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# The Role Of Entrepreneurship Education In Cultivating Student's Entrepreneurial Intention: A Theory Of Planned Behavior Approach

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This research seeks to prove whether entrepreneurship education can significantly grow student's entrepreneurial intention. The approach of theory of planned behavior (TPB) is used to examine whether the effect of entrepreneurship education on student's entrepreneurial intention initially goes through attitude variables, subjective norms, and perceptions about behavioral control first. The population of this study is the students of Narotama University who were taking the course of Strategic HR Management in the odd semester of 2017/2018. Data was analyzed using path analysis method. The result shows that entrepreneurship education has no direct effect on student's entrepreneurial intention. As for the three elements of TPB, only attitude variable which is able to significantly mediate the influence of entrepreneurship education on student's entrepreneurial intention.

**Design/methodology/approach:** In this research, data in the form of respondents' perceptions were analyzed quantitatively using path analysis method.

**Findings:** Entrepreneurship education has no direct effect on student's entrepreneurial intention and solely mediated by attitude of the students in order to effectively influence their entrepreneurial intention.

**Research limitations/implications:** In this research, entrepreneurship education is seen from the learning process in one course only, not viewed holistically starting from a policy making process at the top management level of the university, the preparation of an integrated entrepreneurship curriculum, to its implementation in the learning process in each course. Also, the family background of each student was not considered as one of the determinants of their entrepreneurial intention.

**Practical implications:** There is a need to increase affective content so that a stronger persuasive ability will be established among students to influence the norms in their social environment. Addition in psychomotor content is also needed to form more positive perception about students' competence in doing entrepreneurial activity.

**Originality/value:** This research combines the study of entrepreneurship education with the latest development in TPB study. This research also focuses on a population of students who are taking a certain course. Thus, the components in a learning process can be better observed.

**Paper type:** Research paper

**Keyword:** Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Intention, Entrepreneurship Education, Theory of Planned Behavior

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is needed in a country in order to realize prosperity and welfare for its people. This is because entrepreneurs can open new businesses that can absorb more labor, so as to reduce the unemployment rate. Entrepreneurs also tend to be more innovative in their business operations. For example, by utilizing technology that makes the production process more efficient, entrepreneurs can improve the competitiveness of a country. Entrepreneurship can also be viewed as an activity of business opportunities searching by individuals, governments, and communities around the world to promote economic development (Ramadani *et al.*, 2015). In general, it can be said that entrepreneurial knowledge is an important factor to achieve success (Welsh & Dragusin, 2013).

Many studies suggest that the ideal number of entrepreneur in a country is at least 2% of the population (Santoso, 2014). The ratio of entrepreneur in Indonesia in 2017 is 3.1 percent of the total population. Despite being above the minimum limit, this figure is still below the ratio of entrepreneur in Malaysia (5%), Singapore (7%), China (10%), Japan (11%), and the United States (12%) (Humas Kemenkop dan UKM, 2017).

Thus, generating as many entrepreneurs as possible is an urgent strategic matter to be implemented by a country's government. Universities, as partners of the government in the field of education, have a strategic role to assist the development process of these entrepreneurs. The college students are excellent human resources that are expected to be an intellectual power in advancing a country, both in economic, technological and cultural aspects. Therefore, after graduation they are expected to have the knowledge, skills and motivation needed to establish the business (Welsh & Dragusin, 2013).

One of the core elements in teaching and learning activities at university is lecturing activity. Lectures are organized based on various courses that students can take per semester. In this case, the entrepreneur's creation function must be integrated into the teaching activities contained in the learning design of each course. Consequently, there is a need for an evaluation of the effectiveness of such learning in shaping entrepreneurial intention of the students who attend these courses.

Some research findings indicate that entrepreneurship education activities can trigger one's entrepreneurial intention (Fayolle *et al.*, 2006; Kolvereid and Moen, 1997; Webb *et al.*, 1995). But in its development, many researchers began to consider the role of the theory of planned behavior (TPB) as an important element of student's entrepreneurial intention (Ajzen, 1991; Yang, 2013; Moi *et al.*, 2011). On that basis, this study aims to analyze the influence of entrepreneurship education on student's entrepreneurial intention through elements in TPB, namely attitude, subjective norms, and behavioral control.

### Entrepreneurship Concept

It was Schumpeter (1934) who originally spelled the term *entrepreneur*, which he defined as a person who added value to the economy with the contribution of a new way of thinking. This definition evolves over time along with the dynamics of economy and business around the world. Recently, entrepreneur is defined as a person who exploit opportunities, often through the re-combination of existing resources, and on the other hand also endure uncertainty in the implementation (Gümüşay, 2014). According to Nadim and Singh (2011), entrepreneurs are the ones who act based on their creative ideas. The point here is that an entrepreneur is a dreamer who acts, not a person who only dreams but never acts, and not someone who manifests the dreams of others without having his own dream. Hamilton and Harper (1994) consider an entrepreneur as a person who bears certain risk to benefit from a discovery, while for Thompson (1999), an entrepreneur is capable of identifying and utilizing a new business opportunity.

While there are many definitions of entrepreneurs, there is a consensus that the entrepreneur is a person who has unique instincts, mindsets, inspirations, and visions, and has the power, will, and ability to conceptualize ideas and implement business plans. In addition, entrepreneurs also see change as an opportunity to create value (Cheng *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, according to Eze and Nwali (2012) entrepreneurial activity is generally considered to have an advantage because it shows the following elements:

- Initiatives to combine and allocate resources
- Policy making
- Role as an innovator who is always involved in the creation of new ideas / products / business
- Willingness to take / bear the risk

### **Entrepreneurship Education**

Generally, studies in higher education are more oriented towards preparing graduates who are ready to work (i.e. employability), such as a work of Masum (2012). But today there is a demand for higher education institutions to produce entrepreneurs. In this context, various studies show a close relationship between the world of education with the emergence of entrepreneurs. For example, there has been a positive impact of the role of resources and other support mechanisms in educational settings on students' perception of entrepreneurship as a career choice (Johannisson, 1991 and Autio *et al.*, 1997). Current trends are also raising the idea of an entrepreneurial-oriented university or so-called "entrepreneurial university". Entrepreneurial university is a natural incubator who tries to provide a supportive environment where university members can explore, evaluate, and utilize ideas that can be transformed into entrepreneurship-oriented social and economic initiatives (Guerrero *et al.*, 2012).

The logical consequence of the above developments is the emergence of an urgent need to develop an educational program that is specifically aimed at generating new entrepreneurs. Fayolle *et al.* (2006) defines entrepreneurship education programs as any pedagogical or educational program for entrepreneurial attitudes and skills, involving the development of certain personal qualities. Thus, an entrepreneurship education program does not specifically lead to the creation of a new business immediately. So, this definition covers a wide variety of situations, objectives, methods, and teaching approaches (Tinovitarsari, Yuliastanti and Malati, 2017; Wajdi, Ummah and Sari, 2017)s.

There are three phases of entrepreneurial careers: first, *potential entrepreneur* (i.e. those who have the desire to become entrepreneurs); second, *early-stages entrepreneurial activity* (i.e. entry-level and new entrepreneurs); and third, *established entrepreneur* (Xavier *et al.*, 2012).

In this research, the focus is on entrepreneurship-based learning outcomes in one of the subjects taught at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Narotama University, in the odd semester of 2017/2018, which is Strategic HR Management (SHRM) course. In the context of this study, for the time being, the learning objectives of the entrepreneurship-based learning design applied to SHRM course emphasized the first phase, namely potential entrepreneurs. Thus, the design of the lecture is more oriented to the growth of entrepreneurial intention among the students.

The contents of SHRM course are concepts and practices in HR strategy oriented toward the implementation of entrepreneurial business strategy. The audiences of this course are management major students who had chosen HR management as their study concentration.

The learning objective of SHRM course is equipping students with a number of competencies which are necessary in designing HR strategy in an entrepreneurial organization. In this respect, the students are directed to assume themselves as entrepreneurs focusing on the preparation of employees in order to support the business activity. The purpose of such arrangement is to raise the students' entrepreneurial intention, even though they will not necessarily start a business early in their career. To accomplish the learning objective, a combination of tutorial, exercise, design project, and discussion was used as the learning method.

In SHRM course, the students were asked to initially make a plan to establish a small business. Then, based on that plan, they were asked to design an HR strategy that appropriate enough for supporting the strategy implementation. The focus on small business was determined based on the premise that small business can provide conducive environment for entrepreneurship and innovation, which not always has to rely on know-how and resources control like the characteristics of a large-scale production, instead needs commitment and close cooperation among organization members (Sahut & Peris-Ortiz, 2014).

### **Theory of Planned Behavior**

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) states that people are assumed to be rational and systematically use the information available to them when making decisions. This theory states that (a) individual behavior is determined by their intention to carry out the behavior, which is the most accurate predictor of behavior; (b) the intention to behave is a function of attitudes toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control; and (c) other variables influence intention to behave indirectly through the mediation of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991).

Attitude is a subjective assessment of the consequences of a person's behavior and its effect on the person, which determines whether he likes or dislikes certain behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). There are some party who see entrepreneurship as a last resort for people who do not get another job. On the other hand, there is a view of entrepreneurship as the main career choice that can help people achieve his self-actualization. A person who exhibit positive entrepreneurial attitudes will tend to behave as an entrepreneur and believes that entrepreneurship is not a way to make a living, but a way to achieve self-actualization (Yang, 2013).

Subjective norms refer to the individual perception that the people who are important to him think that the individual is supposed to perform or not perform a particular behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). For example, a student may consider his parents and lecturer as important for him. When the parents and/or lecturer believe that the student must open a new company, or they support his entrepreneurial efforts, the student's entrepreneurial motivation will increase (Yang, 2013).

Perceived behavioral control refers to subjective understanding of one's level of self-control and the degree of difficulty in carrying out the desired behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Thus, entrepreneurial perceived behavior control can be defined as subjective evaluation of the capabilities and resources of one's entrepreneurial efforts, as well as the likelihood of success in entrepreneurship (Yang, 2013). When evaluating the same resources, some people will find it abundant, while others think it is rare. The same is true for one's perception of his ability. People who are positive about their resources and abilities will regard entrepreneurship as an opportunity rather than a risk, and they tend to show stronger entrepreneurial intention than negative people (Wilson *et al.*, 2007).

### **Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis**

Yang (2013) found that TPB can be used to effectively explain student's entrepreneurial intention in China. In addition, attitudes toward entrepreneurship, subjective norms, and perception about behavioral control are also significant factors for explaining variation in student's entrepreneurial intention in China. More specifically, the research finding of Moi *et al.* (2011) shows that attitudes towards entrepreneurship are the most significant predictor for entrepreneurial intention among Malaysian students.

On the other hand, Krueger and Carsrud (1993) developed a model which shows that the three elements of TPB can be influenced by external influences on entrepreneurial activity. For example, attitude can be automatically formed through life experience, learning, observation of others, and so forth (Ahmad *et al.*, 2013). Here it is clear that one of the most important formers of attitude is learning activity, which is at the core of an educational program. In other words, education can be predicted as one external factor that can affect the formation of entrepreneurial intention through the attitude element of TPB.

Although the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education undertaken in universities is still debated (Cheng *et al.*, 2009), there are quite a number of findings that show the strong role of entrepreneurship education to foster entrepreneurial intention. For instance, Fayolle *et al.* (2006) found that entrepreneurship education programs have a significant effect on student's entrepreneurial intention. There are also Kolvereid and Moen (1997) who found that students who take up entrepreneurship studies have shown a greater interest in becoming entrepreneur. In addition, the students also showed greater entrepreneurial action than other students when faced with the challenge of starting a new business. Similarly, Webb *et al.* (1982) found that students who attended entrepreneurship programs were more likely to start their own business than other students. This is reinforced by Upton *et al.* (1995) who revealed that 40 percent of participants in entrepreneurship courses had started their own business.

From the above-mentioned findings of previous research, a hypothetical model can be constructed in several stages, as shown in Figure 1. The first stage is that entrepreneurship education, viewed as an external influence, will affect the three elements of TPB in relation to entrepreneurship, namely (1)

perception of the attractiveness of entrepreneurial behavior (*entrepreneurial attitude*); (2) perception of social norms related to entrepreneurial behavior (*entrepreneurial subjective norms*); and (3) perception of self-control/efficacy in entrepreneurial behavior (*entrepreneurial behavior control*). The second stage is that the elements of the TPB will form an intention to display entrepreneurial behavior, which can be more concisely referred to as entrepreneurial intention.

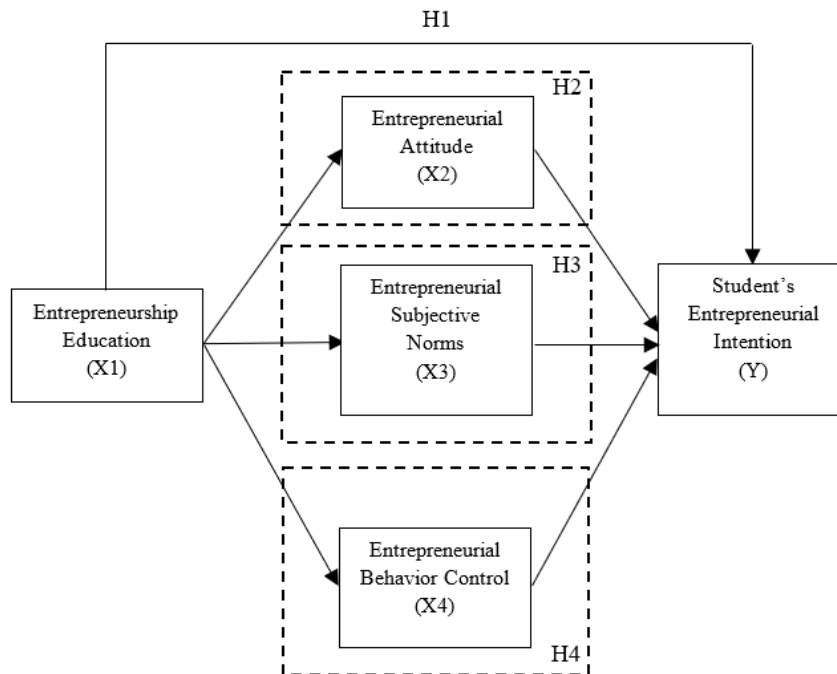


Figure 1 – Conceptual Framework of Student's Entrepreneurial Intention with TPB Approach

From the description of the stages above, then some hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

- *Hypothesis 1:* Entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant impact on student's entrepreneurial intention.
- *Hypothesis 2:* Entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant impact on student's entrepreneurial intention through entrepreneurial attitude.
- *Hypothesis 3:* Entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant impact on student's entrepreneurial intention through entrepreneurial subjective norms.
- *Hypothesis 4:* Entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant impact on student's entrepreneurial intention through entrepreneurial behavior control.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### Research Instrument

Entrepreneurship education (X1) is measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree), with statement items developed based on the conceptualization of design and implementation of entrepreneurship education programs (Fayolle *et al.*, 2006) as follows:

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- x1.1 This course has a clear purpose to encourage you to become entrepreneur.
- x1.2 This course provides an adequate knowledge about entrepreneurship.
- x1.3 This course provides a clear picture about the importance of entrepreneurship for the advancement of society.
- x1.4 The tasks in this course help you understand the steps of entrepreneurship.
- x1.5 The tasks in this course encourage you to think creatively.
- x1.6 The lecturer of this course encourages students to come up with innovative ideas.
- x1.7 Classroom discussion activities add to your insight into the business that attracts you.
- x1.8 Consultation activities with the lecturer assist you in developing a viable business plan.

Entrepreneurial attitude (X2) is measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree), with statement items adapted from Gundry and Welsch (2001) as follows:

- x2.1 I would rather have my own business than work at a high salary in someone else's company.
- x2.2 I would rather have my own business than pursue another promising career.
- x2.3 I am willing to make great personal sacrifices in order to keep my business going.
- x2.4 I will work elsewhere just enough to have time to build my own business.

Entrepreneurial subjective norms (X3) are measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree), with statement items adapted from Kolvereid (2001) as follows:

- x3.1 My closest family members will believe that becoming entrepreneur is right for me.
- x3.2 My closest friends will believe that becoming entrepreneur is right for me.
- x3.3 The most important person in my life will believe that becoming entrepreneur is right for me.

Entrepreneurial behavior control (X4) is measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree), with statement items developed based on the conceptualization of perceived behavioral control (Yang, 2013) as follows:

- x4.1 I have resources to build my own business
- x4.2 I can easily get various resources to build my own business.
- x4.3 I have the physical ability to build my own business.
- x4.4 I have the mental ability to build my own business.
- x4.5 I am able to overcome various challenges in building my own business.
- x4.6 I am able to bear the risks that arise in building my own business.

Student's entrepreneurial intention (Y) is measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree), with statement items adapted from Thompson (2009) and Putra and Tridayanti (2016) as follows:

- y1 I want to establish a company in the future.
- y2 I save money in order to start a business.
- y3 I use the time to learn how to start a business.
- y4 I want to open more job opportunities.
- y5 I want to utilize excess funds more productively.
- y6 I want to capture the existing business opportunity.
- y7 I want to take advantage of existing social networks to build a business.

### Research Population

The population of this study are the students who take the course of Strategic HR Management to complete in the odd semester of 2017/2018. The number of students enrolled in this course is 49 students, but the active participants that reach the final evaluation stage are only 45 students. The latter number is considered the amount of population, given the criteria that the respondent of this study should have attended the Strategic HR Management course completely in order to be able to provide the assessment as objectively as possible. In this study all members of the population were regarded as respondent. Thus, no sampling process is necessary. Questionnaires were disseminated at the time final examination of the semester. Of the 45 students who took the exam, all were willing to fill out the questionnaire. But, of that amount, only 41 questionnaires that can be processed, while the rest are considered invalid because of unfilled items or a double answer.

### Validity and Reliability Test

Instrument validity test was done by calculating correlation value ( $r$ ) between item with total (item-total correlation) compared with  $r$ -table value. An item of statement is considered valid if its  $r$ -calculated value is greater than  $r$ -table value. Using  $r$ -table, where for  $df = 41 - 1 = 40$  and  $\alpha = 0.05$  found  $r$ -table value 0.304. Meanwhile the reliability test was done by calculating the Cronbach alpha value of a set of statements used to measure a variable. An instrument is considered reliable if its Cronbach alpha value is greater than 0.60. The following paragraphs describes the results of validity and reliability tests for the measurement instruments used in this study.

The first test for the measurement instrument of entrepreneurship education variable (X1) generated a Cronbach alpha of 0.682 (reliable), but there are four items of statement with  $r$ -value below 0.304 and thus are considered invalid (x1.5, x1.6, x1.7, and x1.8) and can't be used. After the four items were removed, re-testing was done and the Cronbach alpha rose to 0.763 (reliable).

The test for measurement instrument of entrepreneurial attitude variable (X2) generated a Cronbach alpha of 0.862 (reliable) and all item statements are considered valid ( $> 0.304$ ).

The test for measurement instrument of entrepreneurial subjective norms variable (X3) generated Cronbach alpha of 0.824 (reliable) and all items of statements are considered valid ( $> 0.304$ ).

The test for measurement instrument of entrepreneurial behavior control variable (X4) generated Cronbach alpha of 0.858 (reliable) and all item statements are considered valid ( $> 0.304$ ).

The test for measurement instrument of student's entrepreneurial intention variable (Y) generated Cronbach alpha of 0.878 (reliable) and all item statements are considered valid ( $> 0.304$ ).

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study used path analysis, which is the development of multiple regression analysis, to calculate the causal relationships among the variables that have been modeled in the above conceptual framework. In addition to this analysis, tests on various hypotheses proposed in this study were also conducted.

Based on the conceptual framework and hypothesis developed in this study, the path analysis conducted with the help of SPSS version 20 software and then generated four regression equations as follows:

$$\text{Regression equation 1: } Y = -0.083X1 + 0,529X2 + 0,288X3 + 0,024X4 + 0,225$$

$$\text{Regression equation 2: } X2 = 0.340X1 + 0.781$$

$$\text{Regression equation 3: } X3 = 0.409X1 + 0.694$$

$$\text{Regression equation 4: } X4 = 0,279X1 + 0,850$$

Where:

$$X1 = \text{Entrepreneurship education}$$

- X2 = Entrepreneurial attitudes
- X3 = Entrepreneurial subjective norms
- X4 = Entrepreneurial behavior control
- Y = Student’s entrepreneurial intention

Furthermore, the causal relationships observed in the path analysis model along with their respective significance can be observed one by one. In Table 1, it appears that from the four dependent variables tested, only entrepreneurial attitude (X2) proved to have a positive and significant effect ( $0.001 < 0.05$ ) on student’s entrepreneurial intention (Y) with a beta of 0.529. This is in line with the finding of Moi *et al.* (2011) that attitudes towards entrepreneurship are the most significant predictor of entrepreneurial intention among Malaysian students.

The variables of entrepreneurship education are specifically observed in relation to the three TPB variables. It appears that the entrepreneurship education variable has a positive and significant effect ( $0.029 < 0.05$ ) on the entrepreneurial attitude variable with a beta of 0.340. Entrepreneurship education variable also have positive and significant influence ( $0.008 < 0,05$ ) on the entrepreneurial subjective norms variable with a beta of 0.409. However, the influence of entrepreneurship education variable to entrepreneurial behavior control variable is not significant ( $0,077 > 0,05$ ).

*Table 1 – Causal Relationship Among Variables*

<b>Causal Relationship</b>	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
Entrepreneurship Education → Student’s entrepreneurial intention	-0,083	0,520	Negative, Not significant
Entrepreneurial attitude → Student’s entrepreneurial intention	0,529	0,001	Positive, Significant
Entrepreneurial subjective norms → Student’s entrepreneurial intention	0,288	0,104	Positive, Not significant
Entrepreneurial behavior control → Student’s entrepreneurial intention	0,024	0,865	Positive, Not significant
Entrepreneurship Education → Entrepreneurial attitude	0,340	0,029	Positive, Significant
Entrepreneurship Education → Entrepreneurial subjective norms	0,409	0,008	Positive, Significant
Entrepreneurship Education → Entrepreneurial behavior control	0,279	0,077	Positive, Not significant

**IV. CONCLUSION**

In the context of TPB, it is only an attitude element that can be a mediator to create entrepreneurial intention among students. Most likely this happens because, so far, the course of Strategic HR Management still put the greatest emphasis on the cognitive element. The affective and psychomotor elements are still very minimal. So, it’s logical that the only strengthened aspect is student’s entrepreneurial attitude. It means that while the students generally have a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship after completing the course, there is no guarantee that they will be enthusiastic and take concrete action to start a business.

If affective content were increased, there is a hope that a stronger persuasive ability will be established among students to influence the norms in their social environment. If the influence is well realized, then people who are important to the student will not hesitate to support the student’s choice to



become entrepreneur. Addition in psychomotor content is also expected to help the students forming more positive perception about their competence in doing entrepreneurial activity.

The limitation of this research is that entrepreneurship education is seen from the learning process in one course only. Ideally, entrepreneurship education should be viewed holistically, starting from a policy making process at the top management level of the university, the preparation of an integrated entrepreneurship curriculum, to its implementation in the learning process in each course. Furthermore, the achievement of output and outcome of the entrepreneurship education process is also need to be evaluated on regular basis to ensure the formation of truly strong student's entrepreneurial intention. It is interesting to examine more deeply the possibility of applying an assessment model of entrepreneurship education programs from Fayolle *et al.* (2006). In the model, there is a comprehensive assessment of the various elements of entrepreneurship education, including institutional setting, audience, type and objective of the program, content of the program (know-what, know-why, know-when, know-who, know-how), teaching and training methods, as well as teaching and training approaches.

This study also did not look at the family background of the students. Yet as Yang (2013) found in China, students whose parents had entrepreneurial experience scored higher in entrepreneurial attitude, subjective norms, and perception of behavioral control, and were more entrepreneurial oriented than students whose parents had no entrepreneurial experience. It will be interesting as a future research topic to see whether the same phenomenon also occurs in Indonesia.

Finally, entrepreneurship education is still a research topic that needs to be developed in the future. This is because of the magnitude of the challenges facing the productive age population in Indonesia in this disruptive era. Young entrepreneurs from among the students should constantly be emerged in order to realize the aim of advanced and prosperous nation. Thus, higher education institutions need to formulate more concrete entrepreneurship development policies, for example by allocating budgets to establish business incubators and providing affordable funding schemes for students interested in becoming entrepreneurs. Quality assurance also needs to be done more closely on the certain elements such as development of entrepreneurship curriculum and the university graduates profile. The existence of more in-depth research in this field would be very beneficial for higher education institutions in carrying out these great tasks.

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