
Personal Capabilities and Social Factor towards Entrepreneurial Intention: Empirical Evidence of Science and Technology Undergraduate Students

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Abstract - Entrepreneurial intention is one of the focus and attention among researchers nowadays. The younger generation is encouraged to get involved in entrepreneurship. It may able to overcome the issue of unemployment rate by creating more job opportunities. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship and influence of Personal Capabilities and Social Factors towards entrepreneurial intention among Science & Technology students. A total of 214 respondents of science and technology undergraduate students from both Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) and Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Sarawak participated in the survey. The empirical results indicate that social factors were found to have positive relationship and significantly correlated with entrepreneurial intention. On the other hand, the relationship between personal capabilities and entrepreneurial intention was found to have a significant albeit weak positive relationship with entrepreneurial intention. Implication and future research direction are also discussed.

Keywords - Personal capabilities, Social Factors, Entrepreneurial Intention, UiTM Sarawak, UNIMAS

I. Introduction

Malaysia is among the few economic powerhouses in the Asia Pacific where the government offers generous funding and physical infrastructure to support entrepreneurship activities. The GEM report found that the dismal rate of business start-up among Malaysians is due to the lack of entrepreneurial education in primary and secondary schools, cumbersome regulations such as taxes and bureaucracy, poor research and development (R&D) transfer, and market openness (Seeds, 2016). National Expert Survey (NES) indicates that Malaysian government has provided much assistance in terms of infrastructure and funding to encourage the development of more young entrepreneurs especially for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Now, SMEs are becoming a common form of employment and they tend to be the engines of job creation, seedbeds for innovation and entrepreneurship (Xavier, Noorseha, Leilanie & Yusof, 2011). A survey of technology students from four different countries reveals that the career preferences and entrepreneurial convictions are influenced by the image of entrepreneurship as a career alternative and the support received from the university environment (Autio, Keeley, Klofsten, Parker & Hay, 2001). In fact, according to Duval-Couetil, Reed-Rhoads, & Haghghi (2011) 70 percent of college students felt that entrepreneurship

instruction can expand their career choices, approximately 70 percent of engineering as well as other science and technology students feel that they are more interested in working for a company due to the large number of employers after graduation. They were also more likely to have an idea for a business, product, or technology due to their background. However, 30 percent of non-entrepreneurship students also reported to have ideas for a business, product, or technology.

II. Research Problem and Research Objectives

Personal capabilities are important to create an entrepreneurial intention within an individual. Bandura (1977) claims that self-efficacy is the subjective conviction that one is capable to take an action and the ability to cope with the resulting tasks. It is a reliable predictor of whether or not they will attempt to execute the task, the amount of effort they will expend and their level of perseverance when confronted with unanticipated difficulties. Refaat (2009) states that personal capabilities can be influenced by three factors that is, personality traits, psychological attributes, and genetic factors in order to make strong bonds. Boyd and Vozikis (1994) stated that self-efficacy is an early development stage towards entrepreneurial intentions which will result into entrepreneurial actions. However, there are limited empirical research studies on personal capabilities towards entrepreneurial intention among science and technology students in Malaysia (Duval-Couetil *et al.*, 2011). Likewise, few studies are made concerning on personal capabilities and social factors towards entrepreneurial intentions amongst science and technology university students in Sarawak's higher educational institutions. The current study is important as it can help local universities to use its results to develop initiatives to promote entrepreneurship amongst people of younger generations, particularly for those who are enrolled in universities.

In terms of social factor, both the full-scale environment and the smaller scale environment are essential for new opportunity creation. Social factors play an important role in influencing individual's perception and behavior which is discussed in Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (2001). Individual's social environment consist of their families, friend and their acquaintance that may become the influence of their interest in starting a venture. Thus, this study aims to examine personal capabilities and social factors that could influence entrepreneurial intention among science and technology undergraduate student specifically in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) and Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) in Kota Samarahan, Sarawak.

III. Literature Review

Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurship has always been an important determinant in the success of a country, either in the developed and developing countries, to spur their economic growth (Matlay, 2005). Entrepreneurship also refers to a process of innovation, exploring and exploiting opportunities by turning resources into output (Roxas, Cayoca-Panizales, & De Jesus, 2009). Therefore, a person who wants to be an entrepreneur should first have the intention to become one. These intentions are strengthened by many factors and antecedents (Che Mat *et al.*, 2015). Lee, Wong, Foo, and Leung (2011) imply that the entrepreneurial intention literatures introduce multilevel perspectives of individual and organizational factors influencing business intentions. Past researches on entrepreneurial intentions concludes that the main factors of desirability perceptions can make a person see the feasibility degree of his or her capability of doing so (Krueger & Carsrud, 1993). Lee *et al.*, (2011) theorize that self-efficacy strengthens the relationship on entrepreneurial intentions. High self-efficacy within employees has a greater assurance in starting successful corporations. Those factors, if inversely, would greatly be influenced if the employees experience low job satisfaction.

Personal Capabilities

Refaat (2009) states that personal capabilities can be influenced by three factors that is, personality traits, psychological attributes, and genetic factors. The examples of personality traits are optimism and creativity. The study of Krueger and Carsrud (1993) shows that entrepreneurial optimism requires self-efficacy to make strong bonds. They also stated that it is important to point out that optimism about one's ability to achieve specific goals is not related to the optimism in higher risk taking. Based on Sourav, Ardichvili and Cardoze, (2003), high levels of entrepreneurial alertness are related to high levels of entrepreneurial creativity and optimism. Both subjects must be equal to enhance the entrepreneurial traits of a person. The previous literature shows that a person who becomes an entrepreneur is correlated with a variety of psychological attributes. It is important to have psychological attributes inside entrepreneurial literatures and must not be ignored (Kamineni, 2002). He also added that, many researchers focus more on the need for achievement, risk-taking propensity and locus of control to strengthen the entrepreneurial literatures. Study made by Teixeira (2009) shows that, among 2431 students enrolled in 60 different undergraduate courses of 14 Portuguese school or faculties, found that psychological factors such as risk propensity, leadership profile and creativeness are examples of determinants that are very important in the entrepreneurial intentions.

Social Factors

Social development of a country is an important factor that influences the direction of entrepreneurs. The social climate concept introduced by Schumpeter (1934) stated that entrepreneurs perform their activity within their sociological, economic and institutional climate of the society.

It includes factors such as social values, economic model, government aid and training which then will stimulate entrepreneurial activity, enhancing economic growth and job creation. De Koning (1999) proposed a socio-cognitive system of chance acknowledgment. Her system demonstrates that business people develop opportunities by seeking after three subjective exercises (data gathering, thoroughly considering on the undertaking, and asset evaluating) through dynamic collaboration with a broad system of individuals. This system incorporates the business visionary's internal circle (the arrangement of individuals with whom a business visionary has long haul, stable connections, they are not accomplices in the endeavor), activity set (individuals enlisted by the business visionary to give important assets to the open door), associations (start-up group individuals), and a system of powerless ties (a system used to assemble general data that could prompt distinguishing an open door or to noting a general inquiry).

Family can become a source for financial support as well as moral support for new entrepreneurs. Aldrich and Cliff, (2003) stated that the role of family members in the early stage of venture creation is crucial hence deserves greater importance in the entrepreneurship. Family that gives aid in terms of both professional and non-professional manner can affect the behavior of entrepreneur (Anderson, Jack, & Dodd, 2005). Akinbola Ogunnaike and Amahian (2013) concludes that informal networks have significant effects on entrepreneurial intention of university students and this finding is consistent with previous research by Greve and Salaff (2003) and Moore (2006) that family is an important factor that influence career choice of university students. This outcome is also supported by Rajiman (2001) where he examined the role of social networks; in which individuals are embedded in predicting entrepreneurial intention. His finding shows that an individual might be interested to be self-employed if he or she has relatives who are engaged in entrepreneurship.

Network can provide many benefits to entrepreneurs and that is why Aldrich and Kim (2012) adopted a social network perspective on entrepreneurship. Social network being adopted include greater information flows, which are vital as entrepreneurs seek to learn about technologies, industry practices, and markets. An individual who desires to start a venture usually needs more information relating to what kind of business could be ventured into nowadays and whether there are any competitors if he or she runs this business (Sahban, Kumar & Ramalu, 2015). As there are many challenges in the beginning of business venture, reliable information is needed by budding entrepreneurs to make an accurate decision. By being uncertain of what he or she is facing or having different possibilities available can be a source of low motivation (Mattson's Health as Communication Nexus, 2011).

IV. Conceptual framework and hypothesis statement

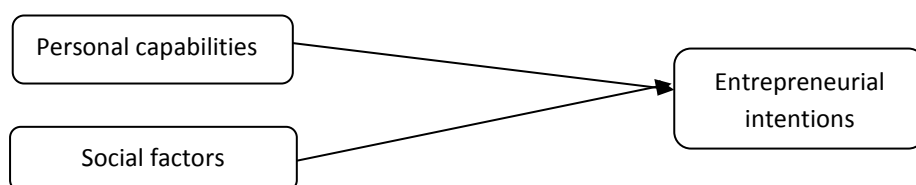


Diagram 1: Conceptual framework of the relationship between students' personal capabilities and social factors towards entrepreneurial intentions.

Hypothesis 1:

There is a significant and positive relationship between the students' personal capabilities and entrepreneurial intentions.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant and positive relationship between the social factors and students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Hypothesis 3:

Social factor has a greater effect towards students' entrepreneurial intentions as compared to their personal capabilities.

V. Research methodology

Using purposive sampling techniques, science and technology students from various faculty of UNIMAS and UiTM Sarawak branch were selected to be the respondents in this survey. Using G-Power 3.1.9.2 with the number of two predictors, the model was tested to determine the minimum requirement. A total number of 85 respondents are the minimum requirement of samples needed for this study. However, according to Hair (2010), a sample size of about 150 to 300 is an ideal sample size for data collection.

As such, 300 questionnaires were distributed but only 214 questionnaires were considered valid and usable for data analysis. Items for both independent and dependent variables were adopted from McGee et al. (2009), Marvel & Lumpkin (2007) Pawlak (2016), Ao and Liu (2015) and Kim-Soon, Ahmad, and Ibrahim (2011). In conducting the study, a hands-on work method was required to be answered by the respondents in order to answer the survey questionnaire. The survey was organized into three sections; the first part consisted of the demographic profiling of the respondents, followed by the second part consisting of questions adapted from past literature and subsequently, the last part involving questions that measured involvement of entrepreneurial intentions.

VI. Finding and discussion

Frequency analyses for demographic profile of respondents are as follows:

Table 1: Respondents' Demographic Profile

Demographic Information	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	78	36.4
	Female	136	63.6
Marital status	Single	212	99.1
	Married	2	0.9
Age	20 and below	106	49.5
	21-25	107	50.0
	25-30	1	0.5
Race	Malay	129	60.3
	Chinese	18	8.4
	Indian	3	1.4
	Iban	15	7.0
	Bidayuh	16	7.5
	Melanau	11	5.1
	Others	22	10.3
University	UNIMAS	141	65.9
	UiTM	73	34.1
Education level	Diploma	39	18.2
	Degree	175	81.8
Program	Faculty Science and Resource Technology	77	36.0
	Faculty of Engineering	63	29.4
	Faculty of Science Computer and Information Technology	12	5.6
	Faculty of Health and Science	27	12.6
	Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying	15	7.0
	Faculty of Applied Science	20	9.3
Entrepreneurial Activities	Yes	64	29.9
	No	150	70.1

Table 2: The correlation between Personal capabilities and Entrepreneurial Intention

		Entrepreneurial Intention
Personal Capabilities	Pearson Correlation	.381
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	214

**Correlation is significant at the level 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Research objective 1: To examine the relationship between student's personal capabilities towards entrepreneurial intention.

Based on the table above, the correlation analysis shows that there is a positive relationship between personal capabilities and entrepreneurial intention with significant value of $r = 0.381$ that indicates the strength of the relationship between each dimension are weak and positive, p -value = 0.000 is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This shows that personal capabilities have a weak relationship with the entrepreneurial intention. This weak relationship may relate to the nature of their academic courses that are inclined towards science and technology. In fact, this finding is opposite with the results of the study by Teixeira (2009) which shows that among 2431 students enrolled in 60 different undergraduate courses of 14 Portuguese school or faculties, psychological factors such as risk propensity, leadership profile and creativeness are examples of determinants that are very important in the entrepreneurial intentions (Teixeira, 2009)

Table 3: The correlation between Social Factors and Entrepreneurial Intention

Social Factor		Entrepreneurial Intention
	Pearson Correlation	.673
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	214

**Correlation is significant at the level 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Research objective 2: To examine the relationship between students' social factor and entrepreneurial intention.

Based on table above, the correlation analysis for social factor shows that there is a positive relationship between social factor and entrepreneurial intention with significant value of $r = 0.673$ that indicates the strength of the relationship between each dimension are strong and positive, p -value = 0.000 is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This means that the objective of this study is met as result shows that entrepreneurial intention is greatly influenced by social factors. This result also can be found in the study stating entrepreneurial social networks positively impact intention is proved. Social networks establish a vital function in retrieving the means desirable to start a commercial start-up (Mosey & Wright, 2007).

Table 4: Model of summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of Estimate
1	0.708 ^a	0.501	0.494	0.58349

a. Predictors: Personal capability and Social Factors

Research objective 3: To identify the critical factor among students' personal capabilities and social factors towards entrepreneurial intention.

The table above shows that the regression analysis was used to assess the strength of association among the variables and was being measured by the coefficient of determination, r^2 (Malhotra, 2010). The linear regression test of the model shows that R Square of the model is 0.501. This illustrates that 50.1% of the variance in the Entrepreneurial Intention has been significantly explained by Personal Capabilities and Social Factors in this research. Meanwhile, the remaining 49.9% are influenced by other factors

Table 5: The Relationship between Variable Standardized Coefficients Based on Beta Value

Model	Standardized coefficients		T	Sig.
	Beta			
(Constant)			-1.066	0.288
1	Personal Capabilities	0.066	1.143	0.254
	Social Factors	0.561	10.203	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intention

Based Table above, the Social Factor represents the highest Beta Value of 0.561 followed by Personal Capabilities which is 0.066. This estimation of Beta Value notifies the amount of increase in Entrepreneurial Intention shows that social factor leads to the most critical effect size towards entrepreneurial intention. From this study, we can see that social factors influence most of science and technology university students towards entrepreneurial intention compared to personal capabilities. Their friends and family may become important factors that lead them to think of involving themselves in entrepreneurial as well as influence them to think on what business they should do. The finding of this study compliments the previous literature on the role of social factors such as friends and roles models who are significant in influencing the individual's decisions to become an entrepreneur (Yurtkoru, Kuscü & Doganay, 2014; Zapkau, Schwens, Steinmetz & Kabst, 2015).

VII. Implication and Conclusion

The significance of this research finding is to give guidelines for the researchers particularly for studies of understanding the behavior of science and technology students on entrepreneurial intentions. Firstly, based on findings, personal capabilities influence the entrepreneurial intentions in someone to participate in entrepreneurial activities. According to Refaat (2009) personal capabilities are influenced by personal traits, psychological attributes, and genetic factors. Based on Krueger & Carsrud (1993), self-efficacy can make strong bonds as it increases entrepreneur optimism. Today, development and inventive advancement are vital to create innovative identities in an individual as these identities will drive him to invent or produce something new. Individuals who have an innovative ability in deduction reasoning can guide them to think outside of the box in generating new ideas. It should be reiterated that the end goal is to construct solid mental traits, which is an individual requirement for accomplishment. Having positive personal capabilities can help in completing complicated tasks and keeps up with stressful situations. The entrepreneurial intention is impacted by the measurement and individual's understanding on the said elements. Therefore, it is important for a person to have an earlier entrepreneurship learning to have the right aptitudes and inspirations to begin a business.

Additionally, this learning can be gained from past experiences. For example, a man was introduced to the fundamentals of business since adolescence. These early exposures determine the personal capability of an entrepreneur. Steve Jobs is a perfect example of an entrepreneur that has endured many bittersweet experiences from his business ventures. His experience with IBM and Pixar, among his ventures, has given him a hard-earned business experiences that increases his personal capabilities which led to the creation of Apple products that are now seen as premium products desired by almost everyone. Therefore, this shows that having positive personal capabilities could assist a person to be more motivated in becoming an entrepreneur.

The second factor, namely social factor has a great influence on entrepreneurial intentions based on the findings of this study. There exists a relationship between effective opportunities finding and developed network with informal community (Frehse, 2007). Lots of advantages are derived from wide spreading system and it can interface with numerous assets. Based on Bingham et al., (2007), social network can amplify the data work that business person can benefit from. This includes business advancements, industry practices and markets, as well as building the assorted qualities of thought for development and quick basic leadership. In terms of the managerial impacts towards a business situation, this study concludes that having a wide network of social circle could increase the chances of acquiring valuable opportunities that would undoubtedly increase a person's entrepreneurial intentions. For example, Donald Trump has a wide business social circle, which includes ministries as well, and this brings about the opportunity to tap into the property and assets business. This opportunity, with the help of his huge social circle, has brought him much success.

Entrepreneurship involvement does not only come from a business background. Some of them are from different fields such as science, technology, and medical programs. The information gained from this study shows that science and technology students also had intentions to become an entrepreneur. Many factors can explain this scenario and one of them is the economic situation in this country which is not stable which contributes to stiff competition to get a job. This encourages students to be independent and start their own business from scratch. Based on the data gathered from the questionnaire, it is found that social factor is an important role in determining the entrepreneurial intention among science and technology students as compared to personal capabilities.

Throughout this study, results have discovered some important dimensions that trigger those students to be involved in business. Hence, this study has added worthy information on the reasons behind entrepreneurial intention among science and technology university students. A study by Mohd Azizie et al (2017) mentioned that human capital is found to have the highest effect and also strong relationship with Social entrepreneurship. Thus, more activities and programs need to be designed among university students so as to enhance their perceived skills, knowledge and experiences. Thereafter, all students from various faculties have their own interest in doing business. This study will further serve as a guideline for university students not only from science and technology background but also from other fields to gain knowledge on how to get involved in entrepreneurship. Lastly, future research will be able to explore more on the effect of social factors on entrepreneurial intention among students. One example is to find out the type of social circle that would lead a person to be more involved with entrepreneurship. This is because it is believed that university students involved in entrepreneurship are not only influenced by their close friends and families but also several successful entrepreneurs that they know from the social media.

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