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THE LINGKAGING ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTRIBUTES ON
STUDENTS' INTENTIONS ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN
MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This study attempts to explore the entrepreneurial intention of final year students in Private Higher Education Institution in Pahang. The questionnaires were distributed to business students and a total 241 usable questionnaires was analysed using SPSS. The study provided a useful insight into entrepreneurial intentions of business student measured through independent variables, namely; entrepreneurial traits, entrepreneurial motive and entrepreneurial education. The findings revealed that entrepreneurial traits, motive and education positively related with the entrepreneurial intentions. Interestingly, even though all variables induced student intention to become an entrepreneur, this study found that education dimension is the least associated with student entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, attention must be given to entrepreneurship education in encouraging entrepreneurs' intention among student. The solid role of education can raise student level of knowledge and this can inspire future graduate to venture in entrepreneurs business. In addition, entrepreneur's education at precollege levels is essential in stimulating student interest in the area. It is believed that the ideal stage to acquire basic knowledge about entrepreneurship and to foster a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship is during childhood and adolescence years

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Keywords: Entrepreneurial traits, entrepreneurial motive, entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial intention.



1. Introduction

Abidin and Bakar (2005) contended that some HEI generate future capable managers and entrepreneurs through entrepreneurship education. This education structure was formulated from the research finding that integrated environmental influences and entrepreneurial education and training. This effort is actually consistent with the government New Economic Policy and the National Development Policy. These policies stressed on entrepreneurs function in shaping and achieving the objectives of national development of producing bumiputera commercial and industrial community.

In the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010), entrepreneurship has been identified as crucial elements to support the economic drive of the national economy, narrowing the wealth differentials among the population, addressing the unemployment issues among the graduates and securing them with various skills and knowledge in creating successful and competitive entrepreneurs locally and internationally (Unit Economic Planning, 2006).

Zimmerer, Scarborough, and Wilson (2008) referred an entrepreneur as an individual that manage to create new business, risk taker and exposed to uncertainty and strive for monetary reward and opportunities to develop and growth and assembles the required capitals to take advantage on those opportunities. Entrepreneurship is associated with personal, organizational and national success (OECD, 2004; Stevenson, 2000). Attention is given by media focusing successful entrepreneur and organizations with dynamic entrepreneurial and spirit (Zimmerer & Scarborough, 2002). Entrepreneurship is divided into different sizes ranging from micro, small, medium and large businesses and can be self-employment or e-entrepreneurs (Matlay & Westhead, 2005).

McClelland (1961) described that a caliber entrepreneurs possessed following traits such as responsible, flexible, hardworking, risk taker, trust in their capacity to succeed, open for criticism, energetic, futuristic, skilful, profit oriented, high level of responsibility, eagerness to acknowledge chance, buckle down and adaptability. On the contrary, individual factors, widely known as the traits model, concentrate on identity attributes of business people (Chye Koh, 1996). This model lays on the presumption that business people have certain interesting qualities, demeanours and that give a driving force to them and differentiate them from others (Chye Koh, 1996; Thomas & Mueller, 2000).

Initially, searching the key factors that motivate the students to be an entrepreneur must be the ultimate goal of any institution that offer entrepreneurship program. The motivation factors should be identified in order to understand the reasons behind an entrepreneurship undertaking. Baumol (1990) proposed that entrepreneurs are roused by the reward offered in economy. Van Praag and Cramer (2001) found that individuals would move toward becoming entrepreneurs if the reward outweighs the normal working salary.

Entrepreneurship education aim at providing knowledge and hands-on learning experiences to assist student in developing related skill for business inclusive of leadership skill, team building, problem solving, networking and etc. (Sahlman & Stevenson, 1992). Brown (2000) inferred that entrepreneurship education expected to sort out and begin new business. Entrepreneurship education is related to learning whether work related (Dwerryhouse, 2001); experiential (Kolb, 1984); action (Smith, 2001), or training (Gibb, 1999).

2. Problem Statement

Previously, we tend to believe that successful entrepreneurs require no formal education since it is totally depending on their experience and hard works (Yu & Chan, 2004). The conventional business person more often than not begins with private company and less capital, operates business with low esteem and requires serious effort. Nowadays, successful entrepreneurs have shifted to deliberate into recent technology, progressive growth and activities with high value-added and recently new entrepreneurs also equip themselves with good academic background. They are now well verse in information communication technologies (ICTs) and know how to take advantage of internet. The current trend had become a growing concern for education institution to impart and embedded critical knowledge on entrepreneurial in the syllabus to prepare future entrepreneurs with the required skills (Yu & Chan, 2004). Entrepreneurial skills and knowledge are significant contemplations in producing successful entrepreneurs which led to firm's growth and profit (Gomezelj Omerzel & Antončič, 2008). With the current issue of a serious student inclination of enrollment in entrepreneurs' courses, this paper is conceded to deliberate over on the issue.

3. Research Questions

This study aim at answering the main research question on the relationship between entrepreneurial traits, entrepreneurial motives and entrepreneurship education towards entrepreneurial intention

4. Purpose of the Study

Entrepreneur is frequently seen as a risky career choice since they are dealing with ambiguity, obstacles, pitfall and frustrations. This study identified several entrepreneurship traits that suited students' entrepreneurial profile. Initially, searching the key factors that motivate the students to be an entrepreneur must be the ultimate goal of any institution that offer entrepreneurship program. In fact, students who take even a one course in entrepreneurship were likely to start their own business after graduation. In considering the above mention statements, this paper aim at examining student entrepreneur intention mediated by entrepreneur traits, motive and knowledge. .

5. Research Methods

This study used sample from business students at one of Private Higher Education Institution in Pahang. Respondent academic background varies from Marketing and Entrepreneur Development and Management and Human Recourse courses. The total population of the business students is 702 but only 241 usable questionnaire received. Proportionate stratified random sampling was used to extract the needed information from the selected sample. The questionnaire is separated into two parts. The first part included demographic profile of respondent. The second part included variable to measure entrepreneur's trait, motivate and entrepreneurial education. Altogether, 33 questions been asked to respondent with 15 items for entrepreneurial traits, 7 items for entrepreneurial motive and 11 items for entrepreneurial education.

6. Findings

Table 1 denoted the Cronbach Alpha value whereby in this regard all value are above than advised value of 0.70 (Hair, Black, & Babin, 2010).

Table 01. Result of reliability

Construct	Cronbach alpha
Entrepreneurial Traits	0.888
Entrepreneurial Motive	0.800
Entrepreneurial Education	0.855

Table 02. Description of questionnaire

Variables	Description	Mean	SD
<i>Entrepreneurial Traits</i>	I am happy when I can have immediate feedback	4.445	0.771
	I am seeking for ways to create my own destiny	4.277	0.674
	I am a creative person	4.269	0.720
	I am searching for opportunities to make something different	4.582	0.630
	I am willing to accept risk, work hard and take action	2.962	1.033
	I am planning to run my own business in the future	4.340	0.654
	I am looking for responsibility and accountability	3.777	0.860
	I am looking forward to solve problems	4.092	0.785
	I am planning for my future	4.214	0.650
	I am not afraid to take risk	4.345	0.711
	I am very confidence in my ability to succeed in my ventures	3.487	0.894
	I am always have high energy level	3.975	0.711
	I have a high degree of commitment	3.929	0.762
	I am very flexible when planning my future undertakings	4.374	0.723
<i>Entrepreneurial Motives</i>	I am skillful in organizing people	3.966	0.717
	I like to be a BOSS	4.198	0.723
	I like to have more freedom in my working life	4.445	0.696
	I like to gain public reputation	4.034	0.751
	I like to have the power to make decisions	4.067	0.798
	I like to set people to agree with me	4.408	0.680
	I like to find ways to generate impressive profits	3.992	0.723
<i>Entrepreneurial Education</i>	I like the value of achievement over money	4.160	0.643
	To become an entrepreneur, I have to attend various classroom lectures.	4.219	0.664
	To become an entrepreneur, I have to have ample knowledge of entrepreneurship.	4.324	0.741
	To become an entrepreneur, I must be able to write effective business plan	3.883	0.702
	To become an entrepreneur, I must be able to execute business plan effectively	3.887	0.723
	To become an entrepreneur, I must be able to monitor and control the implementation of business plan effectively.	3.764	0.760
To become an entrepreneur, I must experience the running of a small enterprise	3.987	1.065	

To become an entrepreneur, I must be able to solve case study problems	3.370	0.830
To become an entrepreneur, I must be able to produce excellent group work	3.987	0.738
To become an entrepreneur, I must undergo a study plan	4.160	0.693
To become an entrepreneur, I must select programs with entrepreneurial intensive syllabus.	3.830	0.710
To become an entrepreneur, I must go through an internship program	2.903	0.956

Table 2 shows that the mean score of the variables used in the study. The average means score for entrepreneurial traits is ($\mu=4.0689$). This indicated that the respondents agreed that traits may influence the decision towards entrepreneurial venture. The result is similar with previous study by Baum and Locke (2004). Currently, psychology-based researches increasing tremendously and has captured interest in entrepreneurs' personal characteristics as predictors of focusing on traits in particular competencies, motivation, cognition, and behaviour. For entrepreneurial motives, the average mean score is ($\mu=4.1862$), this signify that respondent agreed that motives play an important role in entrepreneurial venture (Sagie & Elizur, 1999). Sagie and Elizur (1999) found three facets of achievement motive namely type of confrontation, time perspective related to task performance, and behaviour modality. Indeed, small business students found to score higher in term of motives. Lastly for entrepreneurial education, the average mean score is ($\mu=3.8467$). Basically the main factor of the entrepreneurial education being offered in university is to nurture student entrepreneurial skills, and to guide them in their career path (Liñán, 2004). Most university-level programs are anticipated to increase entrepreneurial awareness and to prepare aspiring entrepreneurs (Garavan & O' Cinneide, 1994; Weber, 2011). Indeed, entrepreneurship education stimulating greater awareness for students who had not already decided which career to pursue or who had not experienced starting their own businesses prior to enrolling in entrepreneurship courses (Peterman & Kennedy, 2003; Raposo & Paço, 2011). Reviews of the literature on enterprise and entrepreneurship education (Gorman, Hanlon, & King, 1997) and of particular entrepreneurship support programs (McMullan, Chrisman, & Vesper, 2002) provide some evidence that these programs are successful in encouraging entrepreneurs to start businesses, or improve the performance of businesses. However, among all three variables, education play least significant role in determining student intention in venturing in entrepreneurial endeavour, this is similar with a finding in Bae et al. (2014) where they found that entrepreneurship education has a statistically significant but small relationship with entrepreneurial intentions.

7. Conclusion

Generally, this study revealed positive association of entrepreneur's traits, motive and education toward entrepreneur's intention. Since education found to be least significant among all other variables, serious attention must be given as open access to entrepreneurship education is vital fueling the pipeline of encouraging entrepreneurs' intention among student. The solid role of education can raise student level of knowledge and this can inspire future graduate to venture in entrepreneurs business. Previously, researchers hypothesized that entrepreneurs are less well educated than the general population (Jacobowitz & Vidler,

1982). Recently evidence suggested that people who start businesses have a higher level of education than people who do not (Bates, 1995). In addition, Robinson and Sexton (1994) found convincing evidence that business owners are more highly educated than the general public. To foster entrepreneurship, specialised courses have become increasingly common in tertiary institutions (Solomon & Fernald Jr, 1991) and enterprise education has been promoted to encourage entrepreneurial behavior (Donckels & Fröhlich, 1991). In a similar vein, Dyer Jr (1994) and Kourilsky (1995) revealed that entrepreneurs education at precollege levels is essential in stimulating student interest in the area as well as their overall preparation. It is believed that the ideal stage to acquire basic knowledge about entrepreneurship and to foster a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship is during childhood and adolescence years (Filion, 1994). Interestingly, study by (Kourilsky & Walstad, 1998) found that lack of understanding about entrepreneurship for young male and female can be addressed with future training. By having sufficient knowledge about entrepreneurship, the reception on courses related to entrepreneurs will increase.

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