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The Moderating Role of Entrepreneurship Education on the Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Attitude and Entrepreneurship Intention

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Abstract

This paper seeks to discuss the moderating role of Entrepreneurship Education (EE) on the relationship between Entrepreneurial Attitude (EA) and Entrepreneurship Intention (EI). Entrepreneurship, according to studies, is a critical component of economic growth and has the potential to become a powerful economic force. Among Malaysian university students, entrepreneurship has been identified as a solution to unemployment as well as a viable career option for young graduates. This paper recommended that exposure to EE prior to graduation has a positive effect on entrepreneurial attitude (EA) and entrepreneurship intention among Malaysian university students, who are more likely to choose entrepreneurship as their first career option after graduations.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Attitude, Education, Intention, Unemployment

Introduction

As entrepreneurship has grown in importance in today's society, it has drawn the attention of stakeholders in a variety of countries around the world, regardless of their political affiliations, economic status, or country's level of development (Etzkowitz, 2014; Puni et al., 2018). With current economic situations, there are many reasons for many young graduates to be trapped in unemployment and unable to secure a stable financial income, including uncertainty in the economic environment, limited job opportunities, and an increase in job automation (D'Silva, 2020). Additional to this and the response to soared of Covid-19, cautious nature of business sentiment has resulted in many companies freezing new hiring and operating with a constrained workforce and new working norms. The disparity between job opportunities and the larger number of graduates entering the market has become a major source of concern, particularly among recent graduates when compared to more experienced employees (Choudhry et al., 2012; Shah et al., 2020). It has become

increasingly difficult for young graduates to find comfortable jobs that are commensurate with their qualifications compared to the difficulties that previous generations of graduates have faced in the past decade.

With the current situation of surplus workforce due uncertainty market sentiment due to Covid-19 crisis, the situation is quite concerning because the negative impact does not only affect youths, but the consequences also have a significant impact on the economic stability of the country, potential for social problems, and waste of human capitals (D'Silva, 2020). In accordance with the rapid development of the country's economy and the trend toward globalisation, the importance of entrepreneurship appears to be more critical today than it was in the previous decade and economic cycle (Wei et al., 2019). Entrepreneurship is widely regarded as having a significant impact on the creation of job opportunities, critical component of a country's economic prosperity and vital components to the competitiveness of economy (Coulibaly et al., 2018). Similarly, various studies have demonstrated that entrepreneurship is regarded as an engine for economic growth and national prosperity due to its ability to generate job opportunities and a stable income for entrepreneurs (Baron & Tang, 2009; Coulibaly et al., 2018). Various entrepreneurial activities and programmes have been introduced at higher learning institutions as a means of fostering an entrepreneurship culture and interest.

Young people are currently experiencing significant unemployment in Malaysia (Cheng & Juita, 2020). The groups considered to be the highest groups without jobs when compared to the general population are primarily students and graduates. Unemployment among young people in Malaysia ranks third among Asean countries, after Indonesia and the Philippines, in terms of percentage of the total. In fact, according to the findings of the study, there has been a significant increase in unemployment among degree holders. According to the Graduate Tracer Study conducted by the Ministry of Education Malaysia, each year higher learning institutions, which included both public and private institutions, produced approximately 51,000 graduates across a wide range of fields of study (D'Silva, 2020). In contrast, after a year, 60 percent of graduates were still looking for work. The situation is becoming more widespread, and policymakers, educators, financial institutions, and the government have all paid close attention to it (Cheng & Juita, 2020). Clearly, the situation is concerning, and it is becoming more complicated as a result of the current economic conditions. As a result, entrepreneurship is receiving special attention because it is regarded as the most promising solution to the problem of unemployment among recent graduates.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurship Intention (EI)

Entrepreneurship intention (EI) defined as a person's goal that conned with his or her cognition and experience to design entrepreneur activities (Do & Dadvari, 2017). It is widely recognised as one of the most important motivational predictors that influence individual behaviour in the course of business creation (Nguyen et al., 2019). According to Barba-Sánchez and Atienza-Sahuquillo (2018), any entrepreneurial endeavour must begin with a clear sense of purpose in order to succeed. Bosma, Wennekers, and Amorós (2012) interprets EI as an individual's belief in his or her ability to start a new firm. The intention to become an entrepreneur should be demonstrated by the person who wishes to pursue his or her own objectives in their endeavours. The theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 2011) explains that the intention to behave is determined by three factors: attitude toward behaviour (ATB), perceived behavioural control (PBC), and subjective norms (SN). In other words, a person

cannot become an entrepreneur all of a sudden without being triggered, and the process must begin with a specific behaviour goal. It took into account a person's interest in the conduct as well as their capacity to do the behaviour. According to the findings of Wei et al (2019), EI has a considerable impact on students' attitudes regarding environmental issues. Similarly, Jena (2020) stated that attitudes are the most important factor in determining a person's EI. Do and Dadvari (2017) discovered that having an entrepreneurial spirit had a favourable impact on employee engagement. As a result, EI that is created and inculcated during the early stages of life is specifically targeted at students and is regarded a crucial process in preparing students to become entrepreneurs or to participate in any entrepreneurial activity in the development stage. As a result, the higher a student's EI, the greater the likelihood that the student will pursue a career as an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurial Attitude (EA)

As defined by Ajzen (2011), attitude is a set of personality qualities that influence intentions and are translated into actions. According to Nguyen et al. (2019), attitude plays a significant role in determining behaviour intention toward entrepreneurship activities, and further influences behaviour intention. It is directly construed as to how persons and their ability to conduct in a consistent manner when exercising their rights are viewed and evaluated. Similarly, Shapero and Sokol (1982) defined EA as a person's state of mind, belief, and appraisal connected to entrepreneurial matters, which is consistent with other definitions provided by previous research. This also implies that persons who are enthusiastic about EA are more likely to have a strong desire to start a new business endeavour than others. The findings of previous studies revealed that attitude has a direct impact on and is evidently favourable towards the objective and crucial predictors of behavioural intention in the development of entrepreneurial intention (Ajzen, 2011; Barba-Sánchez et al., 2018; Linán et al., 2011). According to the findings of Ghazali et al (2009), students who have positive attitudes are more likely to put forth more effort to learn by employing tactics such as asking questions, volunteering information, and responding inquiries. Furthermore, this could be related with the discovery of correlational correlations between distinct predictors that lead, shape, and influence an individual's behaviour intention toward entrepreneurship. Employing effective pedagogical methods proved to be useful in developing students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship. Similarly, McGroarty (1996) stated that attitude consists of three components: cognitive, affective, and behavioural; it consists of beliefs, emotional reactions, and behavioural tendencies that are related to the object of the attitudes, among other things. Kubberd and Pettersen (2017) revealed EA has a significant impact on determining students' interest in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship-related careers. Consequently, it is widely thought that emotional intelligence (EI) among students is one of the most important indicators of their interest in becoming entrepreneurs. The belief and perceived entrepreneur behaviour that affect a student's activity toward becoming an entrepreneur, as well as their involvement in entrepreneurial activities, can be defined as entrepreneurial attitudes (EA). The following hypothesis is offered on the basis of existing literature:

H1: Entrepreneurial Attitude (EA) significantly influence towards Entrepreneurship Intention (EI) among Malaysian university students

Entrepreneurship Education (EE)

The term entrepreneurship education (EE) refers to a platform that is supplied by schools, colleges, or universities with the goal of imparting knowledge, skills, and encouraging

students to engage in entrepreneurial activity (Norberg, 2017). It has been acknowledged and deemed necessary in the development of entrepreneurial knowledge skills and raising awareness, which has been shown to be beneficial in the creation of jobs, the stimulation of economic growth, the alleviation of poverty, and the establishment of future entrepreneurs (Farashah, 2013; Newbery et al., 2018). In light of Jena (2020), EE is regarded as a vital platform for the introduction of entrepreneurship activities and, as a result, as the most effective solution to youth unemployment. In their explanation, Wei et al (2019) stated that education is a strong predictor of student attitude toward entrepreneurship. In this respect, EE has been utilised as a tool to expand adolescent understanding of the subject of enterprise, learning applications, cultivating creativity, and determining whether or not to pursue self-employment (Kassean et al., 2015). When students are exposed to, taught, and learn about various business operations, concepts, and hazards, they are said to be engaged in a learning process. They are also said to be developing skills, making informed decisions, and gaining other business skills. Over the years, several countries have recognised EE as a powerful force in the sense of stimulating entrepreneurial career activities and helping students to better understand their own professional aspirations (Jena, 2020; Wei et al., 2019). Despite the fact that each country has its own strategies for incorporating EE into their educational systems, as well as its own structure, design, policy framework, own theoretical and methodological approaches, yet that the effectiveness of these approaches varies (Bae et al., 2014; Martin et al., 2013). Nevertheless, the objectives remain the same, which is to prepare students with basic business roles to become entrepreneurs and develop own businesses in their areas of interest or prospective markets. Through education platforms, particularly at higher learning institutions, EE is able to equip students with a range of skills encompassing business knowledge, skills, and practical experience, stimulate creativity and build self-confidence in order to translate business ideas into business creation through the application of knowledge gained, and to determine a factor in making a decision on a career path further. As a result, the following hypothesis is put forth:

H2: Entrepreneurship Education (EE) moderate on the relationship between Entrepreneurial Attitude (EA) and Entrepreneurship Intention (EI) among Malaysian university students.

The conceptual framework for this study as follow:

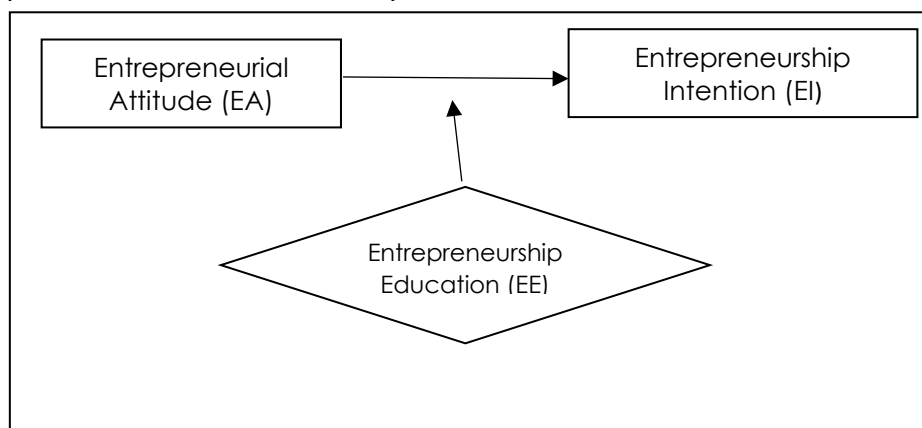


Figure 1 : Conceptual model of study

Conclusion

This study proposed that when the perceived usefulness of entrepreneurship education (EE) is higher, the relationship between entrepreneurial attitude (EI) and entrepreneurship intention (EI) is stronger. As a result, it is possible to conclude that students' exposure to entrepreneurship education has ramifications for their attitude, interest and also psychological development. Attempting to shed some light on the mechanism through which entrepreneurship education influences entrepreneurial intention, this study contributes to the literature. This has practical implications for educators, who must tailor their teaching strategies and course content to meet the specific needs of their students in order to achieve their goals. Within the context of Malaysia, entrepreneurship education (EE) has been actively introduced and implemented in many Malaysian higher learning institutions as a component of the entrepreneur subject, module, or even as a standalone course. Education systems, delivered through higher learning institutions, have been hailed as a game-changing platform for influencing student entrepreneurial interest, equipping young age groups with the necessary entrepreneurial skills and knowledge to venture into new business creation, and further inculcating interest in entrepreneurship in the general population

Nowadays, entrepreneurship is a critical factor in determining a country's economic growth. It has emerged as a viable solution to unemployment not only in Malaysia but spearhead in a many of nations around the world, as well as a key component of self-employment and survival skills. Preparing young graduates with necessary knowledge and skills while they are still in university is critical because it is seen as an ideal platform for raising awareness, developing entrepreneurial knowledge skills, and instilling the desire to become an entrepreneur once they completed their study. Therefore, EE has been successful enhance positive entrepreneur attitude in instilling confidence and igniting passion in students, encouraging them to pursue careers as entrepreneurs, and engaging them actively in entrepreneurial activities linked to their studies. This is founded on the rationale that EE is capable of igniting enthusiasm and imparting information skills that are critical preconditions for becoming an entrepreneur after they completed their study.

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