour control. The project manager's ability to originate new ideas and solutions in a project deliverable with clear and measurable execution criteria is an attitude towards behaviour. The subjective norm is the influence of the organisation. Relating to organisational policy and probably pressure from top management, the project manager is influenced towards being innovative (Gallagher, 2015), and the opportunity for innovation generally centres on problem solving (ibid).

5.2.4 Leadership

Starting and growing a business demands not only ideas and financial capital but also leading others to transform the idea of financial capital into successful reality (Jensen and Luthans, 2006). Entrepreneurs are the driving force of the development of ideas and resources, both materials and human resources, into success, which is an attribute of a leader. The leadership behaviour of the entrepreneur impacts on the performance of new business creation (Daily et al., 2002). The entrepreneur as a leader manages activities as well as leads or oversees the upkeep of the business. Leadership behaviour was evident during the interview from entrepreneurs' narratives. Most of the entrepreneurs had an idea of what business they intended starting; they thought through it and knew where they wanted to go and how to go about it. This was because most of the entrepreneurs had some experience in the business they were starting. They supported and at the same time guided their staff. They provided resources for their business, had the confidence built upon years of learning through education, apprenticeship, paid employment or even family background. They assumed responsibility without hiding them or blaming others, and knew that if a mistake occurs, it does not equate inadequacy.

Findings revealed that entrepreneurial leadership in this study centred on the entrepreneurs knowing who they were and what made meaning to them towards their business, having a purpose for life and work, and understanding how their business fit into their industry and environment. Almost half of the entrepreneurs revealed listening and continuous learning skill, allowing flexibility in finding opportunities to launch new initiatives, which is key to business success/growth. The successful entrepreneurs, as identified, illustrate the points:

> *"…And integrity, and that is building relationships and be a trust-worthy, authentic person that others will love to work with. That's how your team will like to work for you if you are in leadership position." (Lizzie).*

Lizzie talked about integrity as among the three core values of her business and specified integrity as building of trust and associating it with a leader. Here, trust and integrity are inborn,

> *"if someone in leadership, leadership is very important, with clear thinking and uses good judgement, then what you emerge out of it is that you get off your crisis, you learn from it. Then you say ok where we went wrong is this, next time we will do it better by doing these improvements." **(Lizzie)***

The above quote agrees with Hernon (2009), who opined that leadership is more than an element of management functions and involves initiating change, providing direction, and keeping tasks on track. Collin is in the recruitment business and primarily works selling candidates to his clients, mostly international law firms. He formerly worked in a recruitment firm then decided to start his own business doing the same thing he was doing in his paid job. He and his colleague did not have much prior experience in managing and training people. There was no defined structure in running their business. Then they decided to have employees whom they would lead by example. In other words, they designed a structure which they adhered to, so the employees would follow. The participant provided leadership as captured in the quotes:

> *"So we've taken on staff, we have to learn to do that how to teach and how to do performance reviews and how to motivate other people and that side of things". (Collin)* And also he said: *"Having employees makes that easier because we can't be slacking off if we've got an employee. We need to show them and lead by example and we found that very helpful." **(Collin)***

Similarly, such sentiment has been echoed: "For you to run a practice you need to have a leadership skill, you need to have multi skills". The leader deals with the concept and ideas, which will help boost business growth. You need to know how to deal with problems as they come

> *"I think the key to the whole business is the leader. "Without a shadow of a doubt. It is his ingenuity in evolving the business and running it. He is the most important reason by a mile". (Carl).*

The narratives have provided evidence of Leadership leading to entrepreneur's success as reported by Fernald et al. (2005). They suggested that entrepreneurs' success can be associated with leadership functions such as providing vision to the development of a new product, service, or organisation.

In project management, leadership involves defining the requirement of work, establishing the extent of work, and allocating resources required. Defining the requirement of work can be referred to as planning; establishing the extent of work can be referred to as monitoring, whereas allocating resources required can refer to execution. The project manager has a leadership role in creating a productive working environment for the project team. According to the Association of Project Management's report (2018), leadership is about setting direction, dealing with people, and working outside the project with stakeholders. Most leaders envisage themselves as project managers regardless of whether in project management or entrepreneurship.

This was revealed during the responses of John and Pete:

> *"I was the project manager for the project. Setting the management teams, the objectives, and managed the budget as the project proceeded, we sort of made sure that we were addressing the objectives and didn't spend too much. So it's all about managing people, resources and the money."* **(John)** **'execution'.**

Pete, even though he is the owner and manager of the business, plays the role of a project manager, the middleman between the client and the contractor.

> *"I liaise with the client quite often because I'm the go-between, and there is me in the middle, the client on one side and the person who is doing the job*

on a day-to-day basis on other side. So I'm constantly going between any
question the contractor has, any question the client has, I also monitor how
the company is going on a day to day basis." **(Pete) 'execution' and**
'monitoring'.

Applying TPB as a lens revealed that the intentional antecedents evident in the leadership are mainly attitude towards behaviour and the perceived behavioural control. The evaluation towards engaging in leadership role in the project is the attitude towards behaviour and the perceived behavioural control is confidence due to years of experience before starting the business. The confidence is a consequence of experience and learning as projected in the quote:

"So we've taken on staff, we have to learn to do that how- to teach and
how to do performance reviews and how to motivate other people and that
side of things." **(Pete)**

This is because for the entrepreneur the ability to lead involves listening and paying attention to his staff, and their concerns in relation to the business is attitude towards intention. Entrepreneurship, as a leader, involves combination of leadership potentials and entrepreneurial skills (Esmer and Faruk, 2017). This is echoed in the narrative: "*For you to run a practice you need to have leadership skill, you need to have multi skills.*" The reason for this is that when an individual has total control over the performance of behaviour, the individual's intentions alone to perform the behaviour is sufficient to predict the result.

Entrepreneurial leadership links to the attitude towards overcoming future obstacles in venture creation and perceived behavioural control towards the growth of the business. This is because leadership in entrepreneurship is characterised by listening, paying attention to staff, and commitment towards the development of employees, which are attitude towards the behaviour. The findings appear to confirm the research of Esmer and Faruk (2017), who found that entrepreneurial leaders know themselves, their environment and find new opportunities creating value for

businesses plus society. As a leader, an entrepreneur has characteristics such as taking risks, evaluating the opportunities, being innovative, productive, interchanging, and strategic, combining leadership potential and entrepreneurial skills with the managerial skill of giving instruction (ibid). Leadership, in general, involves influencing the activities of an organised group toward goal achievement (House et al., 1999). The reason for this is that when an individual has total control over the performance of the behaviour, the individual's intention alone is enough to predict the particular behaviour. (Leadership is execution and attitude towards behaviour).

5.2.5 Networking

The entrepreneurs usually had to build their networks from inception, and most did so actively (Jack et al., 2008) to ensure they established significant contacts to start and as well grow in their business. Most of the entrepreneurs highlighted the importance of networking as one of the highest business tools for obtaining the most current information related to the business environment. In most cases, the entrepreneurs started attending formal network meetings such as chambers of commerce, breakfast meetings, to mention a few. Others, through informal network, contacted friends and family members who could provide useful entrepreneurial or other business advice via emails, phone calls. Some others networked through contacting previous work colleagues and by word of mouth. Similarly, Lee and Tsang (2001) consider a positive relationship between network partners and business growth. Also, they can benefit from economies of scale without having the disadvantages of being large-scaled (Watson, 2007).

Having such pre-start experience gave the participants in this study knowledge and information, including the confidence to move fully into the start-up, as well as other means of structuring their business, leading to growth. The extent to which participants attended formal networks did varied significantly among businesses. The above mentioned were identified in Pete, who met his first client within the first month he started going for a formal network meeting. According to Pete,

"I had my first client within the first month of my going for a networking meeting officially lunched and is snowball from there; it changed and developed over the years. It started off well and soon come to a point when earning more on this than the event business" and *"So, I went for my first networking meeting. It was quite nervous but met people. Actually, it was just chatting with people. I did that, and I also realised the importance of writing blogging, I didn't have a website initially, but I have to open one, to send out email and the importance of writing an article and showing your expertise. "Those were two biggest drivers put to my business."* **(Pete).** '**execution'**

The response of the participants showed that they gained knowledge from experts and obtained the information they never had. He describes his experience and benefits during the network meeting, which resulted in significant growth in his business. This revealed that networking could be a platform to connect people leading to enhanced business growth. This is in line with Bocconcelli et al. (2017), who suggested that social media can be a great platform to connect with people. Furthermore, several empirical papers have documented the benefits of networking (Gronum et al., 2012; Jack et al., 2010). Through networking, the entrepreneurs obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to remain competitive (Schoonjans et al., 2013).

Paul, a financial controller, started his business with a small client base because he had worked in the same business as an employee for many years. In a bid to boost his business, he resorted to networking by joining chambers of commerce.

"But of course, you don't want to hang around with a couple of clients you need to grow. So, I did a lot of networking, joining chambers of commerce. I joined the Altrincham and sales chambers of commerce. I joined the Greater Manchester Chambers of Commerce". **(Paul) 'execution'.**

Similarly, Wilson's way of improving his practice as a general practitioner was to involve his patients those registered in his surgery, forming a patient group as a way of networking and gathering information on how to improve his practice:

> "We had to form a patient group. Patient group means we had to pick up patients from different backgrounds and formed the group. The group meet from time to time monthly. Because the survey they talked to their colleagues in the forum and come up with advice how to improve things in practice." *(*Wilson) 'execution'.

Network meetings provide numerous business support as well as, relevant information regarding establishing and growing the business. Findings from the transcript conform to that of (Batjargal, 2007; Elfring and Hulsink, 2007), who posit that entrepreneurs that rely on external resources successfully establish and grow their businesses benefit from network relationships. This is line with the findings.

> "I registered with business growth hub and they gave me a mentor because I was also looking at my marketing. They gave me a mentor for marketing and I had the money to try loads". (Lauren)

> "When I was going for all the networking meetings, I realised that most people worked from home. So I decided to move the whole business to the house."(Lauren)

Most of the participants saw chamber of commerce as a good starting point for networking. According to Sandi, chamber of commerce was a good networking place and beneficial:

> "We need the chamber of commerce for networking, as it provides opportunities to meet other companies and other starters and know people who want to use our services." (Sandi) 'planning and execution.'

Sandi designed the network being a member of the formal organisation and through attending events and workshops where her target is to meet new individuals. She believes interacting and connecting with new individuals might become the source to linking to right people, those who are interested in her business.

However, findings also show that some participants believed the family and friends should play a key role in networking.

"To be fair I started with friends that had businesses in Manchester and different parts of the country to understand what the problem was **(Dave)** **'execution'** and *"And of course, I had one or two friends who were doing similar business. Having interacted with them, I felt it is something I could do."* (**Simon) 'planning'**

In networking, the entrepreneur's objective is to interact with individuals with diverse expertise through becoming a member and attending social networking group meetings and events. This is to achieve support and relevant information regarding the establishment. This is evident in the various quotes presented. Such meetings provide numerous business support services, useful in fostering technological innovation (Akcomak, 2009). The quotes revealed resources and ideas that help participants to grow their business. This is not surprising as it has been reported that entrepreneurs who interact more frequently with network partners are more successful in terms of venture growth (Hansen, 1995).

Also, there was evidence of business growth based on the frequency of participant's interactions with network partners. Likewise, the study provided evidence not only concerning resources and ideas, but network relations also offer emotional support, and this, in turn, is thought to enhance persistence to remain in business. This agrees with Gimeno et al., 1997), who believed that emotional support is vital for entrepreneurs to flourish in business.

However, research into the personal networks of entrepreneurs has often focused on flows of resources (e.g., information); less research has looked at social norms and values provided by network members (Shapero and Sokol, 1982; Johannisson, 1990).

Interestingly, social norms are less relevant to intentions for subjects with an internal locus of control (Ajzen, 1987) or who exhibit a strong orientation toward taking action (Baumann et al., 2018; Koole and Jostmann, 2004). Consequently, research has shown that entrepreneurs, who usually have to rely on external resources to successfully establish and develop their new ventures, profit from developing and maintaining network relationships (e.g., Batjargal, 2007; Elfring and Hulsink, 2007; Kim and Aldrich, 2005). Network support increases the chance of new venture survival and growth. Support from strong ties seems more important than support from weak ties (Brüderl and Preisendörfer, 1998)

In project management, networking is employed to find a solution to a problem. According to Wamsler (2017), a network formed could be specifically for a motive such as to address management objectives that are gradually and informally established through stakeholder interactions. This is evident from Wilson's response:

> "*We had to form a patient group. Patient group means we had to pick up patients from different backgrounds and formed the group. The group meet from time to time monthly. Because the survey they talked to their colleagues in the forum and come up with advice how to improve things in practice.*" (**Wilson) 'exectuion'**.

Practicing networking is to improve the performance of his business and address any form of problem arising concerning the care provided to the patients registered in his surgery. assertion fits into the Wamsler view (Wamsler, 2017).

Applying TPB shows the networking sub-theme is associated with subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (PBC), and intentional antecedents towards venture growth. However, Vissa (2012) and Johannisson, (1990) show that entrepreneurs' networking centres on the flow of resources (e.g., information). They opined that only a few researchers have considered the social norms and values networking provides (ibid). In networking, the entrepreneur's objective is to interact

with individuals with diverse expertise becoming a member and attending social networking group meetings and events. The aim is to obtain support and relevant information regarding the establishment and growth of the business. For example:

"I had my first client within the first month of my going for a networking meeting officially lunched and is snowball from there; it changed and developed over the years."

"So, I went for my first networking meeting. It was quite nervous, but I met people. Actually, it was just chatting with people. I did that, and I also realised the importance of writing blogging, I didn't have a website initially, but I have to open one, to send out email and the importance of writing an article and showing your expertise." Those were two biggest drivers put to my business. No, I have got three businesses; Networking, blogging and the other is being credit on twitter."

This is typically and combination of subjective norm and PBC. Joining chamber of commerce, social meeting and relying on friends and colleagues advice produces external pressure on the participants, which is subjective norm. Profoundly, the networking meeting influences the entrepreneur's judgement to perform the behaviour of business creation and growth.

The participants had many years of experience in the same business, while an employee made them be acquainted with the market, and it was not difficult for the participants to embrace the benefit that comes from networking. The perceived behavioural control increases the chances of joining groups or associations that are relevant to the business of interest. According to De Carolis and Saparito (2006), Petrou and Daskalopoulou (2013) regular attendance at meetings reduces the absence of possible direct contact with the networks. It increases the chances of successfully spotting and optimising entrepreneurial opportunities because they are central to and well positioned to influence a structure that is more likely to generate higher levels of information. Correspondingly, such meetings provide numerous

business support services that are useful in fostering technological innovation (Akcomak, 2009), thus enhancing business growth.

5.2.6 Social capital

Research suggests that while approximately one-half of entrepreneurs recognise ideas for new ventures through personal capital, the other half recognises such ideas through social contacts through bonds (Carey et al., 2011; Jiang and Carroll, 2009). Such evidence suggests that beginnings of new venture creation and growth activity may not always occur in a vacuum devoid of social influence. It also suggests that a critical source of information leading to entrepreneurial activities is in the various types of social relations maintained. Social relations such as a shared understanding, shared norms, shared values, trust, cooperation, and reciprocity (Ryan et al., 2008).

During the interview with the individual participants, findings show that few of the entrepreneurs participated in a social capital network where resources, which includes information, ideas, leads, business opportunities, financial capital, power and influence, emotional support, even goodwill, trust and cooperation, were obtained. These resources are not personal; instead, they reside in networks of relationships used to support members when required. The social ties developed are to support human capital, particularly to achieve success in business. During the interview, there were also examples of situations where participants converted human capital into social capital (Nahapiet, 2011). The building of social capital enables entrepreneurs to access community support, market information, business advice, and innovation (Lee and Jones, 2008). Hence, it yields on reproductive benefits.

However, social capital centres more on civic virtue, embedded in the sense of reciprocal relations (Morrow, 2006). Thus, trust embeddedness. The importance of trust is in its capacity to support members of the community of knowledge to assess and validate knowledge as it evolves. The validation is not only a matter of truth determination, but also of selection, utility, and application. A community of knowledge draws on its members' collective experience and intelligence to decide

which of the vast range of possible choices of knowledge is likely to be most favourable. This view is evident in Willie's response.

> *"Clinical Commissioning Group. That is what replaced PCT. All the health in a certain area, for instance, this is Worsley, there is a board that deals with that. I was ones the chair of that board. We actually make decision on all the budget, and services to the patients. So work life balance and professional achievement"* **(Willie) 'planning' and 'exectuion'**.

Willie practiced social capital in that a community of medical professionals meet and discuss issues to achieve the same goal. Those in that network have the same value; there are norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them in terms of budget and services to the patients. Similarly, this response further validated social capital

> *"I had a network and what we set up was something called the NHS TRUST DIRECT FORUM. Which was the networking group for the executives who have the same value system. We talked about how to carry out the project. Is almost like action learning sets"* (Sally) *'PLANNING'*, and *"I meet other women in business and ex-national chair of national women organisation and national women network and now the North West chair, which is a holding position. We have these group meetings and we found that very supportive."* (Sally) **'planning'.**

The responses of both participants show evidence of norm of trust and mutually formed social pressure for participation and responsibility. Trust and reciprocity experienced ensured the transaction costs of doing business were reduced to a minimum in the sense that they share knowledge, resources, and trust while the activity of joining encouraged civic virtue like open-mindedness, less distrust, and more sensitivity. In that way, business growth is encouraged. However, another approach to social capital using the online platform was observed during the cause

of interactions with the participants, a group of freelance individuals with interest in a particular business. They support each other to achieve success.

> "We get into online communities. When we started, we went to an already existing platform. I normally go to 'fiver' or 'Odex'. Where I pay in advanced, but the money is kept in Extron. I will stress that it is an interim account. If they do a job for me and I like it, then I will instruct the platform to release the funds to them. If I don't like it the funds are not released to them until I am happy. Once it goes on for like 6 months, we believe we trust each other, and a lot of things will work quicker, we don't need to use the platform anymore." **(Chuma)** **'execution'.**

It is worth mentioning here that how quick the social capital transcends to business growth is dependent on the trust which members have on each other. The trust can be based on how long the platform has existed as captured in the quote.

> "When we started, we went to an already existing platform. Once it goes on for like 6 months, we believe we trust each other, and a lot of things will work quicker, we don't need to use the platform anymore". There is also issue of mutual benefit, so that it is not one sided mentoring, rather reciprocating "it has to be a two-way thing. If you gonna be my mentor, I will also need to look for something to do for you. It might just maybe your website that I decide to build for you making myself available to help and serve you whenever I can. By having these relationships am exposed to freelancers that are good to my progress, and me. Because I get to know them even before I need them for my company." (**Chuma).**

The perspective of social capital evident in the responses of the participants is, in line with Gronum et al. (2012); Saha and Banerjee (2015) and Wu (2008). They posit that social capital comes in the form of network ties, trust, and shared vision among the members, influencing the performance of the individual businesses by generating

resources providing information and knowledge, and developing new capabilities. It implies that entrepreneurs engage with actors in their environment to obtain necessary resources, support, and information, which may be inaccessible personally. Adler and Kwon (2002) refer to social capital as the goodwill available to individuals or groups. It builds on the structure and content of the actor's social relations, such as norms, obligations, as well as network ties (Saha and Banerjee, 2015)

Besides, understanding such collective behaviours enables mutual support (ibid) and long-term relationship (Jarillo, 1988; Jarillo and Ricart, 1987), therefore, contributing to the organisation's competitive advantage (Carey et al., 2011). According to Antoldi et al. (2011), most entrepreneurs gather these aspects of social capital in networks to support the pursuit of growth opportunities. Similarly, (Sahut and Peris-Ortiz, 2014), expounded that entrepreneurship is a social activity considering that customers and suppliers form part of the social web, where the economic elements of entrepreneurship are conducted; hence, the presence, or absence and the form of social capital is likely to impact the nature of the business.

In project management, social capital centres on interpersonal value (project team) and inter-project relationship embedded in a single unit project and through which relevant resources are accessed. The interaction and connections result in shared norms, trust, and reciprocity, which in turn fosters cooperation to achieve common goals (Tansley and Newell, 2007). Although social capital is found in project management, the operational modulus is different from the entrepreneurs. The project team source for knowledge externally only if it a new task and project have a vague knowledge of such a project. For example, when project tasks require new relevant knowledge located outside project boundaries, the project manager and project teams involved in the projects may strongly be motivated to create network relations with members of other projects having access to new knowledge. Hence, social capital is exploited, producing a variety of benefits at the project level (Di Vincenzo and Mascia, 2012) but this can also be problematic.

For instance, a high degree of interrelated networks can have unexpected consequences if they result in comfortable or validating interactions but not in the most relevant and useful knowledge for the project activities at hand (Mizruchi and Stearns, 2001). Nevertheless, the recurring relationship among diverse project teams results in increased information exchange, mutual knowledge-based trust, and reduced network instability (Polidoro et al., 2011), all of which combine into the development of deterrence-based trust by increasing the visibility of norm-breaking behaviour (Coleman, 1988; Gulati and Gargiulo, 1999).

Applying the theory of planned behaviour, the two antecedents strongly evident in the above responses of the successful entrepreneurs are the subjective norm and the perceived behaviour control. For example,

> *"I had a network and what we set up was something called the NHS TRUST DIRECT FORUM. Which was the networking group for the executives who have the same value system. We talked about how to carry out the project. Is almost like action learning sets" (Sally)* **'execution'** *and "I meet other women in business and ex-national chair of national women organisation and national women network and now the North West chair, which is a holding position. We have these group meetings and we found that very supportive (Sally).*

The subjective norm here is meeting people, such as the ex-national chairperson, who will influence the participant's behaviour, in this case, business growth. The subjective norm is also linked to the gathering of individuals with the same value and who believe in pursuing the same goal via civic virtue. On the other hand, the perceived behavioural control is experience and confidence that most of the individual successful entrepreneurs possess to join such network and make individual contributions such as knowledge sharing and resources to achieve growth in their business. Nonetheless, the attitude towards behaviour revealed was the successful

entrepreneurs' positive evaluation of becoming a member of a social capital group where the norm of trust and reciprocity binds the network.

5.2.7   Communication

Excellent communication impacts on competence, cognitive skills, and interrelationship to enhanced business growth. Effective communication within and outside the business has been found to aid the success of the business (Adejimola, 2008). During the interviews, communication was significant to the entrepreneurs considering their day-to-day working practices. There were verbal and non-verbal forms of communication (interaction) evident among the entrepreneurs. The verbal communication was expressed here in the form of a meeting,

*"With the initial meeting with the client, I will say it is not just me. There are three people who I work with based on what the client wants I will pick the right person for you. So they are aware of it. And sometimes they wanted just me so is only me that does the job." **(Pete),***

*"So what I then have to do is to manage the relationship between the client and the actual day to day stuff. So I'm constantly go between any question the contractor has, any question the client has, I also monitor how the company is going on a day to day basis. I take an overview am the person to do day-to-day exchange ideas on quite regular basis.", and "I meet and chat with that person to find out their requirements and what they need and I tell them what we can offer". **(Julie).***

*"We asked people. We spoke to people what they are doing. and we said well this is what we are thinking of doing. and they said oh yeah that will be helpful and very useful. We did a lot of research with customers." **(Anthon).***

It has been reported that entrepreneurs who establish effective communication within and outside their business tend to become more successful, (Adejimola, 2008) because it helps create trade relations (Abbasi et al., 2011). This assertion has been

observed in the work. Also, there is a signpost showing the relationship between communication and business success (Chatterjee and Das, 2016). There is another communication method recorded here outside face-to face, which is

"Communication tend to be historically by letter, telephone, face-to-face. You move through generation, millennium generation correspondence by face book, twitter and other social media." (Danny) **'execution'.**

Findings in the analysis revealed that the entrepreneurs utilised various aspects of communications in their business, such as writing (emails), reading, speaking, listening communication, and through social media. Writing can be via email or letters. Success in business depends widely on the ability of the entrepreneur to communicate. An entrepreneur can be the best in what he/she does in the aspect of the business. However, if there is an absence of effective communication with customers, staff, the market, opportunities are lost, and the business will struggle. For instance, one of the entrepreneurs explained how he communicates with his customers.

"I meet and chat with that person to find out their requirements and what they need, and I tell them what we can offer".

The findings are in line with (Modrea, 2012), who perceived communication as an essential element of human existence. She further posits that in entrepreneurship, it is a social act that's never done without the intention to influence both qualitative and quantitative interest. Therefore, it is a function of interest, attitude, and activity change of the others (ibid) and relates via different means of communication.

Entrepreneurs utilise Ideas for business development, but it remains in abstract form until it is communicated, then it can materialise (Joshi, 2014). The entrepreneur's ability to communicate with different parties, both external and internal, contributes to the growth of the business. The findings conform to the argument of (Abbasi et al., 2011), who claimed that communication skills are vital for the process of entrepreneurship, as it helps to establish trade relations. In support of the claim,

Adejimola (2008) emphasised the importance of communication, saying that entrepreneurs who develop effective communication within and outside their enterprises achieve success in their business. This ability to communicate with the external parties is mainly achieved through educational qualification, which is the perceived behavioural control. The entrepreneur comprehends the ease or difficulty to communicate, leading to a high-perceived behavioural control because of acquired knowledge will have the confidence to communicate externally.

Similarly, communication in project management achieved similar endeavour as in the entrepreneurship context. According to Zulch (2014) communication in projects is a process of acquiring all relevant information, interpreting the information and effectively disseminating the information to individuals who may require it as expressed in this

> *"With the initial meeting with the client, I will say it is not just me. There are three people who I work with based on what the client wants I will pick the right person for you. So they are aware of it. And sometimes they wanted just me so is only me that does the job." **(Pete).*** The practitioners see communication as the lifeblood of any project (Awati, 2010; Furnell and Scott, 2014).

Using the theory of planned behaviour as a lens revealed the antecedents evident in communication are mainly attitude towards behaviour and the perceived behavioural control. For example:

> *"With the initial meeting with the client, I will say it is not just me. There are three people who I work with based on what the client wants I will pick the right person for you. So they are aware of it. And sometimes they wanted just me so is only me that does the job." **(Pete).***

The entrepreneurs' evaluation towards engaging in communication in the business or project is the attitude towards behaviour and the perceived behavioural control being the self-confidence and many years of experience gained before the start and growth of the business. The entrepreneur not being an excellent communicator

could face challenges which may lead to a negative outcome of the business (Coleman, 2005; Rogers et al., 2001; Young, 2002).

Also, the two main antecedents found in entrepreneurship are evident in project management. The confidence to communicate with employees and customers increased growth in the business. The project manager involving the shareholders, project teams, and other relevant individuals in the project through communication can enhance the execution of the project and achieving the project objective (Larson et al., 2014). The attitude towards behaviour is the ability of the project manager to communicate the requirements of the project communication plan, and failure to do so may lead to project failure (Silva et al., 2017). However, there is an element of a subjective norm in both project management and entrepreneurship. The client induces external influence about how they want the contract to progress is subjective norms. These opinions might be negative or positive, which is the characteristic of the subjective norm.

5.2.8 Human Capital

The empirical findings from the data highlight that there is a common consensus about the concept of human capital among all the successful entrepreneurs. The associated human capital as the skills, knowledge, and abilities to start up and grow a business. These skills and knowledge can be acquired from industrial experience and general education, which tend to have a positive influence on the performance of the business. The three types of human capital (general, venture-specific, and entrepreneurship-specific human capital) identified in this study were evident in the working practices of the entrepreneurs during the interviews. Few of the successful entrepreneurs who did not have the skills of a particular aspect in their business consulted expert that dealt with the aspect. There was evidence of human capital in the practice of the successful entrepreneurs.

> *"When I left the private sector, I felt I have the knowledge and skill to be able to provide consultancy services to people. I started on a very little scale"* ***(Simon) and*** *"Again, in as much that I have three paid staffs, I have*

consultants who work with me. I realised that there is no point having a fixed
cost for what I am doing. Is better that once I have a contract, I go for the
freelancers. Who can deliver that project with me" **(Simon) 'execution'**.

The finding revealed key aspect of human capital, the knowledge and experience of the entrepreneur and the external expertise, who is more knowledgeable. The combination of the key aspect of human capital will enhance business performance. The acquired skills and experience in most of the participants are presented:

"I worked with a couple of other law firm that specialise in personal injury
on both side of defence, claimant and defendant personal injury. I was able
to gain an all-round experience in personal injury then I became very good
at it. I can afford to set up my own business and do this for myself rather
working for someone." **(Felix) 'planning'.**

"Some of the skills we need are legacy skills, for systems that are very old.
And there are very few people nowadays will have those skills." **(Lizzie)** *and*
"We can also prioritise what we do, and increase our turn over by basically
rising seeing some of the technology that we developed by prioritising that.
So we just need to find tune the type of market that it is". **(Lizzie)**

The findings presented that the entrepreneurs all gained specific required human capital to build their businesses. They utilised both internal and external human capital. The findings agree to that of many scholars such as Samagaio and Antonio, (2016); Doong et al. (2011) that human capital adopts various resources such as skills, knowledge, and abilities to improve the firm performance. Therefore, entrepreneurial human capital improves the performance of existing businesses (Kato and Honjo, 2015) and perceived as among the core drivers of business growth (Capelleras et al., 2018; Huang, 2016). In that regard, adequate resources and support are essential to enhance growth (Anwar et al., 2018b).

The importance of human capital in project management and entrepreneurship cannot be overemphasised (Suhonen and Paasivaara, 2011). In the analysed data, there is clear evidence of human capital, but it purely depends on individual experiences and reliance on consultants. However, in project management, the source of human capital is the experience of the individual members of the project team (ibid). This human capital in project management is viewed as resources possessed by individual 'employees,' as well as to project teams working on a project. The Individual human capital perceptive involves the individual's abilities, knowledge, character qualities exhibited during project operation to achieve set objectives.

The theory of planned behaviour clearly shows that two intentional antecedents, the perceived behavioural control, and attitude are involved. While PBC is over knowledge, character qualities, and experience, the attitude is the ability to embark on the project. Project manager's knowledge and experience are considered important in determining project outcomes, and these facets are assessed using a human capital framework (Brown et al., 2007). They contribute significantly to project success (Müller and Turner, 2007).

Applying the theory of planned behaviour shows that three intentional antecedents were evident in human capital. For example,

> "*My experiences have been B2B digital transformation. That's where I've spent the last 17 years.*" *(Zac)* and "*I work exclusively in the creative, digital and technology sector and we work as management consultants, helping creative digital and tech business grow.*" **(Zac) 'execution'**.

The perceived behavioural control over human capital is the confidence that the entrepreneur has by acquiring industrial experience and general education to achieve venture success by improving his capability to explore and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities (Bae et al., 2014; Costa et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2013).

The ability of the entrepreneur to undertake the large entrepreneurial tasks of discovering, exploiting business opportunities, and enhancing alertness to identify these opportunities (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000) is the attitude towards possessing human capital as captured in the response of the participant.

"Now I focus more on the vehicles and other stuffs and she does all the paper work, get all the account ready" **(Harry) 'execution'.**

The use of external expertise, such as consultants to enhance business growth is subjective norm. For example,

"Mostly we have a team of consultants, assessors and trainers that visit the premises to deliver training on our behalf." **(Eddie) 'monitoring and control'.**

It is imperative to state that during the analysis of the data in the transcript, the researcher identified other sub-themes, not identified in the literature. Therefore, the identified sub-themes are discussed below adopting the theory of planned behaviour.

5.2.9   Good customer relationship

Entrepreneurs' commitment to a customer may lead the customer to provide support in the future and enhance the long-term profitability for both parties. Furthermore, entrepreneurs' satisfaction with the customers should expound on how entrepreneurs can develop adequate relationships with their customers when confronted with circumstances of high dependence. The process of acquiring, retaining, and relating to some customers builds higher value for the business towards growth. A boost in a relationship with one's customers can, in the end, lead to higher customer trustworthiness and retention and, likewise, profitability. The effectiveness of entrepreneur-customer relationship towards business growth was captured during interaction with the participants:

"I think the most important thing is a good relationship with your client because even if you have a bad day and something will go wrong they will understand if they have very good relationship with you. I think that is the key." (Julie) and

"And they like that obviously and clients will learn to trust you as well. Because they know that you and your company makes mistake, you personally pay to put it right. And you end up with much better relationships and earn more business downstream." (Lizzie).

It is believed that having a good relationship and excellent customer satisfaction would lead to trust and better understanding, even when things go different while delivering services. The effectiveness of customer satisfaction and excellent customer relationship towards business growth has been found in the literature. According to Hoyer and MacInnis, (2001), who suggested that customer satisfaction forms the foundation of any successful business as customer satisfaction leads to repeat purchase, brand loyalty, and positive recommendations from the customers. The analysis revealed that many other participants were involved in keeping their customers happy and establishing friendship with them, as presented in the following examples.

"The fact we still got clients five or six years old. Have been with them since day one. "Those are success when you keep all your clients" (Pete).

"And I have really good relationship with customers. And I do a really good job for them. They always pay. But the key is just to speak to people regularly and nurture that relationship" (Jonah)

"Our clients in many cases become our friends because we work very closely with them we invite them to Christmas lunch and we invite them to things like that a different way of approaching it." (Danny).

The motivation here is to improve business and cause growth. Similarly, in project management there is no significant difference in the way customer satisfaction and relations are viewed. This is because the project manager, like the entrepreneur. is the one bestowed with the responsibility of managing the customers' expectations and requirements directly relates to the success of the project. This is in agreement with Ireland et al. (2003) who suggest that concepts provide the basis for planning relationships with a unique collection of customers for a project and managing those relationships to achieve the most desired results.

Applying theory of planned behaviour shows that two intentional antecedents evident in the customer are mainly attitude towards behaviour and subjective norm as seen in the quote:

> *"I think the most important thing is a good relationship with your client because even if you have a bad day and something will go wrong they will understand if they have very good relationship with you. I think that is the key."* ***(Julie).***

The customer here, which is external, is the subjective norm that influences the prospect of business growth. On the other hand, the ability of project manager and the entrepreneur to manage customer's expectation and relations is attitude towards behaviour. The behaviour in this case is business growth.

5.2.10   Technological Adeptness

Technology plays a significant role in determining the success of a business. Developing a technological capability requires the entrepreneur to articulate and execute a technical approach based on the type of business, capital, and market orientation. The technology approach changes rapidly, and the entrepreneur needs to keep up to date with the rapid rate of the change. The technology involves the use of computer software, smartphones, and modern machinery. Successful entrepreneurs designate at least some time to be informed of new technological trends and even test driving them, hence reduced cost, time, and growth in the business (Tang et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the technological approach of any firm needs customising. Subsequently, it is the entrepreneur's choice on how to develop and exploit its technological resources. The findings have shown that most of the successful entrepreneurs interviewed utilised information technology, such as software, in different ways to achieve growth in their business. Some of the participants use online platforms for their business, which exposes ways of doing things differently, and some used technology in creating an application for finance. This view agrees with Baines and Harrison (1999), who posit that although a technological decision provided a choice of process and product design for manufacturing business, it can also be challenging occasionally to make the right of technology with an absence of expert knowledge. This view is evident in Lizzie's response

> *"We do big data and advanced analytics to support decision making, modelling, 'WHAT IF' analysis, risk management, safety and business critical type and functions"* **(Lizzie).**

There is clearly evidence that advanced technology provides quicker result, easy to business collaboration and business growth. Also, the findings revealed that advance in technology make work easier as captured during the interview

> *"With technology, that will make things easier so that we can have people helping each other. For instance, if I go on holiday, somebody else can cover me remotely. We can do our prescription from another building"* **(Willie)**
> and
> *"so we have been growing business and we have been successful at commercialising our technology. We are very new technology so the whole concept of taking a technology and making it into a product has been a sort of complex to address."* **(John).**

Advance in technology has also been extended to procurement and has helped business growth based on the ease of doing business. This is express in this expression

> *"In 2020 people will procure from different things but technology moves, it changes and the business we're in now is continuity. "So, you see our new logo has infinity P because we are with you for that infinite journey. Technology goes in, you run your business, technology goes out, new technology goes in 3 year cycle. And when you think of it, that's what we are doing. We are giving people business continuity."* **(Alex)**

Likewise, Kemy,

> *"Digital marketing, I should call it has been very useful. We've been able to revamp our website making sure that the information is available at any event are taken"* (Kemy). *"We are tweeting about events we attended, events we created and those we are likely to host."* **(Kemy).**

The empirical results from this study confirm previous research suggesting a phased approach to Internet adoption. All successful entrepreneurs possess computers, some own a website, and few sold products and services over the Internet. The findings correspond to that of a survey of small and mid-sized businesses by Arthur Andersen's Enterprise Group and National Small Business United (2000) on the reason for the usage of a website. It is believed that the use of a website is for sending and receiving a business email, researching goods and services, purchasing goods and services, and conducting research (Anderson, 2000). Findings also show evidence that technology adoption contributes both to the internal and external growth of the business. For instance, market research, working remotely, and contacting suppliers via emails, which is external. Evidence suggests that the Internet has increased international opportunities for micro, small, and medium businesses (Hamill and Gregory, 1997; Lituchy and Rail, 2000)

Applying the theory of planned behaviour as a lens revealed two intentional antecedents the perceived behavioural control and attitude intentional antecedents in mentoring. Perceived behavioural control is linked to the experience and confidence of the entrepreneur and their motivation to comply.

"We do big data and advanced analytics to support decision making, modelling, 'WHAT IF' analysis, risk management, safety and business critical type and functions" **(Lizzie).**

The influence of advanced technology is seen as perceived behavioural control since it involves the experience of and confidence of the entrepreneur. Similarly, advance technology plays a vital role in shaping the entrepreneur's attitude towards the behaviour. It helps the entrepreneurs to explore new horizons and eventually expand the business.

5.2.11 Competitive advantage

For a business to survive, the entrepreneur needs to consider a strategy that will make them unique from other competitors, and that uniqueness forms the competitive advantage. Competitive advantage is a deliberate choice of the entrepreneur in running the business as opposed to focusing on what other companies are doing concerning running their business. A common question about competitive advantage is what is done differently from other competitors to justify an edge over them? In other words, the entrepreneur has control over developing a competitive advantage. Business survival is the entrepreneur's strategy to follow that will be unique from other competitors, and that uniqueness forms the competitive advantage. An entrepreneur with a competitive advantage understands how to create value and implement it for the business to survive.

The extent to which participants employed a competitive advantage in their business did vary significantly between businesses. Most of the participants demonstrated a competitive advantage in their business and this was evident during the individual entrepreneurs' narratives. Jamie described the competitive advantage as a unique selling point, which he has over his competitor. Jamie's unique selling point is training his staff, as they are the vanguards to the business.

"What is the unique selling point to us is that my experience with some of our larger competitors is that they don't train their staff who are at the forefront. (Jamie) and *"And where we could have a unique selling point, in*

as much as my experience, cables, connectors, and tooling, now we bring all

together, that is quite unique. (Jamie).

This view has been emphasised by Ireland et al. (2003), who suggested that training of employees helps to exploit opportunities and gain competitive advantage.

The empirical findings from the data conform with that of Ab Rahman and Ramli's (2014) research on Small and Medium enterprises that indicated best practices in business links to the adoption of competitive advantage.

> *"I saw that as a plus point because I knew we can comply, and we can afford*
> *the regulation and the cost of compliance" (Paul)* **'monitoring'.**

Competitive advantage is about uniqueness of business regardless of the type of the businesses. This is evidence in several quotes in the transcripts, e.g.:

> *"We offer other services here; which others don't offer. Our patients don't*
> *have to go the hospital to get their wore frame monitored, we do that here."*
> *'monitoring'.*
>
> *"Our patient don't have to go to the hospital for a joint injection we offer it*
> *here". To get joint injection in the hospital it takes about three months to*
> *get an appointment, But here I can do it the same day, this is my kind of*
> *general practice." People get the care they need immediately, not happen*
> *to wait for six months to eight months." (Willie)*, *"There are more than 20*
> *practices in Worsley but this is the only one that runs a training practice*."
> (Willie) **'monitoring'.**

"But I also saw the opportunity with fewer competitors in the market. We might not operate necessarily at their end of the market, but we will still be able to pick up more new business. Because of harsher regulation". (Paul) **'planning' and 'monitoring'.**
similarly carl's response:

"but in the protein business, we are the only people who did it end to end" **'planning',**
'execution' and 'monitoring' *we are completely the greatest supply chain" (Carl).*

Competitive advantage is also driven by *zeal t*o expresses different strategies, which enable the entrepreneur to become exceptional in his business, have a competitive advantage over his competitors:

"I wanted to put my spin, my variation of health promotion, my variation of what I was doing as a trainer and have a different style of gym". ***(Josh)*** **'monitoring'** and *"we have turned a lot of heads in the industry because of the way and the style that we operate and the style of our training and the degree levels of our trainings".* ***(Josh)*** **'execution' and 'monitoring'**

Competitive advantage is also linked to the experience of the entrepreneur. It is based on the experience of the entrepreneur that desired changes can be made to achieve a unique business brand that is significantly different from others as captured in the transcript.

"You just study the market and then know when to adjust". A lot of people don't study these. You learn these things overtime". **'monitoring'**. *"You must keep a good record; you watch and study your market, which we do very well."* (Harry) **'monitoring'**, *"There is lots of competition in the coffee market. We are talking Starbucks, Costa … you know. So you got to go there doing something different. So that is how we started thinking how do we make cinnamon rolls ?"* ***(Aby)*** **'planning'** and *"We actually won the Maress award because it was like a unanimous vote and people actually said because what we do is unique"* ***(Aby)*** **'execution'**.

All the entrepreneurs experienced growth due to the personality traits with which they operate their business such as need for achievement, goal oriented, passion about they are doing and internal locus of control for high achievements, which motivated participants to create unique businesses (Ab Rahman and Ramli, 2014).

Applying the theory of planned behaviour as a lens revealed the three intentional antecedents in completive advantage. Perceived behavioural control is linked to the experience and confidence of the entrepreneur.

"We offer other services here; which others don't offer. Our patients don't have to go the hospital to get their wire frame monitored, we do that here. Our patient don't have to go to the hospital for a joint injection we offer it here. To get joint injection in the hospital it takes about three months to get an appointment. But here I can do it the same day. This is my kind of general practice. People get the care they need immediately, not happen to wait for six months to eight months."

A desire to be in control of their destinies and freedom, all came from the experiences they obtained in various ways towards starting and growing a business. Similarly, competitive advantage plays an important role in shaping entrepreneur attitude towards behaviour. It helps the entrepreneurs to explore new horizons and eventually expand the business. Also, subjective norm is demonstrated here

"There is lots of competition in the coffee market. We are talking Starbucks, Costa … you know. So you got to go there doing something different. So that is how we started thinking how do we make cinnamon?".

The influence of other business with similar interest is seen as Subjective norms, since it is external factor and can influence business performance.

The three intentional antecedents were evident in one way or the other in the above remarks of the participants. A desire to be in control of their destinies and freedom, all came from the experiences they obtained in various ways towards starting and growing a business. All the entrepreneurs who started their businesses were within the environment of their choice. An exception being Joe who lived in the United Kingdom but worked in other European countries for many years and gained experience; however, he decided to start his own business in the United Kingdom despite not knowing the business environment in the UK. His belief and the confidence that he had, including the experiences gained in his previous jobs as a paid employee, made him achieve growth. Perceived behavioural control is evident in Jamie's remarks because he chose to have the edge over his competitors. He has control over developing the competitive advantage of his business by having the

experiences and knowledge of the individual components. Paul was narrating how the government made massive changes to the regulation governing credit management industry and cost of compliance that took away 20% of the industry. Paul, in keeping up to date with the new regulation changes and compliance, saw that as being competitive.

The findings in the empirical work conducted show that business growth is of a range of motivations, which includes the entrepreneur's values, the opinions of others that are significant, and the entrepreneur's belief that growth is practicable. Hence, the three intentional antecedents were evident in most of the participants' narratives. Conversely, an entrepreneur's views for growth is strictly subjective, linked to the personality and choice of the entrepreneur. Hence, they seem to reflect experiential and situational differences. From such a perspective, business is naturally oriented towards growth. Nonetheless, only external ties impede the pursuit of such a goal. Findings also show that growth occurred in different stages of the business. Most entrepreneurs started observing growth in their business in the three years they started the business, while for some it took five years. Only handful noticed growth after the first years of their business. Overall, the participants experienced growth in their business in different ways.

5.3   Project Management Processes

This study explores entrepreneurial activities (leadership, innovation, networking, communication) involved in business creation and growth. It examines whether project management processes (Planning, execution, monitoring, and control) are relevant within such a context through the experiences and practices of successful entrepreneurs using an inductive approach. This second section presents evidence of the project management processes in the transcript, which are project-planning, execution, monitoring, and control within the working practices, and experiences of the successful entrepreneurs. The aim is to see how project management processes respond to the following research questions:

- How have project management processes been applied to entrepreneurial activities to influence business creation and growth?
- How can the theory of planned behaviour be applied to explain the success of entrepreneurial activities of successful entrepreneurs?

The findings of the analysed data of some of the successful entrepreneurs interviewed in the North West of England revealed the use of project management processes (planning, execution, monitoring, and control) in their working practices to achieve growth. This section will showcase the evidence of the project management processes from the findings in the transcribed data and depicts their role in business growth. It is important to note that planning in real sense should only involve the start-up stage of business, but in the context of this study, planning determines whether the business will succeed. It goes hand in hand with the progress of the business.

5.3.1   Planning

A business plan according to Brinckmann et al. (2010) is a document produced by the entrepreneur to help investors, banks and shareholders to estimate the likelihood of success of a new business (Brinckmann et al., 2010). According to Aby and Josh

> *"We did a business plan and went through the process of taking our business loan to pay for some of the equipment and all of that."***(Aby)** and
>
> *"Paper work, the actual funding was done through a SEED investment or SEIS Investment scheme. Is over seen by HMRC and I had to write business plan. Got investors, HMRC approved it." (**Josh).***

By assessing the document provided concerning its pivotal aspect, the investors make their investment decision on key influential factors during the investment (Sharma, 2015), thus, acquiring business financing is the primary reason for writing a business plan (Kaplan and Warren, 2013; Ford et al., 2007). There is less conclusive evidence for this claim (Bewayo, 2015). However, only a negligible number of the entrepreneurs who went for a business loan or got investors to start their business created a business plan. The role of the investors is only to invest money in the

business. They do not make decisions or get involved in the decision making of the business.

However, most participants in this study did not follow the laid down procedure for business planning in terms of shareholders' contributions and investors. The empirical findings of the exploratory study highlight that there is a common consensus that successful entrepreneurs utilise planning in both business start-up and growth, but in different ways ranging from a structured approach to planning and intuitive approach. Majority utilised a structured approach based on knowledge and experience, which in the sense that they outlined the things that are required to be undertaken and ways for doing them to accomplish the purpose.

> *"We Gantt chart project. Once a job is being won, we then make sure we've got the relevant person, for the number of customers, make sure we've got all the specifications so do we know the right paint, do we know the right colours? All those stuff is being sort out off front so we can get prepared for what we need and then put into a very simple flow chart, like Gantt, different colours for different trades, sequential, whether is it start- start or start - finishing in term of how we put the job to site and mobile." (Bradley).*

The focus of the participant is not on the activities to be carried out because it is often complicated in the sense that some activities depend on the outcome of earlier activities rather than what to be done (milestone), as evident in the transcript. The milestone planning observed here could be peculiar to entrepreneurs since planning is not associated with entrepreneurship, which suggests that entrepreneurs may well be using planning without being aware. However, in project management literature, there have been calls for a change of approach on how to apply planning. According to Andersen (2006), milestone planning should replace the standard planning approach, which involves what should be done. In this way, planning will focus on what to be done rather than what should be done. This planning approach is in agreement with the planning evidence provided in the transcript.

Similarly, planning from the entrepreneurship perspective is heavily dependent on the experience of the entrepreneur

> *"Well, I knew that I wanted to be a distributor. The problem was how was I going to do that? So essentially, we put out a plan. So we looked at the situation. We wrote down the background, where we are. We set out a list of objectives. What do we want to get? What we need supplied? Customers weren't a problem. I had a database." and "I drew up a business plan. I knew what I wanted. The thing is, it wasn't a case of oh am unemployed. This is what am going to do. I had already had an idea for some time that this is what I want to do. I knew what I want to do, I know how to go about it. I had a business plan. You know. And I followed that business plan"* **(Felix).**

Also, the experience of the participant is expressed here on how the entrepreneur designed the milestone

> *"I rewrote the business plan and the mission statement and the values of the business. Because when you are selling this sort of service that we are, you have to communicate that to your client. It wasn't distress, but it was in my opinion at the time when I came on board and lacked direction. I then assembled a team that reflected who we are and where we want to go."* (Eddie)

The presence of planning was evident during a conversation with successful entrepreneurs. Furthermore, findings also show that planning was adopted as a milestone to determine what to be done in a timeframe. Milestone planning focuses on the present, not a period. Nevertheless, whether it was a standard planning or milestone planning, the planning process helped the successful entrepreneurs in one way or the other established their business and, more importantly, contributed to the growth in their business. In addition, Kumar (1989) indicated that early developments of strategies are the most important in making a business success. He opined that by gathering enough site information and being aware of project considerations and constraints, it is possible to tailor strategies, which are specific to

a particular situation. Such a well-defined approach will assist in providing a satisfying and successful implementation of a project.

In some cases, some entrepreneurs revealed that because of their experience and training they do not carry out any form of planning

> "There was no planning done. We were both experienced at it. It wasn't an unknown area of the market. It was simply doing what we [had always] done. Simply just cracking on with it. It was nice. It was quite releasing." (Cox).

It is believed that experience and familiarity with the market were more important than planning. This is typically an intuitive planning approach based on the knowledge and experiences of the entrepreneur. This is in support of Dane and Pratt, (2007) and Gendron, (2007) who argued that entrepreneurs with business experience, skip business plan and rely to some certain degree upon their intuition that is sharpened by experience.

Applying TPB shows that the three intentional antecedents were revealed in the planning quotes. The desire for achievement that Felix exhibited towards his career is the attitude towards the behaviour. The attitude towards behaviour is he believe, and evaluation that is adopting a Gantt chart would lead to achieving successful completion of the job. The attitude here emanated from his personality, and the behaviour is the success achieved. The positive influence from his friend connecting him to a different area of specialisation in law, which he found exciting and did his business and including the external influence the customer will have on his business, is the subjective norm. The ability of Felix to construct a business plan knowing what to do and following it with confidence is the perceived behavioural control. However, that was not the case with Cox, who also was initially a lawyer. The training, experience, and self-confidence exhibited by the participants suggest that perceived behavioural control takes pre-eminence over attitude towards intention.

5.3.2 Execution

Once the project is in the execution phase, the process that is required undertaken involves management of the project activities so that the project is completed on time, cost, and schedule performance of quality assurance and information distribution. The narratives of most of the successful entrepreneurs interviewed in this study show that management processes are evident in the practice of the entrepreneurs.

> *"By a year and half ago, this used to be a warehouse. Food storage for the company across the road. We later expanded into the next building beside this one. Converted the two to become one." **(Harry)** and "Digital marketing I should call it has been very useful. We've been able to revamp our website making sure that the information is available at any event are taken. We are tweeting about events we attended, events we created and those we are likely to host. We've done exhibitions as well so people can see what we do and how we do it. So that are pretty useful for us because as you know newspaper adverts are very expensive, so this is probably a very cost-effective way for small businesses like us to get our message across." **(Kemy)***

The empirical findings highlighted that participants developed their ideas/concepts into action to produce the expected outcome in their business, which is growth. For example:

> *"We have grown in terms of the number of staff we have now, it is a good thing we employ more people, pay more tax. We are doing the work better, revenue has increased, we make more profit than we used to. We've got several sites, before it was one site. We have a lot more enquiries, we get a lot more recommendation from people locally other than our business coming from google, we get repeat customers, and we get people that refer other people to us…"*

The execution process is known as the implementation stage of the defined plan.

Although the execution stage is the third stage in the project management process as denoted in this study, this is not fully observed here. Some of the entrepreneurs deployed the execution phase first, and then planning followed. This is aimed at actualising the set goal, which is business growth. In this perspective, the entrepreneur does not follow the stages of the project management processes systematically, unlike the project manager. The entrepreneurs executing their ideas uncovered those relevant aspects that require to be accomplished to enable the growth of the business, e.g., building actual products or services for the customer.

> *"I offer mentorship to pharmacists who want to convert to prescription, prescribing pharmacist, prescribing nurses. I give them training (Willie) and I was the project manager for the project". "Setting the management teams, set the objectives, and managed the budget as the project proceeded, so is all about managing people, resources and the money" (John).*

The entrepreneurs during the interview showed evidence both of planning and execution simultaneously towards achieving a set goal, which is business growth. Conversely, often observed in project management, it is expected that before the execution phase, there should be a detailed understanding of the project task, such as the sequence, at which implementation is structured, the interdependency of each stage, as well as timing (Tatikonda and Rosenthal, 2000). While some of the entrepreneurs engaged an external expert to undertake some of the aspects of execution, others succeeded in carrying out the execution process, respectively.

> *"While I was there, I made a lot of contacts with all the dealers around the whole country. Because we had all their database, working with them to sell brand new cars all over the country. So, I made a good friends, along the line I said it will be nice to enter a car business it is very lucrative. So, I just thought I should go into the business while we've got something going on. So, I started saving up". (Harry)*

Also, a few entrepreneurs carried out execution processes like that of a project manager where people, resources, and finances of the business were managed.

" In the beginning we recruited people, brought some IT System in. Bought some IP, bought a web address and so on. Just the usual stuff really all those practical stuffs you needed in the beginning. We obviously got funding. Along the line we got some more. Got suppliers to back us. We invested quite a lot to building into something that was really generating cash." (Carl).

The findings support the result of the survey conducted by Bhidé (2000), reporting that success was achieved through exceptional execution of ideas. However, executing a business idea can be difficult; conversely, it can be argued that ideas do not make entrepreneurs instead execution does (Venkataraman, 2004)

Applying TPB shows evidence of the three intentional antecedents, the attitude towards behaviour and perceived behavioural control, for example,

"we have grown in terms of the number of staff we have now, it is a good thing we employ more people, pay more tax. We are doing the work better, revenue has increased, we make more profit than we used to, we've got several sites, before it was one site. We have a lot more enquiries, we get a lot more recommendation from people locally other than our business coming from google, we get repeat customers, and we get people that refer other people to us."

The quotes revealed the intentional antecedents, attitude towards behaviour. This can be seen based on the participant recruitment of new staff and the subsequent growth of the business.

The perceived behavioural control is the capability of managing the various aspects of the project, the experience and self- confidence

"Using some of the experience, I had and I understood some of the growth problems businesses have of certain sizes and really start to look at the various methodologies around what are the persisting growth barriers that businesses go through". (Zac).

This can also be perceived as leadership being able to give direction to the team and undertake various management options. The findings support Marion et al.'s (2014) claim that the responsibility of the project manager is to convert the detailed project plan into execution, utilising the resources available (Besner and Hobbs, 2006). The subjective norm antecedent was apparent in Carl's narrative

> *"In the beginning we recruited people, brought some IT System in. Bought some IP, bought a web address and so on. Just the usual stuff really all those practical stuffs you needed in the beginning. We obviously got funding. Along the line we got some more. Got suppliers to back us. We invested quite a lot to building into something that was really generating cash".* *(Carl)*

The investors and the suppliers being the subjective norm external factors to assist Carl to grow his business and the perceived behavioural control being the experience received during the training in recruitment and accounting that helped to grow his business. Similarly,

> *"We are always trying to get reviews off the people that use us. We try to keep improving what we do as well our website we refresh try to include video and things like that looking more attractive, we always try to improve our rankings, on the internet". (Sandi).*

Sandi graduated in business, had experience in a Storage Company, with a desire to be in control of her destiny and have freedom. She started her own business in a self-storage renting with her fiancée. The business grew in the number of employees, expanded to various sites, and made profit. Sandi, having acquired knowledge in business and experience in her previous work as a paid employee, had the confidence to start and grow her business in terms of the number of employees, increase in site, and profit.

5.3.3 Monitoring and Control

The empirical findings from the quotes (Pete, Bradley, Harry, Jacob, and Sandi) in the transcript suggest that only a few entrepreneurs considered monitoring as part of the strategy to enhance business growth. Monitoring includes assessing if the business plan is being implemented, whether there are procedures for gathering feedback in the business and identifying areas that require review to improve in the business. The entrepreneurs who employed monitoring and control in their business were able to adapt to changes in the economy, such as policy and environment, which are beyond their control. Also, this study revealed that monitoring was employed to study the market, keeping a good record, which helped in building patterns towards strategy. Thus, the process involved a series of activities. Depending on the type of business, particularly in information technology, the employees are also monitored to ensure backing up of data during implementation. While some who practiced, monitoring and control used it for time blogging, setting out times for various activities, and completion.

> For example: *"I will time block of course, block out hours of my time so I will say am doing this at that hour. The next hour I will be doing my emails or writing my blogs. My day's planned out."* (Pete) and *"I think being organised, using the time blocking this is the biggest change I've made this year, and it has significantly helped the business. It keeps growing and growing because I've been defined in what I am doing I have a purpose to what I do."* **(Pete).**

Others used monitoring to control their expenditure in business

> *"You learn these things overtime. You must keep a good record; you watch and study your market. Year after year, this is what it was last year, and this is what it was year before last. You know the trend you follow it. Study the market, keeping a good record, which we do very well. It helps you build a pattern and you watch that pattern, we set reminders as well."* (Harry) and *"But if it will go quiet, we can tell from the calls. We monitor our calls. How many calls we get in a week, we have records of the calls in a week.*

"We study the market as well as soon as it hits winter, when it starts getting cold, the market gets good". (Harry).

Monitoring the market variation through calls and seasons was strategic in the observed business growth. Some of the successful entrepreneurs who adopted monitoring and control process did not do so because they were inexperienced or unskilled but is to have full documentation and record of how their business is running and to receive feedback of their services from the customers for business continuity. For example:

"I think we kind of constantly kind of review what we do, we are looking to better ourselves as had an effect on it." "I would say probably being able to adapt and change according to things that happen outside of our control is probably one of the main reasons." (Sandi) and

*"So I wanted more control over income, like which hours, the day I work, which days in the week. which months in the year that I work..." (**Jacob**).*

The way entrepreneur visualises monitoring and control agrees with PMI (2013), which suggests that monitoring and control involve tracking, reviewing and coordinating the advancement and performance of the project; identifying areas in which changes to the initial project plan are made necessary. Furthermore, the findings are supported by the view of Zahra et al. (2009) in the aspect of monitoring and reviewing the business performance to identify existing and potential skill gaps in the growth of the business.

Applying TPB as lens revealed, the three intentional antecedents, it can be seen at one point the business growth is control by an external factor, which subjective norm as captured in the quotation

"And yeah, the contract manager will monitor that to make sure job is going. We run to plan really." (Bradley).

The contract manager is the external factor her, which controls the business growth. By integrating external resources, the entrepreneur creates effective strategies with the existing knowledge (ibid). On the other hand,

> *"I think being organised, using the time blocking this is the biggest change I've made this year, and it has significantly helped the business. It keeps growing and growing because I've been defined in what I am doing I have a purpose to what I do." (Pete).*

 The knowledge and experience gained from blocking gave Pete the confidence to be able to monitor and control his business to achieve growth. The intentional antecedent attitude towards behaviour was evident in the ability of the participant to study the market to establish a market trend.

Furthermore, it imperative to highlight here that project management processes are in one way or other found in the entrepreneurial growth drivers. These project management processes appear to be part of the entrepreneurial growth drivers in the body of this work, but the perception might differ. For instance, innovation in the sense of project management is dependent on the originality of the business, which is the entrepreneur, but the skills and technique are more of individual personality traits. These concepts have been articulated into a conceptual framework presented in the summary. The third and final section is a framework created for this study to illustrate how the entrepreneurial activities and project management processes are integrated using the theory of planned behaviour.

Table 5-1 highlighting emerging themes and how they tied to the themes in the literature.

Main themes (antecedents)	Sub themes	Entrepreneurship literature	Project management literature	Quotes from transcripts
Attitude towards behaviour	Risk taking	*Entrepreneurs' propensity to take risk lie in the distinction between two kinds of risky situations, namely, between purely chance-related and skill-related risk (MacKo and Tyszka, 2009).. The difference between the two kinds of risk is the extent to which the entrepreneur has control over the outcome (ibid).*	*Many projects fail to achieve project objectives because of insufficient risk assessment by the project manager, thus leading to inadequate anticipated project success. Project managers' responsibility is to assess risk before start of the project (Fabricius and Büttgen, 2015).*	*"I wouldn't say I enjoy it because it can be nerve racking. I think you've got to be at peace at taking a certain amount of risk. I definitely wouldn't say I enjoy it, but you got to understand that it is necessary." **(Collin)***
	Decision making	*The decision to grow the firm is the 'first and foremost strategic decision all entrepreneurs must make in starting a business (Gilbert et al. 2006). The decisions entrepreneurs make in the venture's early years have profound long-lasting implications for performance (ibid: 929).*	*In a project context, the project manager has to make decisions in order to achieve a set goal or project objectives. The process of decision-making in projects involves many stakeholders, that is, decision –making is a collective process rather than purely individual (Valiris et al., 2005).*	*"For me it was kind of a personal decision. I always wanted to do something for myself anyway, but I had a very nice job in Holland and it was very well paid." **(Joe)***
	Leadership	*An entrepreneur as a leader, combines leadership potentials and entrepreneurial skills such that he combines both managerial skills of giving instructions and leadership potentials (Esmer and Dayi, 2017))*	*The project manager has to deal with external organisations including varied groups and stakeholders having a special interest or conflicting interest with respect to the project at hand (Pandi-Perumal et al., 2015).*	*"I was the project manager for the project. Setting the management teams, the objectives, and managed the budget as the project proceeded. So it's all about managing people, resources and the money." **(John)***
	Innovativeness	*The entrepreneurial activities such as innovation leads to the creation of new industry and generating jobs from the established industries (Ribeiro-Soriano, 2017)*	*An organisation's attitudes toward risk will heavily influence a project manager's ability to drive innovation forward (Gallagher, 2015).*	*I started to change how our stores are designed such as having an open café concept where people see as we make and bake our food". **(Aby)***
	Communication	*It has also been identified that entrepreneurs who establish effective communication within and outside their enterprises to become more successful (Adejimola, 2008)*	Project managers need to exploit a range of tools and methods to communicate effectively with their team, clients and subcontractors. (Furnell and Scott, 2014).	*"I meet and chat with that person to find out their requirements and what they need and I tell them what we can offer". **(Julie)***

The continuation of Table highlighting emerging themes and how they tied to the themes in the literature.

Subjective Norm	Networking	The focus has been on how entrepreneurs' social networking impacts on business growth (Turkina, 2018).	Practicing networking in project management enable the project manager to find solutions or get new ideas to improve chances of project success (Furnell and Scott, 2016)	"We need the chamber of commerce for networking, as it provides opportunities to meet other companies and other starters and know people who want to use our services." (Sandi)
	Social capital	By skilful use of their social ties, entrepreneurs can apparently acquire considerable profits on their social capital, which in return increase their chances of business success. (Kim and Aldrich, 2005)	The importance of collaboration and the need to integrate knowledge and expertise suggests that social capital, founded on trusting relationships, will be essential for project success (Hoecht, 2004; Newell et al., 2004).	There is also issue of mutual benefit, so that it is not one sided mentoring, rather reciprocating "it has to be a two-way thing. If you gonna be my mentor, I will also need to look for something to do for you (Chuma)
Perceived behaviour control	Human capital	Human capital increases the ability of the entrepreneur to undertake the broad entrepreneurial tasks of discovering and exploiting business opportunities and enhancing alertness to identify these opportunities (Tang et al., 2012).	Successful project management relies almost entirely on the human capital that is embodied within the project manager as an individual (Brown et al., 2007).	"When I left the private sector, I felt I have the knowledge and skill to be able to provide consultancy services to people. I started on a very little scale" (Simon)
	Planning		Project planning is widely thought to be an important contributor to project success (Serrador, 2015). Inadequate planning and analysis will lead to project failure (Thomas et al., 2008).	"Well, I knew that I wanted to be a distributor. The problem was how was I going to do that? So essentially, we put out a plan. So we looked at the situation." (Felix)
	Execution		it is the project manager and project team who execute the project, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the project manager must play a significant role in converting project plans into execution (Marion et al., 2014).	I was the project manager for the project". "Setting the management teams, set the objectives, and managed the budget as the project proceeded, so is all about managing people, resources and the money" (John)
	Monitoring and Control		The project manager identifies all aberrations from the project management plan and undertakes remedial measures to accomplish the proposed outcome. To ensure gains and completion of goals under the menace of many uncertainties (Herroelen and Leus, 2015)	"You learn these things overtime. You must keep a good record; you watch and study your market. Year after year, this is what it was last year, and this is what it was year before last." (Harry)

5.4   Summary

The research findings and discussion are summarised and described within the perspective of the recent academic knowledge of this subject matter, the role of Project Management process in enhancing Entrepreneurship through business growth in the North West of England. The findings suggest that business growth is of a range of motivations, which includes the entrepreneur's values, the opinions of

others that are significant, and the entrepreneur's belief that growth is practicable. Also, growth occurred in different stages of the business. Most entrepreneurs started observing growth in their business in the three years they started the business, while some it took five years. It was only a handful entrepreneur that noticed growth after the first years of their business. Overall, the entire participants experienced growth in their business in different ways.

In addition, a framework is presented that promotes an understanding of the entrepreneurial growth drivers and project management processes in the context of the two research questions:

- How have project management processes been applied to entrepreneurial activities to influence business creation and growth in the North West of England?

- How can the theory of planned behaviour be applied to explain the success of entrepreneurial activities of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England?

Figure 5.1 presents a scematic representation of the Entrepreneurial activities and Project management Framework
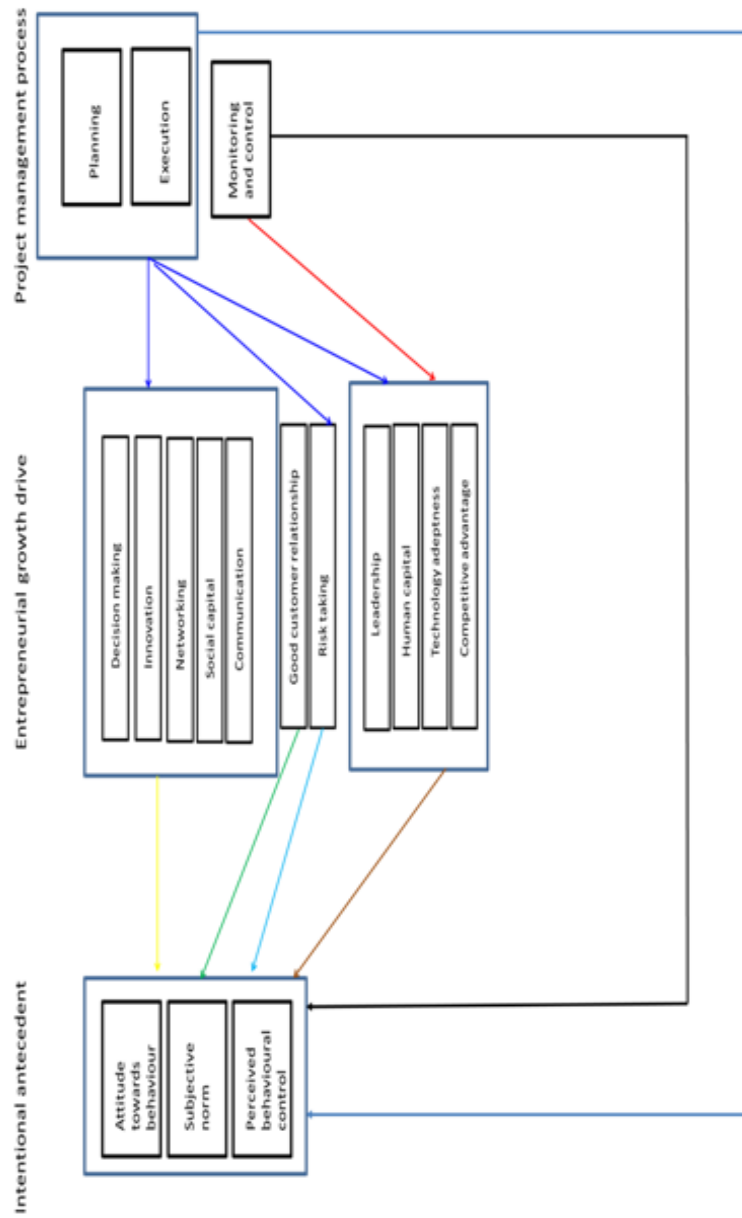
Figure 5.1: Schematic representation of the framework

The concept of this study can be understood as an integration of entrepreneurship and project management, unifying entrepreneurial activities with project management processes to create entrepreneurial performance and growth. With reference to Ajzen (1991), the theoretical framework of 'The role of Project Management Processes in enhancing Entrepreneurship through business growth in the North West of England' is presented.

The entrepreneurial activites and project management framework was developed from the critical components identified from project management and entrepreneurship literature and the theory of planned behaviour. The framework presented above consists of three major aspects that play a critical role in understanding the integral link between entrepreneurship and project management (synergies). These aspects include the theory of planned behaviour intentional antecedents (main themes), entrepreneurial activities' growth drivers' (sub-themes), and project management processes (sub-themes), as shown in Figure 5. These are the factors considered at any stage of business growth.

The framework shows that entrepreneurs need different growth drivers (entrepreneurial activities), project management processes, and cognitive elements for business growth. The themes and sub-themes in this framework are linked with arrows of distinct colours for a clear understanding between the various factors. The detailed discussion of the components can be found in different chapters and sections in this study. The framework will provide the entrepreneurs with a more holistic approach to business growth and provide project management and entrepreneurship scholars a better understanding of the various associations between the two fields.

The three intentional antecedents in the theory of planned behaviour were used as a framework to explain the identified entrepreneurial activities from the literature review and character traits regarded as soft skills in project management. These entrepreneurial activities and project management processes, also known as the growth drivers, are driven by the personal attitudes, but also by social pressure and sense of control towards the behaviour (achieving project objective/ obtaining

growth in the business). The theory of planned behaviour exposes the entrepreneurs to the use of their cognitive abilities to create and manage businesses. The theory helped provide an understanding of how entrepreneurs could exploit project management processes for business start-up, the implications for the practice on improving business growth, and, ultimately, economic development.

Chapter 6   Conclusion

6.1   Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the findings related to the two research questions of this study have been discussed in detail. The purpose of this research is to integrate research on entrepreneurship and project management in the perspective of project management processes towards business growth in the context of a successful business. In this study, the core aim is to explore literature on entrepreneurial activities (leadership, planning, innovation, networking, communication) and project management processes (planning, execution, monitoring and control) to examine how project management processes are being applied by entrepreneurs in operationalising their activities for creating and growing their business. These activities are uncovered by probing the working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England using the theory of planned behaviour.

The gap in the extant literature in respect to this study, that the literature shows little or no connection between entrepreneurship and project management in either research or practice, has been highlighted throughout this research. This potential missing link shows a lack of fundamental understanding of the synergies between entrepreneurship and project management, i.e., how they complement each other. Despite the lack of recognition of the role of project management in entrepreneurship, findings from this study suggest that successful entrepreneurs utilise, at least to some extent, some elements of project management processes in achieving business growth. Detailed work has been conducted to understand the synergies between both fields, thus bridging the knowledge gap regarding the elements of project management in the perspective of project management processes that have contributed to the success story of entrepreneurs through applying a behavioural theory, the 'theory of planned behaviour' (Ajzen, 1991).

Thus, the two research questions were answered, utilising a qualitative exploratory research design strategy from the qualitative research methodology approach in which semi-structured in-depth individual interviews were conducted to gather primary data from forty successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England. The method is to gain an understanding of the subject. In addition to this chapter, the theoretical and practical contributions and the limitations of the research project described earlier explain the recommendations for further research. The exploratory approach also allowed the researcher to stay open to findings and try to understand fully the business growth in the perspective of project management processes, while acknowledging the successful entrepreneurs' reasoning and actions behind their choices of behaviour.

There are several findings that confirm results from other scholarly works, such as initial operations and the post-project phase-sustaining the business operation 'project' (Ajam, 2011). These key points apply to both fields (entrepreneurship and project management) for economic growth regardless of whether an entrepreneur or project manager is involved. Successful entrepreneurs make up for a very heterogeneous group of people with varying characteristics, disciplines, previous experiences, and interest (Kerr et al., 2018). This view highlights places where in the empirical findings are consistent, while also embracing the heterogeneity where it is evident. Some of this variance appears due to multiple perspective of the entrepreneurs and different experiences in starting and growing their business.

Furthermore, emerging similarities in the economic and growth drivers both entrepreneurship and project managemen answer the questions, aim and objectives in this study. The following section discusses how research objectives/questions were achieved and answered in this study. The methods, mode of achievements are presented in table 6.1.

Table 6-1 Methods used to achieve the research objectives

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Table 6-1 Methods used to achieve the research objectives

Details of objective	Mode of achievement	Chapter
Research objective 1: To critically review the literature and theoretical concepts of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activities (leadership, planning etc), project management processes and business growth.	Literature review and field data	Chapter 2 and 3
Research objective 2: To explore synergies between entrepreneurial activities and project management processes that support business growth in the North West of England.	Literature review and field data etc	Chapter 2
Research objective 3: To explore the experiences and practices of successful entrepreneurs from the perspective of project management processes and behavioural intentions.	Field data	Chapter 5
Research objective 4: To create a framework that explain the inter-connectivity between entrepreneurship and project management in the perspective of entrepreneurial activities and project management processes	The framework was designed based on the Literature and field data	Chapter 2, 3 and 5

The first objective was to review the literature and concepts of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activities and project management processes. The findings established eight entrepreneurial activities, such as risk taking, decision making, networking, and innovation, to mention a few. These are referred to as the growth drivers and are found both in the practice of the entrepreneur and of the project manager to achieve growth. The research revealed that project management processes are relevant for this study in the context of business growth. As explained in Table 6-1, the key means of achieving this objective emerged from two sources: literature review and field data. It appeared that these entrepreneurial growth drivers were identified in the transcript during data analysis, and three more growth drivers emerged from the data. These made a total of eleven growth drivers.

The second objective was to explore synergies between entrepreneurial activities and project management processes that support business growth in the North West of England. The findings established the similarities between the two fields (entrepreneurship and project management) from the existing literature using the theory of planned behaviour as a lens. The research revealed evidence of their synergy that supports business growth in the North West of England. The researcher found evidence that the entrepreneurial activities and character traits regarded as soft skills in project management are led by intentions, and the intentions are driven by the attitudes towards the behaviour, which is growth. As explained in Table 6-1, the key means of achieving this objective also emerged from two sources; literature review and field data. It revealed how project management processes supported growth and how they keyed into the narratives of intentional antecedents and behaviour, as also suggested in the transcripts.

By applying the theory of planned behaviour, the researcher made it possible to explore how successful entrepreneurs use their cognitive abilities to create and manage businesses. The theory gave an understanding of how entrepreneurs could exploit project management processes for business start-up, the implications for practice on improving firms' growth, and, therefore, economic development. The

understanding obtained from applying the theory of planned behaviour helped establish a baseline for the analysis and answered the question raised in this study.

The third objective was to explore the experiences and practices of successful entrepreneurs from the perspective of project management processes and behavioural intentions. The findings established the themes that enabled the researcher to understand the interrelationship between entrepreneurship and project management. Kuura and Lundin (2019) support this finding, which builds on the notion that entrepreneurial activities and project work are linked in the real world of practice. This was revealed in the preliminary study conducted, which required six interviews with successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England. The interviews resulted in the gathering and analysing of a rich set of qualitative data.

The researcher examined the research questions by expounding on the stages leading to the emergence of the study's findings in the analysis that contributed to the existing knowledge. The researcher found evidence of connectivity between the two academic fields by exploring the experiences and practices of successful entrepreneurs from the perspective of project management processes and behavioural intentions. As explained in Table 6-1, achieving this objective emerged from one source: field data. It emerged that by employing exploratory research (qualitative), the researcher strove for a transparent audit trail contributing to the trustworthiness of this study because the analysis showed deliberate and partly successful efforts to connect both fields of study.

The Fourth objective was to create entrepreneurial activities and project management processes framework that explains the relationship between entrepreneurship and project management from the perspective of entrepreneurial activities and project management processes. The findings and discussion of the qualitative data within the perspective of the recent academic knowledge of this subject matter established the role of the Project Management process in enhancing Entrepreneurship through business growth in the North West of England. The

findings suggested that business growth involves a range of motivations, including the entrepreneur's values, the opinions of others who are significant, and the entrepreneur's belief that growth is practicable. Concerning this view, the researcher created a framework that consisted of the three major aspects, which played a critical role in understanding the integral link between entrepreneurship and project management. These aspects include the theory of planned behaviour intentional antecedents (main themes), entrepreneurial activities' growth drivers' (sub-theme), and project management processes (sub-themes). The framework showed that entrepreneurs need different growth drivers (entrepreneurial activities), project management processes, as well as cognitive elements for business growth.

6.2   Theoretical Contribution

This research has made several academic contributions to the body of knowledge in enhancing the literature on business growth. In addition, it bridges the knowledge gap in the fields of entrepreneurship and project management with respect to business growth. The major contributions to knowledge are as follows:

1. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, that research topic 'the role of project management processes in enhancing entrepreneurship' has been empirically researched in the North West of England. This study also responded to the request of Kuura et al. (2014) that more research on the synergies in both fields be undertaken. This research contributes to academic knowledge by adding to the study of the entrepreneurs' activities (growth drivers) especially in the perspective of business growth.

2. Drawing on extant literature, this study focusses upon eleven key themes, which are linked directly to the research questions: Risk taking, decision-making, innovation, leadership, communication, networking, social capital, and human capital. Including the project management processes: planning, execution and monitoring. The emerging understanding of these themes if taken into consideration when starting and growing a business, support business success and make such initiatives more relevant not only to the

North West of England entrepreneurs but also to other micro, small and medium size businesses in other geographical regions/countries.

3. This study contributes to the body of knowledge in business growth through the perspective of project management processes with its focus on the successful entrepreneurs in the North West of England and thus, represents novelty of the subject. It provided evidence showing strong links between the two fields, which rarely exist in the literature.

4. This study adds to the body of knowledge by highlighting the significance of using the theory of planned behaviour with qualitative approach, to understand experiences of successful entrepreneurs. Most research underpinned by the theory of planned behaviour rarely engage qualitative research. Rather, they adopt quantitative approach which focuses on measuring antecedent variables and testing the coherence of the theory of planned behaviour as a theoretical model instead of evaluating the theory once the behaviour is in evidence.

5. This study will help other academic researchers in the academic community who want to broaden their knowledge in entrepreneurship and project management synergies. In addition, encourage other scholars to replicate this study in an extensive geographical regions. This study will further provide background information needed for such study.

6.3 Contribution to practice and implications for entrepreneurs

This research had contributed to professional practice in understanding business growth through different perceived factors; including the project management processes covered in this present study. Thus, it is beneficial to both developed and developing economies. The findings from this research offer some important implications that could assist the nascent entrepreneurs, policy makers, managers, practitioners and the public in general to understand entrepreneurial activities and project management processes in a different social context. The research contributions to professional practices are:

- This research informs managerial practices by putting forward a new proposal that suggests the need for entrepreneurs to recognise and understand the role of project management in their business activities to achieve growth. This study advocates for the incorporation of project management into entrepreneurship studies. A framework has been developed which can be included in the entrepreneurship programmes giving guidance to entrepreneurs.

- The research findings will enable the successful entrepreneurs' consciousness in the practice of project management processes in achieving growth and re-evaluate their performances from time to time to improve where necessary in their business. This is possible if the entrepreneurs apply the identified growth drivers in running their business

- The study is useful to nascent entrepreneurs as it will enable them to broaden their knowledge and understanding on those activities and processes that when undertaken leads to growth and acknowledge the use and practise of project management processes towards growth in their business. This is possible based on the identified growth drivers.

- This research has provided the practical knowledge and understanding required by micro, small and medium sized businesses to continually achieve considerable improvement, whether in manufacturing or as service providers. This is evident in the emerging understanding of the collaboration of project process and entrepreneurial activities towards business growth.

- This research also provided evidence that some differences that exist between project management and entrepreneurship could be in terms of phases and terminology. The study revealed that the entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial activities were using project management processes, which were embodied in the context of the theory of planned behaviour. It was found that the phrases and terminology might differ in context, but actually were used in both fields unawares.

- The research findings present an in-depth understanding and knowledge of the individual entrepreneurial activities and project management processes

synthesise in a framework named 'Entrepreneurial activities and Project management processes framework' that could potentially enhance entrepreneurial growth.

6.4 Reflections on theoretical and practical development: A natural history of this research

In the process of research development, a researcher's values and beliefs guide their choices and so reflexivity is a vital issue to consider. The implementation of reflexivity is crucial in the entire research process, including the formulation of a research question, collection and analysis of data, as well as the conclusion (Bradbury-Jones, 2007; Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). This process is one where the impact of previous experience and knowledge is determined with the researcher engaged in critical self-reflection of biases, research dilemmas and vulnerabilities (Kleinsasser, 2000; LaBanca, 2011). Consequently, this reflexive first-person narrative is provided for insight into the learning journey.

From the beginning, my research topic has been framed around entrepreneurship and project management synergy. Since then the way of looking at this has changed to reflect what I have been studying, not significantly but rather marginally. This was until I read Entrepreneurship and projects- Linking segregated communities from Kuura et al. (2014), who investigated the links between project work and entrepreneurship, to explore synergies between the two academic disciplines, connecting academic research to practice through their activities. They considered that entrepreneurship and project management are inherently linked and argued several benefits in developing theory and practice for mutual learning. I have taken much time in reading and writing up on the behaviours of the entrepreneurs and project management through their practices. With my knowledge of project management, having completed a taught master's degree programme in project management, I related the processes in project management to that of entrepreneurial activities to assist me in developing my literature review.

On reflection, I realised that this was done without clearly understanding the theoretical underpinnings of the works I was evaluating and using for my study. Hence more depth was required. With my study focusing on social phenomena, and in particular on business growth, it was important to gain a deeper understanding than was currently available of the social interaction of the successful entrepreneurs in achieving business growth. This was rather limited since I was coming from an objective deterministic background. Much of my current theoretical development can be traced back to the reading I did at the behest of my previous and current supervisors.

I had been finding it rather difficult disengaging from my positivistic thinking which I had absorbed from the pure sciences, having studied metallurgy engineering for my undergraduate degree and sticking with a positivist stance for my masters. A deterministic approach assumes consequentiality, and here I was seeking to change my mindset to accept a non-deterministic view of the world, where individuals make sense of things and assign meaning to those things in a cognitive manner.

Researching into a social science, interacting with the social world to understand everyday life, has guided me on the road through subjective thinking - thought that has been enlightening as it has been rigorous, and at the same time exciting. My position into subjective thinking was interpretivist/social construction. The work of Lindgren and Packendorff (2009) proposed application of the social constructionist perspective to entrepreneurship research. The social constructivist perspective has significantly spread in project management research (Bredillet, 2010; Turner et al., 2010) as well as in entrepreneurship research (Chell, 2000; Downing, 2005; Fletcher, 2006). In respect to my study, I view entrepreneurship and project management as interactional where their activities are considered (entrepreneurial activities and project management processes). Interaction allows insight into the emergent meaning for the individual entrepreneurs' experiences and working practices in achieving business growth.

In presenting any theoretical concept there has to be points of contact between the discussion presented and existing approaches to theorising. In respect of that, according to Kuura et al. (2014), there is a need for a theoretical and/ or methodological baseline in any research. In other words, my theoretical influences for this thesis are laid out in Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour, where entrepreneurial activity clearly represents planned (thus intentional) behaviour. With the theoretical explanation, and the fulcrum on which this study balances, is laid out and decided upon, following through on analysing the collected data was another hurdle to be addressed being that the methodology for this research enquires into social and behavioural perspectives (Hammarberg et al., 2016). According to Jonker and Pennink (2010) and Wahyuni (2012), being aware of the philosophical position is important as this will guide the choice of method to be used in obtaining data to understand the phenomenon under investigation.

Regardless, analysing the collected data has been a rather rigorous and frustrating exercise, but then again exciting because my project management knowledge enhanced the process of data collection and data analysis in studying the lived experiences of successful entrepreneurs in achieving business growth in the perspective of project management processes. This allowed me to approach the study with some knowledge (having insight into project management processes), it enabled me to address specific topics more efficiently or even be aware that I should address them.

For example, the participants talked about the things they organised before starting their business. I knew too well that they were talking about planning before setting up their business. I had to be alert and rigorously reflect on how I shape the conversation as well as interpret their experiences. The approach had to be different for each person; my familiarity with project management processes meant I knew what to ask and how to ask it, as well as understand the responses in a nuanced and multileveled way. As a result, I was able to probe more efficiently and gain in-depth understanding.

On the one hand, such familiarity may enable a better understanding of participants' perception and accurate interpretation of their lived experiences. On the other hand, however, I remained constantly alert to avoid projecting my own experience and using it as the lens to view and understand the participants' knowledge. A practical strategy for conducting this comparison was creating a matrix in which the pre- and post-analysis are compared for each section of the transcript to produce a more precise understanding and narrowing meanings into few categories or ideas. To conclude this section, the writing here is both a consideration of the past as it is a development of my future thoughts and direction as I discover myself within the social and interactive arena.

6.5   Originality of the thesis

The novelty of this thesis is the significance of using the theory of planned behaviour with a qualitative approach to integrate entrepreneurship and project management. This is based on how project management processes have been applied and their effect on business growth in the North West of England. Using a behavioural theory, 'the theory of planned behaviour' on these two fields, one can shed light on how these alternative perspectives can further the fields in research and practice. The researcher created a framework that consisted of the three major aspects, which played a critical role in understanding the integral link between entrepreneurship and project management. These aspects include the theory of planned behaviour intentional antecedents (main themes), entrepreneurial activities' growth drivers' (sub-theme), and project management processes (sub-themes). The Entrepreneurial activities and Project management processes framework showed that entrepreneurs need different growth drivers (entrepreneurial activities), project management processes, and cognitive elements for business growth.

Most previously published research in entrepreneurship (Kautonen et al., 2011, 2013; Kolvereid and Isaksen, 2006) empirically adopted the theory of planned behaviour employing a quantitative approach to arrive at their conclusion. Despite the meaningful outcomes of the quantitative studies, those studies reduce individual

entrepreneurs to a simple statistical and measured outcome (Mehralizadeh and Sajady, 2006). The focus was on measuring antecedent variables and testing the coherence of the theory of planned behaviour as a theoretical model as supposed to evaluating the theory once the behaviour is in evidence. They do not provide information beyond confirming that intentions are involved in entrepreneurship.

In this study, the researcher explored the human perspective and experiences. Employing a qualitative approach to the theory of planned behaviour gave a better understanding of the research question and objectives. This is evident in the fact that entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial activities used project management processes, which are embodied in the context of the theory of planned behaviour. It was found that though phrases and terminology might differ in context, thy are used in both fields unawares. Furthermore, this thesis' originality is also based on the researcher's ability to uncover more themes that enhanced business growth, such as good customer relationship, technology adeptness and competitive advantage, which are peculiar to North West of England. This thesis, shows that, the three themes significantly impact on business growth. However, please note that business growth is first pertinent to research participant's world and not global business growth.

- **Good customer relationship**

Entrepreneurs' commitment to a customer may lead the customer to provide support in the future and enhance the long-term profitability for both parties. Furthermore, entrepreneurs' satisfaction with the customers should expound on how entrepreneurs can develop adequate relationships with their customers when confronted with circumstances of high dependence. The process of acquiring, retaining, and relating to some customers builds higher value for the business towards growth. A boost in a relationship with one's customers can, in the end, lead to higher customer trustworthiness and retention and, likewise, profitability.

It is believed that having a good relationship and excellent customer satisfaction would lead to trust and better understanding, even when things go different while delivering services. However, the effectiveness of customer satisfaction and excellent customer relationship towards business growth has been found in the literature, but in the context of using the theory of planned behaviour as a lens. According to Hoyer and MacInnis, (2001), who suggested that customer satisfaction forms the foundation of any successful business as customer satisfaction leads to repeat purchase, brand loyalty, and positive recommendations from the customers. The analysis revealed that majority of the participants were involved in keeping their customers happy, maintaining long term relationships, and establishing friendships with them.

The motivation here is to improve business and cause growth. Similarly, in project management, there is no significant difference in how customer satisfaction and relations are viewed. This is because the project manager, like the entrepreneur, is bestowed to manage the customers' expectations and requirements, directly relating to the project's success. This is in agreement with Ireland et al. (2003). They suggest that concepts provide the basis for planning relationships with a unique collection of customers for a project and managing them to achieve the most desired results. The customer here, which is external, is the subjective norm that influences the prospect of business growth. On the other hand, the ability of the project manager and the entrepreneur to manage customer's expectations and relations is the attitude towards behaviour. The behaviour, in this case, is business growth.

- **Technological Adeptness**

Technology plays a significant role in determining the success of a business. Developing a technological capability requires the entrepreneur to articulate and execute a technical approach based on the type of business, capital, and market orientation. The technology approach changes rapidly, and the entrepreneur needs to keep up to date with the rapid rate of the change. The technology involves the use of computer software, smartphones, and modern machinery. Successful

entrepreneurs designate at least some time to be informed of new technological trends and even test driving them, hence reduced cost, time, and growth in the business (Tang et al., 2018) .

Furthermore, the technological approach of any firm needs customising. Subsequently, it is the entrepreneur's choice on how to develop and exploit its technological resources. The findings have shown that most of the successful entrepreneurs interviewed utilised information technology, such as software, in different ways to achieve growth in their business. The majority of the participants use online platforms for their business, which strongly exposes ways of doing things differently, and others used technology in creating an application for finance. This view agrees with Baines and Harrison (1999). They posit that although a technological decision provided a choice of process and product design for manufacturing business, it can also be challenging occasionally to make the right technology with an absence of expert knowledge. This submission uncovered during the interview.

There is clear evidence that advanced technology provides a quicker result, easy to business collaboration, and business growth. Also, the findings revealed that advances in technology make work easier. Advancement in technology has also been extended to procurement and has helped business growth based on the ease of doing business. The empirical results from this study confirm previous research suggesting a phased approach to Internet adoption. All successful entrepreneurs possess computers, some own a website, and few sold products and services over the Internet. The findings correspond to that of a survey of small and mid-sized businesses by Arthur Andersen's Enterprise Group and National Small Business United (2000) on the reason for the usage of a website.

It is believed that the use of a website is for sending and receiving a business email, researching goods and services, purchasing goods and services, and conducting research (Anderson, 2000). Findings also show evidence that technology adoption contributes both to the internal and external growth of the business. For instance,

market research, working remotely and contacting suppliers via emails, which is external. Evidence suggests that the Internet has increased international opportunities for micro, small, and medium businesses (Hamill and Gregory, 1997; Lituchy and Rail, 2000).

- **Competitive advantage**

For a business to survive, the entrepreneur needs to consider a strategy that will make them unique from other competitors, and that uniqueness forms the competitive advantage. Competitive advantage is a deliberate choice of the entrepreneur in running the business as opposed to focusing on what other companies are doing concerning running their business. A common question about competitive advantage is what is done differently from other competitors to justify an edge over them? In other words, the entrepreneur has control over developing a competitive advantage. Business survival is the entrepreneur's strategy to follow that will be unique from other competitors, and that uniqueness forms the competitive advantage. An entrepreneur with a competitive advantage understands how to create value and implement it to survive.

The extent to which participants employed a competitive advantage in their business did vary significantly between businesses. Most of the participants demonstrated a competitive advantage in their business, which was evident during the individual entrepreneurs' narratives. Jamie described the competitive advantage as a unique selling point, which he has over his competitor. Jamie's unique selling point is training his staff, as they are the vanguards to the business. These three undoubtedly supported the aim and objectives of this thesis.

Table 6-2 highlighting emerging themes from the interview transcript

Main themes (antecedents)	Sub-themes	Quotes from transcript
Subjective Norn	Customer relationship	"The fact we still got clients five or six years old. Have been with them since day one. "Those are success when you keep all your clients" (Pete).
Perceived behavioural control	Technology adaptiveness	"With technology, that will make things easier so that we can have people helping each other. For instance, if I go on holiday, somebody else can cover me remotely. We can do our prescription from another building" (Willie)
Attitude towards behaviour	Competitive advantage	"What is the unique selling point to us is that my experience with some of our larger competitors is that they don't train their staff who are at the forefront." (Jamie)

6.6   Research limitation

While undertaking the empirical aspect of this study, there were a few limitations in this research. In practice, no research is without its own limitation and this study is no exception. These limitations are enumerated below.

- The present study was undertaken to understand the impact of growth activities on the economy. Although, many of the findings may be specific to this location, North West of England, but reflects the broader contexts of United Kingdom and other developed countries, as well as many developing countries. The findings have highlighted the entrepreneurial activities and project management processes that drive growth in the business using the theory of planned behaviour.

- Methodologically, it should be noted that this is a small-scale study not a large-scale survey, and as such, it is prudent to caution the generalisation of findings for those of a normative persuasion. However, what this research achieved was make visible significant opinions worthy of further exploration. It is also possible that the sample set could have been more focused on a

particular set of successful entrepreneurs in a particular business to gain insight into specific conventions particularly concerning growth in their business. However, in the actual circumstances, the diversity of successful entrepreneurs in various business did produce visible differences in conformity, whereas a concentration on a specific group of successful entrepreneurs in the same business may not have avoided this. Besides, the study focuses solely on entrepreneurs and as such is situated in their experiences and perspectives. This is valid in seeking an understanding of their different experiences and working practices to achieve growth.

- Predominantly, there could be personal bias in the interview responses given by the successful entrepreneurs, since those are the words from their personal experiences. Thus, data could be subject to response distortions, such as those surrounding the social desirability of responses. Therefore, the qualitative interviews could suffer from concealment or exaggeration in the construction of their narrative by the participants. Although the research participants were successful entrepreneurs who have the knowledge and understand the interview questions asked, however, there might be bias because of the subjective nature of the successful entrepreneurs, which is unavoidable. The researcher could only envisage that the responses by the successful entrepreneurs are theirs during the research interviews. The successful entrepreneur had different experience before start-up and during attaining growth in their business and it is on that regards that the researcher interprets their experiences, which is the multiple truth.

- The sample was confined within only successful entrepreneurs whose business is up to three years and over, actively involved in the day-to-day operations of the business during the interview. The research was designed to explore their personal experience regarding the success of their business. Thus, conclusion of findings drawn from them. Hence, the generalisation of

such findings to nascent entrepreneurs with this kind of personal experience and practices is limited.

6.7   Recommendation for further research

This research has been exploratory in nature and throughout the discussion there has been observance of the extant literature with it informing the analytical discussion. Some aspects of the analysis have less research support than others providing the contribution, hence areas for further research. Just as Gummesson (2006) acknowledged the complexity in qualitative approach to research which the researcher must deal with. Hence, there is much complexity in research, which is difficult to address in one study as this. Therefore, there is room to investigate further into the complexity. Subsequently, four areas for additional research are proposed.

- First, further studies exploring the entrepreneurial activities and project management processes in the perspective of business growth in a broader geographical region would be particularly informative, as this would further clarify linkages between entrepreneurship and project management field of studies. There could be also focus on themes that are more specific in the activities of the entrepreneurs corresponding in part to the key elements of the framework the researcher created in this study.

- Second, to explore questions around whether entrepreneurship and project management should stay separate or should converge (Fonrouge et al., 2018). This will enable more understanding of the impact of the activities of the entrepreneur and that of project management processes in achieving business growth or project objectives.

- In addition, a third suggestion for research is around the need to draw out the intentionality and behavioural aspects in the two fields of study, which is the impact of project management processes in enhancing entrepreneurial activities towards growth using the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) as a lens to understand.

- Finally, the fourth area of proposed research points to what has already been revealed in this study that entrepreneurship activities is a planned behaviour. Hence further links between entrepreneurship and planned behavioural theory would provide promising proposals for research. Where entrepreneurship and project management scholars may gain new insights into the two fields.

Consequently, future investigations that address these four areas would advance the research started here, providing further understanding of both entrepreneurial activities and project management processes and the synergies between entrepreneurship and project management. Finally, this study provides material for further intellectual debate.

6.8 Summary

It is possible then for the conclusion to be drawn, that in this study the challenge had been to show more connections between entrepreneurship and project management. As Kuura et al. (2014) argued there is need for more effort by researchers in both fields to seek synergies. Thus, it extends knowledge to those seeking to encourage a more and clearly defined academic field of entrepreneurship within this arena through the application of the theory of planned behaviour in a qualitative approach. This conclusion follows logically from the view that this thesis puts forward the idea that entrepreneurs utilise many of the same processes, tools, and techniques as are used in project management in achieving business success, but often without conscious awareness or acknowledgement. At this stage, it is the hope that the research undertaken and laid out offers a worthwhile extension of the existing theory and research then points the way towards future research that can further contribute to the understanding and development of both entrepreneurship and project management.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

APPENDIX 2

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APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

Manchester
Metropolitan
University

Introduction
All university activity must be reviewed for ethical approval. In particular, all undergraduate, postgraduate and staff research work, projects and taught programmes must obtain approval from the Academic Ethics committee.

Application Procedure
The form should be completed legibly (preferably typed) and, so far as possible, in a way which would enable a layperson to understand the aims and methods of the research. Every relevant section should be completed. Applicants should also include a copy of any proposed advert, information sheet, consent form and, if relevant, any questionnaire being used. The Principal Investigator should sign the application form. Supporting documents, together with one copy of the full protocol should be sent to the Faculty/Campus Research Group Officer.

Your application will require external ethical approval by an NHS Research Ethics Committee if your research involves staff, patients or premises of the NHS (see guidance notes)

Work with children and vulnerable adults
You will be required to have an Enhanced CRB Disclosure, if your work involves children or vulnerable adults.

The Academic Ethics Committee will respond as soon as possible, and where appropriate, will operate a process of expedited review.

Applications that require approval by an NHS Research Ethics Committee or a Criminal Disclosure will take longer.

1. Details of Applicants
1.1. Name of applicant (Principal Investigator): MISS AKUNNA UCHENNA CHINWE AGUNWAH
Telephone Number: 07830916620
Email address: AKUNNA.U.AGUNWAH@stu.mmu.ac.uk
Status: ~~single~~	Postgraduate Student (Taught or Research) PhD (Research)
Department/School/Other Unit: Department of Business and Management Studies
Programme of study (if applicable): PhD in Business and Management
Name of supervisor/Line manager: Dr Kevin Gallimore
1.2. Co-Workers and their role in the project: (e.g. students, external collaborators, etc)

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Name: NOT APPLICABLE	Name:
Telephone Number:	Telephone Number:
Role:	Role:
Email Address:	Email Address:

2. Details of the Project

2.1. Title: The Role of Project Management approaches in enhancing Entrepreneurial Development

2.2. Description of the Project: (please outline the background and the purpose of the research project, 250 words max)

Entrepreneurship and Project Management is a diverse study, which has influenced positively in the success and growth of a business. Previous studies have looked at these two multidisciplinary studies in a divergent way on how they enhanced business success

However, there have not been any studies on how project management approaches can enhance entrepreneurial growth.

The drive for understanding how the project management approaches support entrepreneurial growth comes from the limited understanding of overall key effects of these two multidisciplinary fields of studies in providing business growth. Unarguably, both fields have contributed to business growth, but the effect of convergence both fields on business growth is vaguely understood.

Therefore, in this study, an attempt to converge these two fields of research would try to bridge the knowledge gap regarding the interface between these two fields. The work proposed here will focus on understanding the role of project management (PM) approaches in enhancing entrepreneurial growth. How the former will enhance the later to attain success.

2.3. Describe what type of study this is (e.g. qualitative or quantitative; also indicate how the data will be collected and analysed). Additional sheets may be attached.

Qualitative Approach

The proposed study is exploratory and interpretive and would be analysed using Qualitative approach, which is the model behind this research process. Qualitative approach was developed in the social sciences to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomena and suitable in the context, purpose and nature of the research study in question. The qualitative approach seeks to gain insight and understanding of people's perceptions of particular issues (Fellow and Liu, 1997). In addition, it has special value for investigating complex subjects and is an exploratory research method, used when there is a limited amount of knowledge about a subject. The choice of the proposed approach is based on the report of previous works. This is exemplified in the works of some scholars (e.g., Domegan, and Fleming, 2007; Henning, Van Rensburg, and Smit, 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005), who argued that human learning is best researched by using qualitative data.

This study is about human experiences in carrying out their business. It is also generally recognised that qualitative researchers are concerned with processes rather than simply the outcomes or products. When the understanding of an event is a function of personal interaction and perception of those in that event, and the description of the processes that characterise the event, qualitative method are more appropriate than quantitative designs to provide the insight necessary to understand the participants' role in the event, and their perceptions of the experience. Qualitative method are becoming more widely used as analysis methods improve and people search for better ways of gathering data about a problem. Qualitative research are most appropriate when the researcher wants to become more familiar with the phenomenon of interest, to achieve a deep understanding of how people think about a topic and to describe in great detail the perspectives of the research participants. The recruitment of participants to a qualitative interview study will of course depend on the study's aims, and on its theoretical, epistemological and methodological position.

The main data collection techniques is face-to-face semi-structured interview and captured in an audio tape recorder. This method of interview has features of both structured and unstructured interviews. The information will be collected through series of interviews with individuals who are

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entrepreneurs that have been participating in the entrepreneurial growth and owners of their business.

In this research, 25-owner manager whose businesses are 3 years and above, are the target to participate in this research project. The recorded interview will be transcribed into text.

The data collected will be analysed using thematic analysis by an Iterative process of analysis involving the identification of themes from transcribed data from the interview.

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2.4. Are you going to use a questionnaire?   ✓ NO
2.5. Start Date / Duration of project: The start date of my research project will be July 2015 and the completion date will be March 2018.
2.6. Location of where the project and data collection will take place: The research project will be located in United Kingdom and the data collection will take place in North West of England (Greater Manchester)
2.7. Nature/Source of funding: The research is self-funding.
2.8. Are there any regulatory requirements?   ✓ NO

3. Details of Participants

3.1. How many? The research project is aiming at having to interview 25 entrepreneurs registered members of the Local Chambers of Commerce in North West of England

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whose businesses are in Greater Manchester. The reason for this is because I interviewed some of these registered members of the local chambers of Commerce in greater Manchester during my pilot study, and they gave me their word that during my PhD project they will contact their members to participate in the interview.

3.2. Age: Adult

3.3. Sex:

Male and Female

3.4. How will they be recruited? (Attach a copy of any proposed advertisement)

An Introduction and invitation letter to partake in the interview will be sent off via email to the potential participants. See appendix 3

3.5. Status of participants: (e.g. students, public, colleagues, children, hospital patients, prisoners, including young offenders, participants with mental illness or learning difficulties.)

The status of the participants will be male or female entrepreneurs who are owner/manager of their business.

3.6. Inclusion and exclusion from the project: (indicate the criteria to be applied).

Entrepreneurs that have been in business for 3 years and above are successful. Several researchers (Vesper, 1990; Watson et. al., 1998; Taormina and Lao, 2007; Dafna, 2008) classify successful business as a venture that has been operating for at least three years and remain operational.

3.7. Payment to volunteers: (indicate any sums to be paid to volunteers).

The research will not involve paying the volunteers.

3.8. Study information:
Have you provided a study information sheet for the participants?
✓ YES (Please attach a copy) See appendix 3

3.9. Consent:
(A written consent form for the study participants MUST be provided in all cases, unless the research is a questionnaire.)
Have you produced a written consent form for the participants to sign for your records?
✓ YES (Please attach a copy) See appendix 4

4. Risks and Hazards

4.1. Are there any risks to the researcher and/or participants?
(Give details of the procedures and processes to be undertaken, e.g., if the researcher is a lone-worker)

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YES (Copy of Risk Assessment attached for question 4.1. 4.2, and 4.3)

See appendix 6

4.2. State precautions to minimise the risks and possible adverse events:

4.3. What discomfort (physical or psychological) danger or interference with normal activities the researcher and/or participant might suffer? State precautions which will be taken to minimise them:

5. Ethical Issues

5.1. Please describe any ethical issues raised and how you intend to address these:

Informed consent for the interview will be sort by ensuring that the details of the interview process is explained thoroughly to the respondent and that the respondents respond to the questions on informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality are made clear before proceeding to answer the interview questions.

See Appendix 2

6. Safeguards/Procedural Compliance

6.1. Confidentiality:
    6.1.1. Indicate what steps will be taken to safeguard the confidentiality of participant records. If the data is to be computerised, it will be necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.
    6.1.2. If you are intending to make any kind of audio or visual recordings of the participants, please answer the following questions:
        6.1.2.1. How long will the recordings be retained and how will they be stored?
        6.1.2.2. How will they be destroyed at the end of the project?
        6.1.2.3. What further use, if any, do you intend to make of the recordings?

The information gathered from this research will be securely stored in a locked cupboard provided by the school for my usage. Care will be taken to avoid storing the information on any devise that has open access and data on computers will be password protected. Additionally, care will be taken to ensure that the audio recordings, are coded, and not made accessible to unauthorised persons. All information on hard copies will be stored in a locked cupboard until it is being put in use. After the completion of the research, all used data will be kept for 3 years then destroyed.

6.2. The Human Tissue Act
    The Human Tissue Act came into force in November 2004, requires appropriate consent for, and regulates the removal, storage and use of all human tissue.

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6.2.1. Does your project involve taking tissue samples, e.g., blood, urine, hair etc., from human subjects?

NO

6.2.2. Will this be discarded when the project is terminated?

Not applicable

If NO – Explain how the samples will be placed into a tissue bank under the Human Tissue Act regulations:

6.3. Insurance

The University holds insurance policies in place to cover claims for negligence arising from the conduct of the University's normal business, which includes research carried out by staff and by undergraduate and postgraduate students as part of their course. This does not extend to clinical negligence.

In addition, the University has provision to award indemnity and/or compensation in the event of claims for non-negligent harm. This is on the condition that the project is accepted by the insurers prior to the commencement of the research project and approval has been granted for the project from a suitable ethics committee.

Research, which is applicable to non-negligent harm cover, involves humans and physical intervention, which could give rise to a physical injury or illness, which is outside the participants' day-to-day activities. This includes strenuous exercise, ingestion of substances, injection of substances, topical application of any substances, insertion of instruments, blood/tissue sampling of participants and scanning of participants.

The following types of research are not covered automatically for non-negligent harm if they are classed as the activities above and they involve:

1) Anything that assists with and /or alters the process of contraception, or investigating or participating in methods of contraception
2) Anything involving genetic engineering other than research in which the medical purpose is treating or diagnosing disease
3) Where the substance under investigation has been designed and /or manufactured by MMU
4) Pregnant women
5) Drug trials
6) Research involving children under sixteen years of age
7) Professional sports persons and or elite athletes.
8) Overseas research

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Application Number__13162674_____
Date Received__4/06/2015_____

Will the proposed project result in you undertaking any research that includes any of the 8 points above or would not be considered as normal University business? If so, please detail below: NO	

6.4. Notification of Adverse Events (e.g., negative reaction, counsellor, etc):
(Indicate precautions taken to avoid adverse reactions.)

Please state the processes/procedures in place to respond to possible adverse reactions.

In the case of clinical research, you will need to abide by specific guidance. This may include notification to GP and ethics committee. Please seek guidance for up to date advice, e.g., see the NRES website at http://www.nres.npsa.nhs.uk/

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	Date
SIGNATURE OF ~~FACULTY'S HEAD OF ETHICS:~~	Date: 16/6/16

Dept of Business & Management Ethics rep.

Checklist of attachments needed:
- ✓ Participant consent form
- ✓ Participant information sheet
- ✓ Full protocol
- Advertising details
- Insurance notification forms
- NHS Approval Letter (where appropriate)
- Other evidence of ethical approval (e.g., another University Ethics Committee approval)

Introduction and invitation to partake in the interview

My Name is **Miss Akunna Uchenna Agunwah**, a PhD student of Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom. I am currently undertaking a research on the topic The Role of Project Management Tools Enhancing Entrepreneurial Development.

Your Participation in this part of the Research will involve your responding to various interview questions bordering on your experiences as an entrepreneur and your business line of product/service. The interview session should take approximately thirty to forty-five minutes of your time.

Participation in the research is **voluntary**. You can **withdraw from participating** at any stage and you may refuse to respond to any question that you are uncomfortable with. The management of the information given will ensure that strict **confidentiality** is adhered to and all the stages of data generation and management will ensure strict compliance to ethical standards. **Anonymity** of the interview sessions will be guaranteed to ensure that participants are not identified.

If you have any concerns during or after the completion of the interviews, you are encouraged to discuss them at any time by email. Contact details are as contained below or you might wish to contact my supervisor with the address below.

Dr Kevin Gallimore
Principal Lecturer in Strategic Management
MMU in Cheshire
Tel: 0161 247 5026
Room C1-24a

Thank you for your time and consideration in accepting to participate in this research.

Yours sincerely,

Akunna Uchenna Agunwah

Email: AKUNNA.U.AGUNWAH@stu.mmu.ac.uk

Appendix 3

Participation Information Sheet

Title of the Study: The Role of Project Management Approaches in Enhancing Entrepreneurship Through Business Growth In The North West of England

Researcher: AKUNNA UCHENNA CHINWE AGUNWAH

Contact Details: email; AKUNNA.U.AGUNWAH@stu.mmu.ac.uk

Supervisors: Dr Kevin Gallimore, K.Gallimore@mmu.ac.uk **and Dr Kathryn Kinmond,** k.kinmond@mmu.ac.uk

Dear Participant

Thank-you for considering taking part in this study that forms part of my PhD degree.

This research aims to explore entrepreneurs' working practices and experiences in utilising project management approaches for enterprise development. Please read this participant Information sheet and talk with others if you wish before deciding whether to take part in this study.

What is the purpose of this study?

This study will explore successful entrepreneurs' experiences of developing their business. It will ask also about their experience of the role of project management (PM) approaches in enhancing entrepreneurial growth.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

You have been chosen to take part as you are a successful entrepreneur and your business has been in operation for over three years.

What will happen to me if I take part in the study?

If you agree to take part, we will arrange to meet at a convenient time and venue to you. Probably a public place such as the library, coffee shop. The interview will consist

of a few questions and will last approximately an hour. With your consent, the interview will be recorded on a tape recorder and few notes may be taken.

<u>Do I have to take part?</u>

No, you do not have to take part. Even if you choose to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time during the interview and to withdraw your data up until a month following the date of the interview by contacting me at the email address above.

<u>What are the possible advantages of taking part in this study?</u>

There is probably no direct advantage to you from participating in this study but you may enjoy the experience.

<u>What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?</u>

A possible disadvantage of taking part is that an hour of your time will be taken to take part in this study. It is not compulsory to answer all or any questions asked during the interview and the interview can be halted at any time you wish. During the course of answering question and you, feel distressed a break can be given or the interview stop entirely.

<u>Who will know that I have taken part in this study?</u>

My supervisors and I will know your contribution. However, only I will know your identity. With your consent, the final report may include extracts from your interview. This report will be reviewed by other academics, but your information will be anonymised and kept secure by the researcher. The researcher will destroy all recordings and data three years from the date of your interview.

If you would like any further information or wish to take part in this study, please contact me via the email address provided above.

For further information, contact Dr Kevin Gallimore Department of Business and Management Studies K.Gallimore@mmu.ac.uk or Dr Kathryn Kinmond, Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, k.kinmond@mmu.ac.uk Manchester Metropolitan University, Crewe.

If you wish to make a complaint about this study, please contact <u>Dr Jie Lieu</u>

j.lieu@mmu.ac.uk

This research has been approved by the Department of Business and Management Studies Research Ethics Committee, Manchester Metropolitan University Crewe.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this participation information sheet.

Appendix 4

Consent Form

The Role of Project Management Approaches in Enhancing Entrepreneurial Development

Researcher: Miss AKUNNA UCHENNA AGUNWAH

Supervisors: Dr Kevin Gallimore, K.Gallimore@mmu.ac.uk **and**

Dr Kathryn Kinmond,k.kinmond@mmu.ac.uk

(If you consent, please sign your initials in the boxes provided).

I have read and fully understand the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions

I agree to participate in the study and am happy for my contribution to be tape recorded and transcribed

I acknowledge that my participation is voluntary and that I am able to withdraw without giving a reason

I consent to direct quotations from the interview to be used in research reports

I consent for any data I have provided to be used in publications, conferences and presentations

I understand that I have the right to withdraw my data up until 1 month following interview

I understand that all data provided by me will be securely held then destroyed after 3 years

Participant signature.........................   **Name (Please print) ....**

Date ....

Researcher signature...........................   **Name (Please print) ….............................**

Date ….................

Appendix 5

Interview guide design

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE RESEARCH

1. Can you tell me a little bit about your background?
   a. Education, career, frustration, family, etc.
2. What kind of business are you doing? That is in which industrial sector does your firm operate? E.g consultation, commercial, servicing etc.
3. At this point in time, how many employees does your firm employ?
4. How many years has your business been in operation? (3years +)
5. How did you get started with your business?
   a. Critical events
6. Can you recall the driver and key moments that led you to start this business?
7. Would you say the business is successful? (Their interpretation – compare with the literature?)
8. What does success mean to you in relation to the business? (By what criteria do you judge that success?)
   a. Profit, security, growth, satisfaction, life style
9. What difficulties/challenges have you encountered since you started the business? (critical incident)
   a. Cash flow, finding a market, premises, etc.
   9b. how did you address or overcome those difficulties/challenges? (behaviour/action)
   9c. "what did you do or say?
   9d. How did you respond?
   9e. How did you decide what to say or do?
10. What happened because of your actions?
    How did it turn out?
11. How did this influence the development/performance of your business?

12. How did you know your approach to solving the problem was successful/effective? (outcome)
13. What has been most useful in supporting the success of your business?
    a. Entrepreneurship – networking, government support, my bank manager, family etc?
    b. Project management – timing, sequencing, planning, relationships between tasks, resource timing, etc.
14. Why do you think your business has survived for so long?
15. Anything else you want to say?

Blue = ideas from literature

Appendix 6

Example of an Interview Transcript

RESEARCHER: Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

PARTICIPANT: certainly, I did a business degree at the university, then a year in France, after that I went to join a company which is a small firm owned by an entrepreneurs and worked there setting up storage facilities for a year or two then I met my partner, we decided to set up our own firm together.

RESEARCHER: What kind of business are you doing?

PARTICIPANT: it is a self-storage company and it is a renting of rooms for storage, which has offices.

RESEARCHER: So which sector can you place that kind of business?

PARTICIPANT: it is a retail, predominantly a retail.

RESEARCHER: How many employees do you have in your company?

PARTICIPANT: The organisation is about 23 companies overall, as a group we have 10 employees.

RESEARCHER: How many years has your business been in operation?

PARTICIPANT: 10years

RESEARCHER: how did you start the business? That is what led you to start the business?

PARTICIPANT: a desire to be in control of my destinies and to have sort of freedom and erm.. We could see the benefits the operators had in setting up their own companies. At the time when we were working, there were other businesses; our jobs were to set up these companies for somebody else. So thought why not do it for ourselves.

Appendix 7

Oral Conference attended at Vancouver Canada in August 2017.

The impact of Project Management approaches in enhancing Entrepreneurial Growth: a study using the Theory of Planned Behaviour as a Lens to understand

Akunna Agunwah, Kevin Gallimore, Kathryn Kinnmond

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship and project management are widely associated and seen as a vehicle for economic growth, but are studied separately. A few authors have considered the interconnectivity is existing between these two fields, but relatively little empirical data currently exist in the literature. The purpose of the present empirical study is to explore whether successful entrepreneurs utilise project management approaches in enhancing enterprise growth by understanding the working practices and experiences of the entrepreneurs' using the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) as a lens.

In other to understand those experiences, ten successful entrepreneurs in various business sectors in the North West of England were interviewed through a face-to-face semi-structured interview method. The collected audio tape-recorded data were transcribed and analysed using the thematic deductive technique (qualitative approach). The themes were viewed through the lens of the Theory of Planned Behaviour to identify the three intentional antecedents (attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control) and to understand how they relate to the project management approaches (Planning, execution, and monitoring).

The findings are twofold, the first evidence of the three intentional antecedents, which make up Theory of Planned Behaviour was present. Secondly, the analysis of project management approaches themes (planning, execution, and monitoring) using the lens of the theory of planned behaviour shows evidence of the three intentional antecedents. There were more than one intentional antecedent found in a particular project management theme, which indicates that the entrepreneur does utilise these approaches without categorising them into definite themes. However, the entrepreneur utilised these intentional antecedents as processes to enhanced business growth. In conclusion, the work presented showed a novel way of understanding the interconnectivity between entrepreneurship and project management towards enhancing enterprise growth by examining the working practices and experiences of successful entrepreneurs in North West England.

Keywords – Business growth, entrepreneurship, project management approaches, theory of planned behaviour

Appendix 8

Poster Presentation attended at Badajoz Spain in September 2017