



# MBA Education: Curriculum to Creation (C2C) of Potential Entrepreneurs

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**Abstract:** Malaysia has greatly recognized entrepreneurs' growth and has introduced many entrepreneurial policy inceptions to boost the number of entrepreneurs, and to create entrepreneurial interests among future generations. There is a growing development in entrepreneurship education to educate and advocate entrepreneurship start-up intentions among students. In conjunction with it, this research aimed to investigate the creation of entrepreneurial start-up intention among MBA students in Malaysia through course experience in developing entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills. Course experience consists of good teaching, clear goals and standards, generic skills, and motivation has accessed the development of entrepreneurial skills and knowledge, and eventually the start-up intention among students. 219 MBA students from Malaysia participated as respondents and it's concluded that course experience has a significant relationship in developing entrepreneurial knowledge and skills and these developments do have a significant relationship in creating entrepreneurial start-up intentions. In particular, the entrepreneurial skills found to have the strongest significance in creating entrepreneurial start-up intentions. These research findings have added to the existing body of knowledge in entrepreneurial research and entrepreneurial education domain.

**Keywords:** course experience, entrepreneurial knowledge, entrepreneurial skills, start-up intentions, MBA

**Paper type:** Research Paper

## 1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship development in Malaysia has been steadily growing which has made researchers conduct a variety of studies on entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship and has become a popular topic among many types of researches (Ismail et al., 2009; Zain et al., 2010; Hanafiah et al., 2016). Any education-related with entrepreneurship is successfully producing graduate entrepreneurs and has prepared them to continue their profession as an entrepreneur (Nabi & Holden, 2008) and it has become a most popular career choice (Van Gelderen et al., 2008). Financial supports from governments, the existence of physical infrastructures, business advisory services, and individuals' traits are among the key players in creating entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship intentions in a country (Zain, Akram & Ghani, 2010).

Entrepreneurial education is an integral part of the curriculum in business schools, and it is promoting effective methods to transform an increasing degree holders' education to the working environment (Matlay & Westhead, 2005). In Malaysia, even though entrepreneurial educations were delivered from secondary level, the education provided at tertiary level is considered the most effective foundation to guide and advocate the transition of graduates into the world of entrepreneurship (Ismail, Khalid, Othman, Jusoff, Rahman, Kassim & Zain, 2009). Apart from Malaysia, the study of Hart and Harrison (1992) on the tendency of university students involving in business in Northern Ireland showed that 47% of the students have the intention to run their own business due to the impact caused by business education. Similar to the study conducted by Karr (1985) which showed 46% of college students looking into their own business as careers.

Universities provided entrepreneurial related studies, and among all, Master of Business Administration (MBA) is the most common and effective course for every entrepreneur. Baporikar (2018) defined that good MBA postgraduates showed personalities of leadership potentials, consistent academic achievement, creativity, dedication, commitment, and professionalism. All these characteristics prepare the respective graduates to excel in their management careers and train them to become successful entrepreneurs.

Despite having a variety of studies related to entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship educations, the causes and factors in creating entrepreneurs are still being studied by many researchers to support the importance of education and knowledge in determining the success or failures of business (Pau, Nizam, & Arasaratham, 2018). From the educational perspective in Malaysia, there were also studies conducted towards the creation of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship intention, especially among business students. The research by Zain, Akram, and Ghani (2010) has studied the factors of entrepreneurship intentions from the point of personality and economic traits. In the previous year, there was another study performed to understand the creation of entrepreneurship intention caused by contextual factors and Big-Five personality factors by only involving Malaysian undergraduates (Ismail, Khalid, Othman, Jusoff, Rahman, Kassim & Zain, 2009). A-like to this study, Pau, Nizam, and Arasaratham (2018) analyzed the personality, knowledge, perceived behavioral control, attitude, and subjective norm factors among MBA graduates in creating entrepreneurship intentions. This showed throughout the years, the creation of entrepreneurship studies are widely being studied from the context of personality traits, economic traits, attitudes, knowledge and social influences (Zain, Akram & Ghani, 2010; Ismail, Khalid, Othman, Jusoff, Rahman, Kassim & Zain, 2009; Pau, Nizam, & Arasaratham, 2018).

Although all the entrepreneurship education studies proved its potentials in creating entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship intentions, Malaysia is still facing a lack of involvement and participation of graduates in the social entrepreneurial sector (MaGIC, 2015). Moreover, based on the research conducted by Herrington (2017), only 4.9% of Malaysians show their interest to create new ventures and willingness to be self-employed. All these years, although there were many studies performed on entrepreneurial intentions widely and have been internationally discussed by researchers, there are still limited studies from the past

that have specifically conducted any research on MBA graduates in Malaysia (Pau, Nizam, & Arasaratham 2018). Hence, to cover all these theoretical gaps, this study is taking a different initiative to understand the significant impact of the Master of business administration (MBA) program in educating and advocating potential entrepreneurs' creation by evaluating its course experience delivered to the post-graduates. The effectiveness of the MBA course has been validated by the impact of course experience that develops entrepreneurial knowledge as well as entrepreneurship skills, which creates entrepreneurial start-ups intentions among MBA postgraduates. At the end of the research, this evaluation has provided an overview of this MBA education in creating entrepreneurship intentions among the students. The course experience questionnaires mainly measured the development of entrepreneurship knowledge and entrepreneurial skills of the students which significantly created entrepreneurial start-up intentions. Hence, the objectives of this research are four-fold: i. to identify the relationship between course experience and entrepreneurial knowledge, ii. to identify the relationship between course experience and entrepreneurial skills, iii. to identify the relationship between entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial start-up intentions, and iv. to identify the relationship between entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial start-up intentions.

## 2. Literature Review

### A. *Entrepreneurial start-up intentions*

According to Douglas and Fitzsimmon (2008), entrepreneurship intention is defined as an act of an individual towards the outcomes that his/her action and self – efficiency. It is an act self – motivation, ambition, and an individual's determination to survive on their own feet. Entrepreneurship intention also creates the desire of performing a productivity act effectively, which able to direct individuals to use and implement business ideas (Krueger, 2000). These intentions are not inherited, but it can be nurtured and developed through education-related to entrepreneurship. As mentioned by Athayde (2009), the attributes of entrepreneurs can be well-shaped by the educational courses which able to build students' mindset in making entrepreneurship as their career path. Meanwhile, Kuttim (2014) and Kim-Sun (2016) have proved that involvement in entrepreneurship education has to influence positively on creating entrepreneurial intentions among students. Moreover, findings of Hussain and Norashidah (2015), Lorz (2011), Hattab (2014) and Ibrahim (2015) proved that there is a signification relationship between entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial education, nevertheless, it needs student's participation in experimenting lifelong learning practices (Robinson, 2016) and through enhancing the meaning of action, reflection, and experience (Hägg & Kurczewska, 2016). Entrepreneurship knowledge is learned, and entrepreneurship skills are trained during the course periods which will be boosting students' attitudes and motivation in developing themselves as entrepreneurs (Raposo & Do Paco, 2011). Past studies found that there is an important link between the motivation and attitudes of entrepreneurs, learning processes, and students' concern towards entrepreneurial education (Prodjosoesilo, 2005; Fayolle, 2006). Meanwhile, the study of Lee and Wong (2003) concluded entrepreneurial educations have an immediate influence on shaping students' attitudes in risk-taking to set up new businesses. Entrepreneurial intentions can be supported by Ajzen's TPB model (1991) that states the perception of attitude towards behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in creating behaviors and intentions to be an entrepreneur. The creation of entrepreneurial start-up intentions can be measured through four dimensions, which are intentions of business involvements, creation of business attitudes, the pressure to be entrepreneur, and self – control in creating a business (Staniewski & Awruk, 2016). Firstly, as for business involvement, the TPB model advocates that a person's behavioral intention to execute an activity factor actual behavioral. Hence, factors such as motivators create and enhance the level of involvement and to undertake the effort to perform the desired action (Ajzen, 1991). Thus, in this context, the TPB model able to support the intensity of business involvement in creating entrepreneurial start-up intentions which eventually determines the actual act in

becoming an entrepreneur. According to Ajzen (1991), attitude towards behaviors decides how favorable or unfavorable an individual will be assessing certain behaviors. Based on this, Wu and Wu (2008) mentioned that attitudes are mostly related to the personal reflection of opinions and beliefs held by those respective individuals. Hence, in terms of creating entrepreneurial start-up intentions, the cause of business-related attitude may act as a power of conviction for individuals to become actual entrepreneurs. Thirdly will be pressure to become an entrepreneur. Staniewski and Awruk (2016) mentioned that individuals pressure that placed them in starting his/her own business due to the closest environmental situations. From Ajzen's (1990) point of view, social pressure is seen as a subjective norm in the TPB model to become involved or to avoid being involved in behavior. Thus, the pressure of creating an entrepreneurial start-up intention may arise due to social pressure or the motivation to comply with those who are causing the pressure. The last dimension in the entrepreneurial start-up intention is perceived control. In Ajzen's TPB theory (1991) perceived control decides the degrees of individuals perceive a situation as a controlled one. It doesn't mean the actual control is exercised by the person himself. Nevertheless, from Ajzen's theory, the sense of control is molded by causes of previous experience and the prediction of challenges that can be encountered soon. Hence, the cause of perceived control able to influence creates entrepreneurial start-up intentions which eventually cause the impact of becoming actual entrepreneurs. Knowledge plays an important part in the success of career development (Oyewumi, 2013; Evans & Leighon, 2007; Otham & Ishak, 2009). The previous research of Charney and Libecap (2000) has proved that there are positive correlations between entrepreneurship intentions and knowledge of the business. This finding has been also supported by Tshikovhi and Shambare (2015), the finding of these authors' the study showed that both entrepreneurial knowledge and personal attitudes affect entrepreneurial intentions. There is some evidence which points to entrepreneurial skills in creating entrepreneurial start-up intentions. Capaldo (2004) founded that entrepreneurial skills are essential for the definition of the destinies of all businesses. Besides, attainment of correct entrepreneurial skills can achieve entrepreneurial intentions (Fini, Grimaldi, Marzocchi & Sobreror, 2009) and it can be linked with the ability of entrepreneurs in developing a new business model and strategizing their business vision (Loué & Baronet, 2012). Furthermore, Alvariez and Barney (2007) have found that entrepreneurial skills do create the ability to identify the needs of customers which leads to the exploitation and identification of new venture opportunities. Besides all these, there are a lot of past studies that have also positively reported a significant relationship between entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial intentions (Levie, Hart, & Anyadyke-Danes, 2010; Lashgarara, Roshani, & Najafabadi, 2011; Mobaraki & Zare, 2012).

### *B. Course experience*

This research was initiated to prove the significance of entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills in creating entrepreneurial start-up intentions among MBA students. Thus, to understand the level of entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills among students, these variables were measured through the course experience questionnaires. During the annual Graduate Destination Survey since 1993, the Graduate Careers Council of Australia has incorporated the course experience questionnaires (Wilson et al., 1997) and treated it as a performance indicator of teaching and learning at degree level (Marton & Säljö, 1976; Biggs, 1999; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). Course experience measures the range of students' perceptions towards teaching and learning and the overall course satisfaction as a validity check on its respective scales. The course experience questionnaire is mainly designed to indicate the effectiveness of teaching across all institutions and disciplines (Lizzio, 2002). Regarding this, Diseth, Pallesen, Brunborg, and Larsen (2010) firstly validated the relative participation of course experience in students' approach to learning efforts and previous academic achievement as academic predictors' achievements. Secondly, this study also interested to examine the different mean scores between these mentioned performance

indicators. Similar to it, course experience questionnaires also being used to provide a reliable and valid indication of crucial aspect in rating overall course satisfaction and to determine whether the questionnaire used could be standardized as a performance indicator to monitor the quality of tourism management academic programs in Greece (Stergiou & Airey, 2012). According to Australia's annual graduate destination survey, course experience has four reliable scales that evaluate the overall satisfaction of a degree program. Based on this, Ginns, Prosser, and Barrie (2007) discussed on four dimensions of course experience that determines its relationship with Students' Approach to Learning (SAL) effort, and prior academic performance. Good teaching, clear goals and standards, generic skills, and motivation are the dimensions of course experience that can influence students' perception of assessing the quality of their teaching course which has been discussed below. So, the course experience's involvement in developing entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skill and has been studied in this research, hence, the hypothesis to be tested is:

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between course experience and entrepreneurial knowledge.

**H2:** There is a significant relationship between course experience and entrepreneurial skills.

### *C. Good teaching*

Referring to Haider, Ali, and Jalal (2018), every teacher acknowledges that even a good curriculum and perfect syllabus may remain dead useless, but it can be revived into life via the right kind and method of teaching (Secondary Education Commission, 1996). Besides this, mutual learning between the students and teachers should take place where the teachers listen to the views and ideas from the students without having the thought of who should teach who. Good teaching comes together with effective learning as an ally where both students and teachers collaborate (Anderson, Rabello, Wass, Golding, Rangi, Eteuati, Bristowe & Waller, 2017). During the research on the understanding of international students towards good teaching, Anderson (2014) has emphasized the significant impact of teachers' openness, their clear and effective communication abilities, and student engagement capacities. Students acknowledge good teaching whenever teachers promote students' interests, wellbeing, and their capacity to engage with challenging or new ideas (Zepke & Leach, 2017; Brownlee et al., 2009). Based on a study performed by Lizzio (2002) on academic achievement among first-semester undergraduates, it is found that the good teaching in course experience significantly predicted the Grade Point Average (GPA) among the students of several faculties. Furthermore, the higher construction of good teaching was positively related to the students' intense approach to their studies. In other words, the students who thought their learning environments were more likely to take a 'meaning-based' and less willing to follow reproductive learning strategies because of the purpose of good teaching (Lizzio, Wilson & Simons, 2002). Meanwhile, Anderson, Rabello, Wass, Golding, Rangi, Eteuati, Bristowe, and Waller (2017) had successfully studied diverse students' good teaching concepts, and effective learning critical incident techniques, group discussion, and photovoice since the researchers recognized learning and interwoven learning together (Parpala, 2011). This study has discussed good teachers are the people who care for their instruction, training, and student education. Their role in the subject is strongly influenced, their enthusiasm for learning, and their aspirations for the future. Based on this, the level of entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills development can be also studied through good teaching, hence, the hypothesis to be tested is:

**H1a:** There is a significant relationship between good teaching and entrepreneurial knowledge.

**H2a:** There is a significant relationship between good teaching and entrepreneurial skills.

#### *D. Clear goals and standards*

Locke and Latham (2002) described that the most effective goals are clear, specific, and challenging. As in education, the guidelines and goals are formulated by the objectives found from the education law (Goryunova, 2019). This author further explained that the education law enlarges the education goals and provides guidelines for the local authorities on their planning activities which are related to educations. Upon having clear goals or objectives, it motivates the students to increase their proficiency in their tasks which they know what they should do. Standards defined as ‘what students need to know and should be able to perform’. The performance of students will say ‘how the students will show that they are meeting the course standards’ (Wisconsin’s Model Academic Standards for Environmental Education, 1998). Education standards are a broad statement as it describes what the students need to know and their capability in performing after learning the courses. The standards set in that course need to create a vision of student empowerment. Students who recognized and were most encouraged studying the goals and standards will be having better learning outcomes. Besides, standards do serve as goals for learning, teaching, and treated as a guiding post. With this, students, educators, commoners, and parents able to know about the students’ learning during their education periods (Azeem, Gondal, Abida, Farah, Hussain, Munira, 2015). Based on Gibbs (1992), specific goals and standards recognized academic achievements as the best measure, but sadly insufficient. It is perceived as a dimension that more deeply influences the learning environment on ‘how good students can succeed’ instead of ‘what approach they use’. Based on this, the level of entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills development can be also studied through clear goals and standards, hence, the hypothesis to be tested is:

**H1b:** There is a significant relationship between clear goals and standards with entrepreneurial knowledge.

**H2b:** There is a significant relationship between clear goals and standards with entrepreneurial skills.

#### *E. Generic skills*

Harshvardhan and Manju (2015) studied that generic skills enable an individual to create new skills that can succeed in new atmospheres which eventually will make them manage and adapt to any changes and to shine by creating what matters in any face of adversity. Generic skills are highly important as they are needed to make individuals to become confident, to acquire new knowledge and information, to interact and socialize, remain competitive and to adapt according to the demands at any places. When knowledge obsoletes, the learned skills will be acquired during the development process and will be widely applicable in most situations. In terms of creating entrepreneurship intentions, skills such as the capacity to make decisions, problem-solving, and working independently will be expected and acknowledged by all individuals. According to the National Board of Employment Education and Training (1996), generic skills refer to core skills, competencies, personal skills, or employment skills. Previous researches have proved that generic skills can be developed in the learning setting focuses on the process other than content alone (Gibbs, 1992, Biggs, 1993 & Candy et al., 1994). Student-centered process approached, which consist of task-oriented activities, reflection, and dialogue feedback is a need for learning environments (Laurillard, 1993). This author mentioned that during the process approach, skills such as planning, resolving conflicts, interpersonal skills, time management, and meeting deadlines can be naturally developed. Besides, Marginson (1993) also mentioned that there are other arguments as well to justify appropriate meaning for generic skills whereby time management, collaborative skills, communication, and critical thinking should be considered are generic skills. Many of these terms are highly dependent on the time and places of the workplace and being differed by disciplines, interests, and purposes as well. Marginson (1993) also stated that there are three top desired skills developed among university graduates are communication, ability to learn new skills and methods, and capacity on corporation and teamwork. These skills were derived from

the research study performed by the Australian Council for Education Research in 1999. In the study conducted by Green, Hammer, and Star (2009) and Horsburg (1999), it was mentioned that employers are looking for employees with attributes such as adaptability, willingness to learn, flexibility, effective communication and self-motivation from the graduates as these can make the individuals adapt and contribute to the fast-changing world and fast-growing learning modes. Based on this, Barnett (2000) has argued that universities are being reactive on these changes and requirements, hence, there is a need in revising the curriculums so that graduates with required generic skills can produce by the universities. Based on this, the level of entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills development can be also studied through genetic skills. Hence, the hypothesis to be tested is:

**H1c:** There is a significant relationship between generic skills and entrepreneurial knowledge.

**H2c:** There is a significant relationship between generic skills and entrepreneurial skills.

#### *F. Motivation*

Berthold and Neumann (2008) mentioned that entrepreneurs have intrinsic motivation in self-fulfillment. Entrepreneurs should ensure they are being engaged along with the development of their business enterprise. If there is no engagement in this development process, he or she will be considered as administrator but not an entrepreneur. Meanwhile, McClelland and Burnham (1976) labeled motivation as the sole and most vital factor for an entrepreneur to be successful. Zimmerer (2008) describes entrepreneurial motivation is the energy that boosts individuals in performing tasks leading to the attainment of needs, satisfaction, and reducing the stress by introducing a new business or venture. Relatively there is research has discussed the relationship between learning strategies, motivations, and business students' academic performance (Vanthournout et al., 2012). Meanwhile, DeMarie and Aloise-Young (2003) and McEvoy (2011) had recommended that in terms of motivation, students from the business background are considered a breed of their own that is mainly motivated by rewards such as securing high-income and prestigious jobs. Besides, attitude and motivations are key factors that are strongly related to each other towards learner's achievements (Gardner & Lambert, 1959). Attitude towards students' motivation is impacted by their background (Obeidat, 2005 cited in Rönqvist & Rigley, 2010). Moreover, the society and the business environments are demanding entrepreneurial competencies causing more stress and pressure on an individual's entrepreneurial attitudes and skills (Tautila, 2010). Based on this, the level of entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills development can be also studied through motivation, hence, the hypothesis to be tested is:

**H1d:** There is a significant relationship between motivation and entrepreneurial knowledge.

**H2d:** There is a significant relationship between motivation and entrepreneurial skills.

#### *G. Entrepreneurial knowledge*

Entrepreneurial knowledge defined as individuals' appreciation towards the entrepreneurship skills, mentality, and concepts expected from a venture creator (Jack & Anderson, 1999). In 2009, Massad and Tucker defined that entrepreneurship knowledge is acquired and enhanced through the involvement's entrepreneurs made in entrepreneurship activities. Regarding understanding the entrepreneurship concept, other than discussing the ideas about marketing, business networking, and strategic planning, entrepreneurs should know to enhance the existing entrepreneurial attitude such as creative thinking, innovation, driver-ship, and risk-taking. Besides, Tucker (2009) proves that there are two types of entrepreneurial knowledge, the first one is the ability to identify entrepreneurial opportunities and the second type will be exploiting the identified opportunities. During the identification of business opportunities process, entrepreneurs should

be able to recognize the potential market to serve or to solve an existing problem. By looking into solving people's problem, the entrepreneurial knowledge will help the entrepreneurs to think innovatively in recommending new products or services for the customers. Upon identifying, entrepreneurs should be able to create business plans or models which need the formation and development of profitable business to sustain in the market. This act is referred to as the second type of knowledge whereby the entrepreneurs should be able to exploit the opportunity using their knowledge. The research performed by Ranwala (2017) has proved that there is the existence of a significant impact of entrepreneurship education in creating entrepreneurial knowledge for a venture start-up. Since course experience can be used teaching and learning quality measure (Marton & Säljö, 1976; Biggs, 1999; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Ramsden, 2003), it is also can analyze the level of entrepreneurial knowledge development among the students as in previously Kabanoff, Richardson & Brown (2003) have carried out a study to determine the business graduate's perception of the quality and satisfaction with their courses by using course experience questionnaires. Students' perceptions towards curriculum, teaching, and assessments considered important determinants in their approach to learning, and measure the quality of the outcome of the learning process, thus, course experience questionnaires are used to measure this concept within the students (Ramsden, 1992). These questionnaires are being grouped into a few scales that represent teaching practices, course standards, generic skills, and motivations (Wilson, Lizzio & Ramsden, 1997; Johnson, 1998). Kabanoff, Richardson & Brown (2003) mentioned that the extension of course experience questionnaires was used to relate the outcome and work-related knowledge and skills that are strong predictors of course satisfaction. In the same study, it was also proven that people's judgment towards the quality of their undergraduate study had led to a significant impact on the development of knowledge and skills. Hence, based on these the following hypotheses were formulated:

**H3:** There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial start-up intentions.

#### *H. Entrepreneurial skills*

Folahan and Omoriyi (2006) mentioned that business skills are considered entrepreneurial skills whereby individuals will be acquiring the skills to suit themselves into the business environment as entrepreneurs as self-employed. Successful entrepreneurs were able to constantly learn, acquire knowledge, and develop relative business skills (Smilor, 1997; Minniti & Byrgave. 2001). In the past, several kinds of research studied entrepreneurial skills and have proposed some sets of entrepreneurial skills and their significance in developing entrepreneurial intentions (Chell, 2013; Lichtenstein, 2001; Liñán, 2008; Morales & Marquina, 2013). According to Lichtenstein and Lyons (2001), entrepreneurs need to perform some key functions such as identifying market opportunities, develop innovative solutions for the opportunities, and build an organization to capture those opportunities. Hence, based on this point, these authors have mentioned that to perform all the functions, entrepreneurial skills are needed and important for entrepreneurial success. The entrepreneurial skills can be nurtured (Lichtenstein & Lyons, 2001), and this has been further supported by Lazear (2004) whereby this author's research mentioned that even if someone doesn't have the needed sets of skills, they still can acquire them to start a business. Successful entrepreneurs acquire both the right characteristics and necessary skills (George, 2001). Although there are entrepreneurs with passion and great business ideas, without the business skills and characteristics, the success of his/her business will remain doubtful. Lack of entrepreneurial skills negatively impacts an entrepreneur's success in business (Edmunds, 1979). Entrepreneurship skills can be transformed and improved during every repetition and practice process (Chell, 2013). Smith and Morse (2005) have supported this statement by pointing that any repetitive distinctions had been created in literature within management skills and entrepreneur skills. These authors have categorized two entrepreneurial skills which are functional skills



covering marketing, human resource, finance, and procurements as well as organizational skills, which primarily cover leadership and motivation. Key entrepreneurial skills able to identify consumer needs and able to identify technical prospects and market opportunities as well (Koryak et al., 2015). The connection between business skills and its causes on intentions should be studied in the future to understand the significance of entrepreneurial skills in developing entrepreneurial intentions (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2013; Smith et al., 2005, Chell, 2013). It is proven that students can involve in experiential and active learning which are designed to improve the skills and knowledge application through their involvement in activities such as readings, assignments, knowledge development, course participation, and projects (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, 2016 cited in Korneychuk & Bylieva, 2018). By involving in business-specific innovation educations in business curricula that create skills, potential entrepreneurs will be able to solve countless challengers (Klinger & Schündeln, 2011). Since course experience questionnaires able to analyze the teaching effectiveness (Lizzio, 2002), the development of entrepreneurial skills also can be studied through these sets of questionnaires. Assessments are required to study the students' understanding of course content to ensure the alignment with the learning objective in comparison to the performance of skills (Masum & Parveen, 2016). Since the course experience measures four reliable scales determines its relationship with Students' Approach to Learning (SAL) effort, and prior academic performance (Ginns, Prosser & Barrie, 2007), and the existence of interrelation within entrepreneurial skills, education and new exposures to start a new business idea is proven by Smith and Morse (2005), the relationship between the of development of entrepreneurial skills and course experience dimensions can be analyzed as well. Based on this, the following hypothesis is formulated for the construct:

**H4:** There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial start-up intentions.

Based on these arguments, a conceptual framework was developed for this study as shown in Figure 1 below:

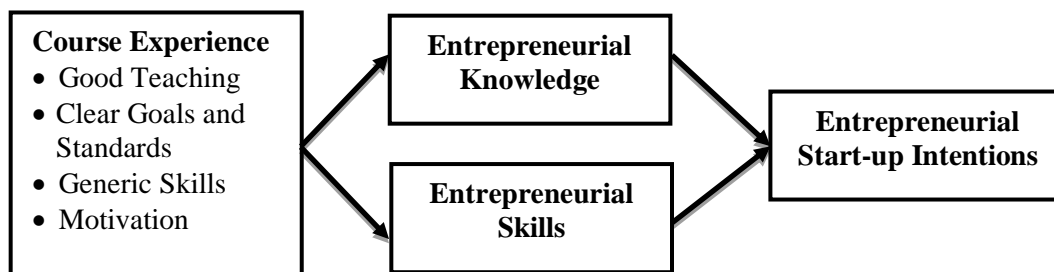


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

### 3. Research Design

#### A. Research context

The research was conducted among MBA postgraduate students in Malaysia. The students are mostly working professionals. A survey questionnaire was used as the instrument. All the questionnaire form is constructed using Google Forms as it found to be a useful user interface that helped this research to reach more people to answer the distributed survey easily. Google forms distributed through social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp contacts. These social media platforms performed

better than traditional questionnaires in reaching the sample target of the study in the most cost-effective. A total of 219 valid responses were received.

### B. Population and sampling

MBA students across Malaysia are the targeted population for this study. A simple random sampling of probability sampling has been chosen as the sampling technique for this research. Since the targeted population is MBA students across Malaysia, the respondents would be randomly chosen whereby each member from the population knows about being the subject of the sample.

### C. Measures

This research has allowed respondents to express their agreements and disagreements on the statements by using 5-Likert scales, which ranges from “1 = strongly disagree” till “5 = strongly agree” (Saul, 2008). The whole Section A questionnaire uses this scale of measurement. The questionnaire is based on the previous studies which cover the same research variables which this study adapts. Table 1 shows the questionnaire items of each research variable.

Table 1. Constructs and measures

Constructs	Sources
Course Experience Perceived	Ginns, Prosser, & Barrie (2007)
Entrepreneurial Knowledge	Haynie & Shepherd (2009)
Entrepreneurial Skills	Ify Anumnu (2014)
Entrepreneurial Start-Up Intentions	Staniewski & Awruk (2016)

### D. Data analysis

After the data collection, a statistical analysis was conducted in a quantitative study using SPSS. Several tests were performed including data screening, reliability test, factor analysis, and hypothesis testing.

## 4. Results

### A. Respondents profile

Table 2 shows the profile of respondents. 219 respondents are MBA students across Malaysia participating in the research. Out of 219 respondents, 129 are females and 90 are males. Students aged between 26 – 35 years old leads the aging group category by 142 respondents, followed by 36-45 years old group with 45 respondents. Below 25 years old category placed third with 24 respondents and lastly aging group 46-55 years and 56 years above categories placed bottom with 6 respondents and 2 respondents. Based on the breakdown by semester category, 56 respondents are graduates, 50 respondents are in semester 3, 42 respondents are in semester 2. This is followed by 41 respondents from semester 1 and lastly, 5 respondents are from the above 4-semester category.

Table 2. Profile of Respondents

Profile of Respondents		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	90	58.9
	Female	129	41.1
<b>Total</b>		<b>219</b>	<b>100</b>

Age	Below 25 years	24	11.0
	26-35 years	142	64.8
	36-45 years	45	20.5
	46-55 years	6	2.7
	56 years & above	2	0.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>100</b>
Semester	Semester 1	41	18.7%
	Semester 2	42	19.2%
	Semester 3	50	22.8%
	Semester 4	25	11.4%
	Above Semester 4	5	2.3%
	Graduated	56	25.6%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>100%</b>

Measurement properties such as reliability and validity are required to be accesses to determine the assurances of the quality of the research instrument (Karanicolas, Bhandari, Kreder, Moroni, 2009; Richardson, Walter, Norman, Guyatt, 2009). This study isn't a scientific-based approached and can be specified as valid without an in-depth scientific justification. Questionnaires distributed and analyzed the determinants of entrepreneurship start-up intention through MBA education among the students. Firstly, it will be tested through a pilot test with 15 respondents at the beginning so that necessary adjustments can be made on the questionnaires if needed before the real data is successfully kick-started. Moreover, in this study, the Coefficient alpha test will be assessing the reliability of the sum of test scores which has multiple items (Salkind, 2007). It provides a simple method to measure the internal test or scale consistency and the results will be known between 0 and 1 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011) and by obtaining value with 0.7 and below indicates as below satisfaction internal consistency reliability (Nunnally, 1978; Cortina, 1993; Drost, 2011; Pallant, 2013). It was introduced by Lee Cronbach to analyze the consistency of the scales.

Table 3. Reliability analysis

Constructs	No. of Items	Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Course Experience	18	.903
Entrepreneurial Knowledge	11	.805
Entrepreneurial Skills	7	.864
Entrepreneurial Start-Up Intentions	23	.918

Reliability analysis is the procedure used to ascertain the internal consistency of the measures. According to Hair *et al.* (2009), Cronbach's alpha above 0.6 for the exploratory study is considered reliable. In the research, the range of Cronbach's alpha is between 0.811 and 0.884.; thus all measures in the study are reliable. Following internal consistency achieved from the pilot test, the researchers proceeded with data collection. The subsequent sections describe the analysis of the sample.

### B. Factor analysis

Factor analysis is defined as dimension reduction, whereby this test will reduce the observable and measurable variables to lesser variables of research that shares similar variance and unobserving (latent) factors as well (Bartholomew, Knott & Moustaki, 2011). According to Dubey (2018), factor analysis is



none other than a technique with data summarization and data reduction. He mentioned that it is an exploratory method and tool which needs many subjective judgments and often gets controversial since the models, subjectivity, and methods are extremely flexible that argue about the occurrence of interpretations. In this test, there will be a lot of variables and questions involve which eventually reduce to smaller sets that lead to interpretation and obtain the fundamental concept of the study. The purpose is to estimate the correlation coefficients between observable variables and factors without validating the intermediate phase of estimating the factors (Field, 2009). Correlation of components needed equal to or more than 0.30 and anything lesser, it is considered as a weak correlation between variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Table 4. Course Experience Factor Analysis

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
CEGT1				.805
CEGT3				.752
CEGT5				.633
CECGS2			.631	
CECGS4			.852	
CECGS5			.821	
CEGS1	.800			
CEGS2	.781			
CEGS3	.772			
CEGS4	.722			
CEM2		.823		
CEM3		.765		
CEM4		.779		

Based on Table 4, the factor analysis for course experience resulted in four dimensions with the loading of more than 0.4. Nevertheless, five items (i.e. CEGT2, CEGT4, CECGS1, CECGS3, and CEM1) have been removed due to the loading of below 0.4.

Table 5. Entrepreneurial Knowledge &amp; Entrepreneurial Skills Factor Analysis

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2
EK1	.661	
EK2	.672	
EK3	.599	
EK4	.644	
EK5	.472	
EK6	.688	
EK7	.662	
EK8	.737	
EK9	.657	
EK10	.581	
EK11	.581	
ES1		.594
ES2		.694
ES3		.726
ES4		.740
ES5		.670
ES6		.723
ES7		.773

Based on Table 5, the factor analysis for Entrepreneurial Knowledge and Entrepreneurial Skills variables concludes that all the 11 items and seven items from respective variables resulted in the loading of more than 0.4. Hence, no items were removed.

Table 6. Factor Analysis of Entrepreneurial Start-Up Intentions

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
ESUIBI1	.720			
ESUIBI2	.744			
ESUIBI3	.766			
ESUIBI4	.669			
ESUIBI5	.694			
ESUIBI6	.649			
ESUIBA1		.711		
ESUIBA2		.794		
ESUIBA3		.788		
ESUIBA4		.831		
ESUIBA5		.671		
ESUIP1			.483	
ESUIP2			.505	
ESUIC2				.742
ESUIC3				.597
ESUIC4				.652
ESUIC5				.455
ESUIC6				.468

Based on Table 6, the factor analysis for entrepreneurial start-up intentions scored a loading of more than 0.4. Nevertheless, five items (i.e. ESUIP3, ESUIP4, ESUIP5, ESUIP6, and ESUIC1) were removed due to the lower loading.

### C. Hypothesis testing

Based on Table 7, it's known that all the independent variables and dimensions have a significant relationship to its dependent variables. The course experience variable does have positive relationships with entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills. Nevertheless, it's found that course experience has a more significant relationship to entrepreneurial knowledge (H1) compared to entrepreneurial skills (H2). Both relationships have  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ , but the  $t$ -value and standardized beta value of course experience to entrepreneurial knowledge (H1) is higher which is 14.662 and 0.705 respectively, whereas, the  $t$ -value and beta value of course experience to entrepreneurial skills (H2) just achieved 9.804 and 0.554 respectively.

Among the course experience dimensions' relationship with entrepreneurial knowledge, with  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ , generic skills (H1c) and motivation (H1d) have the highest significant relationships with entrepreneurial knowledge compared with the other dimensions by having the same beta value of 0.628. Besides, the  $t$ -value for both generic skills and motivation is almost similar by scoring 11.876 and 11.897 respectively. On the other side, within the course experience dimensions' relationship with entrepreneurial skills, hypothesis H2c, which is generic skills have the most significant influence on entrepreneurial skills compared to the other dimensions. The standardized beta value of this relationship is 0.507 which proved that it is the most significant dimension to entrepreneurial skills. The  $t$ -value for this H2c is 8.656.

Furthermore, although both entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills have significant influences on creating entrepreneurial start-up intentions among students, hypothesis H4, which is the relationship between entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial start-up intentions is more significant than the influence of entrepreneurial knowledge has on entrepreneurial start-up intentions (H3). Hypothesis H4 has scored a standardized beta value of 0.451 whereas hypothesis H3 has only scored 0.398. Thus, entrepreneurial skills have the highest significant positive relationship with entrepreneurial start-up intentions compared to entrepreneurial knowledge.

Table 7. Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig. (p-value)	R <sub>2</sub>
H1	Course Experience	Entrepreneurial Knowledge	0.705	14.662	0.000	0.498
H1a	Good Teaching	Entrepreneurial Knowledge	0.473	7.915	0.000	0.224
H1b	Clear Goals and Standards	Entrepreneurial Knowledge	0.494	8.361	0.000	0.244
H1c	Generic Skills	Entrepreneurial Knowledge	0.628	11.876	0.000	0.394
H1d	Motivation	Entrepreneurial Knowledge	0.628	11.897	0.000	0.395
H2	Course	Entrepreneurial Skills	0.554	9.804	0.000	0.307

Hypothesis	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig. (p-value)	R <sub>2</sub>
H2a	Experience Good Teaching	Skills Entrepreneurial Skills	0.438	7.183	0.000	0.192
H2b	Clear Goals and Standards	Entrepreneurial Skills	0.326	5.085	0.000	0.106
H2c	Generic Skills	Entrepreneurial Skills	0.507	8.656	0.000	0.257
H2d	Motivation	Entrepreneurial Skills	0.480	8.066	0.000	0.231
H3	Entrepreneurial Knowledge	Entrepreneurial Start-Up Intentions	0.398	6.398	0.000	0.158
H4	Entrepreneurial Skills	Entrepreneurial Start-Up Intentions	0.451	7.445	0.000	0.203

In this research, the independent variable, course experience, and all the dimensions are tested against the dependent variable, which is entrepreneurial knowledge, and entrepreneurial skills. There are 4 dimensions in course experience which are good teaching, clear goals, and standards, generic skills, and motivation. The aim is to test the entrepreneurial start-up intentions; so, upon testing the course experience variable, the entrepreneurial knowledge, and entrepreneurial skills are observed and measured as independent variables so that the entrepreneurial start-up intentions are tested among MBA students. The summary of the hypotheses results as shown below:

Table 8. Summary of Hypotheses Results

Hypotheses	Findings
<b>H1:</b> There is a significant relationship between course experience and entrepreneurial knowledge	Supported
<b>H1a:</b> There is a significant relationship between good teaching and entrepreneurial knowledge	Supported
<b>H1b:</b> There is a significant relationship between clear goals and standards and entrepreneurial knowledge	Supported
<b>H1c:</b> There is a significant relationship between generic skills and entrepreneurial knowledge	Supported
<b>H1d:</b> There is a significant relationship between motivation and entrepreneurial knowledge	Supported
<b>H2:</b> There is a significant relationship between course experience and entrepreneurial skills	Supported
<b>H2a:</b> There is a significant relationship between good teaching and entrepreneurial skills	Supported
<b>H2b:</b> There is a significant relationship between clear goals and standards and entrepreneurial skills	Supported
<b>H2c:</b> There is a significant relationship between generic skills and entrepreneurial	Supported

Hypotheses	Findings
skills <b>H2d:</b> There is a significant relationship between motivation and entrepreneurial skills	Supported
<b>H3:</b> There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial start-up intentions	Supported
<b>H4:</b> There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial start-up intentions	Supported

## 5. Conclusion

The result of this study has proved that all the dimensions involved in the course experience variable have positive relationships in nurturing entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills among the students. Hence, these developments have proven to be significant influencers in creating entrepreneurial start-up intentions among the students. All the hypotheses involved in this study have been accepted. Since there is limited research conducted using course experience questionnaire to analyze the impact of entrepreneurial educations, the findings of this study will add further value to the reliability and validity of course experience dimensions so that it can be further used in the future to assess or measure any education-related courses or programs. This study highly committed to supporting the critical roles of each course experience in educating entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial skills among MBA students to create entrepreneurial start-up intentions.

### A. Theoretical implications

In terms of theoretical contribution, the findings of this study have contributed and supported the empirical evidence of past study which proved the significant contribution of university-level entrepreneurship education towards developing entrepreneurial intentions (Sánchez, 2013; Peterman & Kennedy, 2003). Moreover, this study also added further values in course experience questionnaires as it is being used as a performance indicator of teaching and learning at degree level programs. It's proven that course experience questionnaires can be used in the future to analyze the significance of entrepreneurial related courses or programs. Furthermore, this research has also been supported by literature reviews related to the connection between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial start-up intentions as it currently requires more supportive empirical studies as mentioned by Ababtain and Akinwale (2019). Moreover, based on the result of these findings, new conceptual frameworks involving course experience questionnaires can be developed for further entrepreneurial start-up intention studies.

### B. Managerial implications

The finding of this research can be used to further reassess and reorganize their curriculum strategic directions to provide the best entrepreneurial and business education for their MBA students. Furthermore, from this study, the ratings of each MBA course experience in the development of entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial knowledge are visible which can help this institution for further academic improvements. On the other hand, the findings of this study also provide a wider understanding of the importance of measuring the course experience of the MBA program and its significances in creating entrepreneurial start-up intentions among the students of other universities across Malaysia as well. By





using this proven measurement, the universities can conduct an annual review on the influence and impact of the MBA program to ensure its sustainability in the delivery of entrepreneurial education. Hence, based on this study national academicians will be able to improvise the academic policies and standards related to entrepreneurial education.

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