

Effects of Entrepreneurial Family Background on Students' Entrepreneurial Intention: A Study at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Jeli Campus and Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok Campus

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to analyse the determinants of students' intention towards entrepreneurship. This study used the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) represented by three variables (attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behaviour control) and family background as the determinant that could influence students' intention to become an entrepreneur. A total sample of 489 university students from Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Jeli Campus and Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok Campus was used in the analysis. Results from the study indicated that perceived behaviour control had a significant relationship towards students' intention to become an entrepreneur. At the same time, attitudes and subjective norms were not significantly related to students' intention towards entrepreneurship. This study also examined the impact of entrepreneurial family background as a mediating factor in the relationships between attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behaviour control towards students' entrepreneurial intentions. The findings can contribute to new knowledge in the field of the family business and have practical implications in entrepreneurship education for university students.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), family background, entrepreneurial intention.

1. INTRODUCTION

Unemployment among Malaysian graduates has become one of the serious issues in Malaysia. The high rate of unemployment among graduates would affect the economy of a country and continuously reduce national growth. Tang, Teerachai and Wallapha (2014) mentioned that soft skills like leadership, group building, basic intuition, entrepreneurial interest, communication and critical thinking are among the necessary skills needed by the industry. However, university students are focusing more on academic results rather than improving their soft skills. In addition, parents also have an influence on the students' future career decision (Tang, 2016). The unemployment issue among graduates has worsened due to the increasing evidence that job opportunities are limited in today's competitive job environment (Keat *et al.*, 2011) and that the so-called job security is not valid anymore in the recent employment environment (Ferreira *et al.*, 2012). The Department of Statistic Malaysia reported an increase of 4.6% unemployment rate in Malaysia in 2018 compared to that recorded in 2017, which involved about unemployed 162,000 graduates (Farashah, 2013).

Realising the serious effect of unemployment among graduates towards a nation's economy, the Malaysia government had introduced entrepreneurship education in higher education institutions to curb the issue. Entrepreneurship education has been mentioned as one of the imperative determinants that could influence students' future career decisions (Peterman & Kennedy, 2003).

Moreover, entrepreneurship education had given the opportunities for students to explore and take part in many entrepreneurial and business activities at their respective universities (Junainah *et al.*, 2015). A previous study showed a higher possibility to become an entrepreneur among youths by taking the entrepreneurial subject during their study at university (Wasmail *et al.*, 2009).

Despite the Malaysian government's effort to expand the course of entrepreneurship in university, the number of entrepreneurs among Malaysian graduates was still inadequate (Lim, Lim, Lim, Ng, & Wong, 2012). Therefore, this study was aimed at examining the determinants for students' intention to become an entrepreneur using the Theory of Planned Behaviour represented with attitudes, subjective norms as well as perceived behavioural control, besides identifying the effect of family background towards students' entrepreneurial intention.

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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) was espoused to guide this study as it provides a relevant framework that could be used to predict entrepreneurial intentions more accurately based on personal traits and environmental factors (Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000). Three concepts that represent the TPB, namely attitudes toward behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behaviour control were the variables used in this study to examine intention among university students towards entrepreneurship.

The first variable on attitudes describes individual beliefs or personal attractions on one particular subject that is linked to their behaviour. The second variable was subjective norms, which refer to the influence of the surrounding community to an individual, whereas the third variable was perceived behaviour control that relates to the experience faced by an individual previously. Overall, the TPB predicts that a stronger perceived behaviour control will determine more favourable attitudes and subjective norms, which leads to a greater individual intention to perform an activity.

2.2. Student Intention Towards Entrepreneurship

Previous literature indicated that students' intention to become an entrepreneur might be influenced by attitude towards the entrepreneurial behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behaviour control. According to Octício (2012), attitude describes an individual beliefs or personal attractions towards a subject that is linked to certain behaviour. While subjective norms refer to the influence of environment or surrounding community towards an individual decision, perceived behaviour control denotes the experience faced by an individual previously. Within this framework, a person's intention to become an entrepreneur is influenced by his/her attitude towards the entrepreneurial behaviour and the rewards gained from the entrepreneurship activity (Ernie, 2014). Empirical evidence demonstrated that intention is a potential and good predictor for entrepreneurial behaviour as people's mindset is controlled by the intention that then leads them to certain beliefs and actions (Khuong & An, 2016).

2.3. Attitudes to become Entrepreneur

According to Daniela, Rainer, Norbert and Birgit (2016), the more positive an individual's attitude

towards entrepreneurship behaviour, the stronger his or her intention to start up a new business. Souitaris, Zerbini and Al-Laham (2007) discovered that good attitudes were embodied by university students, which would increase the students' intention towards entrepreneurship by participating in entrepreneurship programmes. Hence, positive attitudes demonstrated by students toward entrepreneurship behaviour would increase their intention to create a new business. Based on studies conducted by Byabashaija and Katono (2011) as well as Tam (2009), entrepreneurial attitudes and intention among students changed accordingly after they got involved in entrepreneurial education that built their self-confidence to create their own career or business. Based on the above discussions, it was hypothesised that:

H1: There is a significant relationship between attitude and students' intention to become entrepreneur.

2.4. Subjective Norms

Ajzen (1991), and Engle, Dimitriadi, Gavidia and Schlaegel (2010) suggested that ideas from parents, peers or partners create subjective norms toward others and would influence a person's behaviour to perform a specific action and decision making. Specifically, to the Malaysian context, a study conducted by Chuah *et al.* (2015) found that undergraduate students' intention towards entrepreneurial behaviour is not only influenced by individual factors, but also by societal or environmental factors. These societal factors or norms, in turn, affect the students' entrepreneurial intention. However, research on the influence of societal norms towards students' intention to become entrepreneur appears limited in the Malaysian literature (Chuah, Ting, Alsree, & Cheah, 2015), and a study conducted by Lim *et al.* (2012) discovered that there was an unclear relationship between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention. Based on these discussions, this study hypothesised that:

H2: There is a significant relationship between subjective norms and students' intention to become an entrepreneur.

2.5. Perceived Behaviour Control

According to Bandura and Walters (1977), perceived behaviour control is closely linked with self-efficacy, and it reflects to the perception of one's own ability to carry out a task. Self-efficacy also influences one's beliefs towards a particular object and to achieve

a target (Cromie, 2000). Individuals who believe that they could achieve a target and get what they desired will be more efficient to handle all sort of difficulties (Pajares, 2002). Moreover, Wu and Wu (2008) and Kruger *et al.* (2000) stated that perceived behaviour control is the strongest tool to predict one's intention towards entrepreneurship compared to other factors. The researchers claimed that to increase the inclination of individual towards entrepreneurship, positive attitudes coupled with positive perceived behaviour control are very important to influence the entrepreneurial outcomes. Therefore, this study hypothesised that:

H3: There is a significant relationship between perceived behaviour control and students' intention to become an entrepreneur.

2.6. Exposure Towards Entrepreneurial Family Background

Tyagi (2014) claimed that personality traits with demographic factors would affect one's intention towards entrepreneurship. These traits include the need for achievement, locus of control, risk-taking, innovation, tolerance for ambiguity and self-confidence, while demographic factors are gender, family occupation and family income. According to Hoe *et al.* (2012), personal factors influence one's passion towards an entrepreneurial venture and a desire to gain success on their own career. Drennan, Kennedy and Renfrow (2005) found that those who are exposed to a positive experience from their family business would perceive their own businesses as desirable and feasible. This leads to the fourth hypothesis as follows:

H4: Students with the business family background will have the intention to become an entrepreneur.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sampling Technique

The unit of analysis for this study involved the students from Universiti Malaysia Kelantan and Universiti Utara Malaysia. A multiple-stage sampling technique was adopted in this study by combining a cluster sampling and simple random sampling. The cluster sampling technique was used by grouping the targeted research participants into four residents from Universiti Utara Malaysia and two residents from Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Then, listing all blocks at these six residents formed the sampling frame for this study. The simple random sampling was performed

using a random table to determine a minimum sample size required for this study and to select the study participants. A total of 720 and 188 questionnaires were distributed to the selected students at Universiti Utara Malaysia and Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, respectively. Out of the questionnaires distributed, a total of 422 sets were returned from Universiti Utara Malaysia and usable for further analysis with 56% response rate. Meanwhile, a total of 67 usable questionnaires were returned and usable for analysis with 37% of response rate. Thus, a total of 489 returned questionnaires were valid and acceptable for descriptive and multiple linear regression analyses.

3.2. Measurement Instrument

Primary data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire. This questionnaire comprised three sections with a total of 19 questions used to measure attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behaviour control, respectively. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = 'Strongly Disagree' to 5 = 'Strongly Agree' was used as the measurement instrument. All measured items were adapted from Patrick (2013) as well as Lee, Lim, Lim, Ng and Wong (2012). The questionnaire also included a question for assessing students' intention to become entrepreneur measured with categorical data and questions for demographic details on gender, age, race, education, financial sources as well as family background.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Socio-Demographic of Respondents

Descriptive analysis was performed to describe the students' socio-demographic profiles and their intention to become entrepreneur as in Table 1. Majority of respondents were Malay (67.3%), and there was 50.2% male compared to 49.8% female respondents. Most of the respondents were aged between 21 to 25 years old (63.2%) and their level of education comprised 82.4% first degree, 11.2% master, 6.1 PhD and 2% with other educational levels. Furthermore, most respondents used PTPTN education loan as the main source of financial support for their study (56.1%). Approximately 61% of the respondents agreed to have the intention to become entrepreneur.

Table 2 shows the level of attraction among students towards a potential career profession after graduating from university. Even though the results showed significant levels of attraction for all the

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Profiles of Respondents (n = 489)

Variable	Items	Percentage (%)
<i>Gender</i>	Male	50.2
	Female	49.8
<i>Age</i>	18-20	24.1
	21-25	63.2
	26-30.	6.9
	31-35	1.5
	35-40	1.3
	41-45	1.7
<i>Race</i>	Malay	67.3
	Chinese	15.8
	Indian	4.5
	Others	12.3
<i>Education level</i>	First Degree	82.4
	Master	11.2
	PhD	6.1
	Others	2
<i>Financial source</i>	Self-sponsored	30.1
	Government sponsorship	6.1
	PTPTN Scholarship	56.1
	Others	5.1
<i>Intention to become entrepreneur</i>	Yes	60.7
	No	39.3

Table 2: Level of Attraction Towards Potential Profession after Graduating from University

Variable	Mean	Significant level
Work as politician	2.14	0.00***
Work in government organisation	3.61	0.00***
Work in a domestic private company	3.55	0.00***
Work as freelancer	3.30	0.00***
Create own business	3.63	0.00***

***Significance at the 0.01 level.

professions, the students from both Universiti Malaysia Kelantan and Universiti Utara Malaysia preferred to create their own business with the highest mean value of 3.63. Most people would like to become entrepreneur because the entrepreneurial goal and reward could help them to be more productive and more passionate in contributing to their organisation (Ernie, 2014).

Moreover, the university roles in providing entrepreneurship education also have a significant influence toward students' intention to become entrepreneur. This can be proven by Liñán, Rodríguez-Cohard and Rueda-Cantucho(2010) who mentioned

that entrepreneurship education is very important in universities as it is one of the keys to increase entrepreneurial attitudes of the students.

Wasmal *et al.* (2009) also mentioned that students who took the entrepreneurial subject would have a high possibility to become an entrepreneur as their intention to create a business is higher than other people.

4.2. Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was used to reduce measurement items for the three main independent variables examined in this study, which were:

- i. Attitudes (ATT)
- ii. Subjective norms (SN)
- iii. Perceived behaviour control (PBC)

Based on Cronbach and Meehl (1955), factor loading of 0.30 is minimal, 0.40 is important, while 0.50 is practically significant. In this study, item with factor loading less than 0.50 was removed from the analysis. Attitudes and subjective norms toward entrepreneurship were measured using five questions, whereas nine questions were used to measure perceived behaviour control. All five items were

retained for attitudes. Meanwhile, one item was removed for subjective norms and five items were removed for perceived behaviour control due to the low factor loading results. Table 3 summarises the reliability of the variables.

4.3. Multiple Linear Regression

Table 4 indicates a significant relationship between perceived behaviour control and students' intention to become entrepreneur at the 0.01 level. However, the influence of attitudes and subjective norms towards students' intention to become entrepreneur was not statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 3: Summary of Reliability Analysis for the Variables

Items	Factor loading	Cronbach Alpha (after deleted items)
1. Attitudes (A)		
It is preferable to be an entrepreneur than working in a big company.	0.995	0.997
To be able to do the kind of work I wanted to do.	0.994	
I would rather open my own company than be the manager of the existing one.	0.995	
Starting my own business sounds attractive to me.	0.995	
I personally consider entrepreneurship as a highly desirable career for people with my professional education background.	0.994	
2. Subjective Norms (SN)		
My closest family members think that I should pursue a career as an entrepreneur.	0.700	0.990
To what extent do you care about what your family members think as you decide whether to pursue a career as an entrepreneur.	0.773	
My parents are positively oriented towards my future career as an entrepreneur.	0.748	
I care about the opinion of my family regarding my career.	0.561	
**My family encourages me to set up my own business.	0.027	
3. Perceived Behaviour Control (PBC)		
Starting a business is easy for me.	0.758	0.682
Keeping a business working well is easy for me.	0.776	
I know how to develop an entrepreneurial project.	0.657	
**If I try to start a business, I would have a high probability of succeeding.	0.463	
If I want, I could become self-employed after my studies.	0.588	
**It is very easy for me to ensure and keep a firm working well.	0.049	
**I believe I can create ways to improve existing products for a new business.	0.021	
**I will be fully prepared for entrepreneurship career upon graduation from university.	0.362	
**I can control the creation process of a new firm.	0.221	

**Note: Items deleted from variables.

Table 4: Path Coefficient and Hypotheses Testing

Paths	Beta Estimate	t-value	Result
Attitudes (ATT) → Students Intention (INT)	-0.005	-0.416	Not supported
Subjective Norms (SN) → Student Intentions (INT)	0.011	0.729	Not supported
Perceived Behaviour Control (PBC) → Student Intentions (INT)	0.374***	6.849	Supported
<i>Constant</i>	2.575	15.850	-
R^2		0.346	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		0.342	

Note: *** Significant at the 0.01 level.

The findings revealed that perceived behaviour control have a significant positive relationship towards students' intention to become entrepreneur. Elfving, Brannback and Carsrud (2009), as well as Paco *et al.* (2011), claimed that entrepreneurial intention is not directly affected by individual's self-efficacy, but an increased level of self-efficacy and commitment demonstrated by an individual would lead to a high enthusiasm towards a business. In the study, however, there were no significant relationships between attitudes and subjective norms toward student intention to become entrepreneurs as supported by Krueger *et al.* (2000) and Farashah (2013).

These findings indicate that students' intention to become entrepreneur is not influenced by the social factors coming from family, peers and society. According to Lim *et al.* (2012), previous scholars found an unclear relationship between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention. Similar notion emphasised by Krueger *et al.* (2000) suggested that subjective norms can be linked to attitudes towards behaviour and perceived behaviour control, which show an indirect or combined effect of the variables. This means the interactions between variables have the potential effect

of promoting one's intention to perform a particular behaviour.

It can be concluded that student intention to become entrepreneur was associated directly with their perceived behaviour control. Wu and Wu (2008) and Krueger *et al.* (2000) stated that perceived behaviour control is the strongest factor to predict one's intention towards entrepreneurship compared to other factors. Based on the results showed in Table 4, this study proceeded with further analysis by adding control variable as a predictor that could moderate the relationship between attitudes and subjective norms towards student intention to become entrepreneur.

The family background was estimated as a moderating factor that changed the effect of subjective norms and attitudes towards student intention to become entrepreneur with the results as presented in Table 5.

Findings from Table 5 show that entrepreneurial family background was significantly linked with attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behaviour control towards student intention to become

Table 5: Path Coefficients for Moderating Factor

Paths	Beta	t-value	Result
Attitude (ATT) → Students Intention (INT)	0.134***	3.285	Supported
Subjective Norms (SN) → Student Intentions (INT)	-0.106***	-2.520	Supported
Perceived Behaviour Control (PBC) → Student Intentions (INT)	0.363***	6.810	Supported
Family Background → Students Intention (INT)			
<i>Constant</i>	2.517	16.206	-
R^2		0.136	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		0.131	

Note: *** Significant at the 0.01 level.

entrepreneur at the 0.01 level. Specifically, having an entrepreneur family member significantly influenced the students' attitudes and subjective norms toward entrepreneurship. Krueger (1993) mentioned that students with an entrepreneur father would gain more experience and knowledge in entrepreneurship, which will lead them into more positive attitudes and perceptions toward entrepreneurs. Therefore, this study accepted Hypothesis 4 and concluded that students with business family background would have a high intention to become an entrepreneur.

5. CONCLUSION

Results from this study have confirmed the findings from previous studies in terms of relationships between students' attitudes, subject norms and perceived behaviour control. This study found that there was no significant relationship between attitudes and subjective norms towards student intention to become entrepreneur. However, further analysis revealed that having a family background as entrepreneur produced significant results between students' attitudes and subjective norms toward students' intention to become entrepreneur. Hence, these findings confirmed the important role of a family in enhancing the positive attitudes and norms on entrepreneurial intention among students.

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