



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i10/14995> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i10/14995

Received: 10 August 2022, **Revised:** 13 September 2022, **Accepted:** 29 September 2022

Published Online: 15 October 2022

In-Text Citation: (Ahmad et al., 2022)

To Cite this Article: Ahmad, K. S., Rahim, N. A., Samad, K. A., Mohamad, M. S., & Juhari, J. (2022). Assessing Factors of Digital Entrepreneurial Intention among Young Generation. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(10), 1284 – 1295.

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Vol. 12, No. 10, 2022, Pg. 1284 – 1295

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www.hrmars.com

ISSN: 2222-6990

Assessing Factors of Digital Entrepreneurial Intention among Young Generation

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the factors that influence youngsters' intention to be involved in digital entrepreneurship. The study also examines the relationships between entrepreneurship education, personal attitude, and digital marketing literacy toward the digital entrepreneurial intention. A total of 151 respondents among students taking entrepreneurship subjects were collected and data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0. Descriptive, correlation, and multiple regression analyses were used to analyze the data. Based on the stepwise method used, it was found that only personal attitude has a significant relationship with digital entrepreneurship intention among students. The personal attitude seems to have a strong relationship with digital entrepreneurial intention. This variable also was the best predictor variable in predicting digital entrepreneurial intention while educational support and digital marketing literacy were rejected. The finding is important to policymakers to formulate suitable policies to be flexible with the nature of young generations to be an entrepreneur. Based on the findings, the current curriculum and prospectus designed in the higher learning institution are beneficial and improve self-confidence and self-efficacy throughout the students' life experiences. Hence, the Ministry of Higher Education can provide more grants and incentives to the universities to involve students in improving their digital entrepreneurial skills. In the future, the researchers might consider different genders and diversity of ethnicities in the model and add some other variables that affect digital entrepreneurial intention among the young generation such as personality factors, social factors, and risk-taking propensity.

Keywords: Personal Attitude, Entrepreneurship Education, Digital Marketing Literacy, Theory of Planned Behavior, Digital Entrepreneurial Intention

Introduction

According to the 2021 Report Department of Statistics (DOSM), Malaysia's Digital Economy contributed 22.6% of the GDP in 2021, with the e-commerce sector showing a rapid increase to 11.5% of the GDP compared to 8.5% in 2019. The rapid pace of digital economy growth exceeds the government's expectation to reach the figure (22.6% of GDP) only by

2025. Recently, the prime minister announced the digital economy's contribution to GDP to exceed 25.5% by 2025. This consolidated the fact of digital entrepreneurship is significant to Malaysia's growth. Its importance has been leveraged during the pandemic Covid-19. Strong ICT infrastructures are vital to ensure the sustainable development of the digital economy. The digital economy becomes a major concern of the Malaysian government and is important to help Malaysia to regain its economic health in this post-covid landscape. To accelerate the growth, the government initiated MyDIGITAL initiative and Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint as an action plan to benefit all Malaysian (Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint, 2021). The Government strengthening digital technology adoption and digital trade through Malaysia Digital Catalytic Programmes (PEMANGKIN) which among the main focused group is young entrepreneurs.

In 2021, the survey shows that 96.8% of Malaysia's population are active internet users and the percentage of individuals using mobile phones is high (98.7%). Social networks are the most popular internet activity (99.0%) among the population in Malaysia. This makes social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok a popular marketplace among digital entrepreneurs to market their products (Ojo et al., 2021). The increasing popularity of e-Commerce platforms in Malaysia such as Shopee, Lazada, Grab and Food Panda enables small and medium enterprises to reach potential customers and provides other job opportunities such as gig workers (Azhar et al., 2021).

Working with a digital platform such as e-commerce and social media helps the new start-up to save costs of doing business, reduce time consumption and labor cost, easiest market penetration, and eliminate the company's risk (Youssef et al., 2021). Digital technologies contribute many advantages to entrepreneurs and may reduce the unemployment rate in the nation.

Previous papers often highlight entrepreneurship in general. Thus, we aim to propose a model on determinants of students' entrepreneurial intention which prioritizes on digitalization aspect with the use of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The information acquired from this research is to contribute to the development of digital entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students and revealed that personal attitude is the main determinant of digital entrepreneurial intention.

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

Sommer (2011), Planned Behavior Theory (TPB) has proven to be a powerful approach to explaining human behavior since it was developed two decades. Planned Behavior Theory (TPB) has been applied to a variety of behaviors to better understand how the individual behavior. It is one of the most popular social psychological theories when it comes to predicting human behavior. Behavioral decisions are the result of rational processes in which behavior is influenced by attitudes, norms, and perceived behavioral controls. These constructs influence behavior primarily by influencing behavioral intentions.

Human behavior is guided by different subjective probabilities (Ajzen, 1991), which means beliefs about the consequences of the behavior, beliefs about the normative expectations of other people and beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede the performance of the behavior. Beliefs are based on a wide range of background factors. In their aggregates, behavioral beliefs produce attitudes toward behavior normative beliefs result in subjective norms and control beliefs generate perceived behaviorcontrol.

Based on the theory of Planned Behaviour states

1) Attitudes toward Behavior

This element concerns beliefs and judgments that a person has about actions or actions, including those who believe that a particular action is beneficial to themselves or vice versa. It is also generally defined as how a person feels, negatively or positively, about the consequences of a particular action.

2) Subjective Norms

Ajzen (1991) described subjective norms as accepted social pressures on individuals to engage or not to engage in behavior. Social pressure comes from the perspective of parents, partners, friends, spouses, or those who play important roles.

3) Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioral control. It refers to an individual's perception of his or her ability to carry out a particular behavior over which he or she can exert a great deal of control (Ajzen, 1991)

Krueger et al (2000) recommended that TPB presents a significant opportunity for better understanding and prediction of entrepreneurial actions; the empirical data have shown that TPB is a useful model since the whole model was significant. It enables researchers to get a better understanding and prediction of the entrepreneurial intention by considering not only personal but also social factors. Lin and Lee (2004) pointed out that TPB has been used widely to predict and explain behavior intention and actual behavior in many areas, such as social psychology, marketing, and information system adoption. Past research confirmed the legitimacy of using TPB in explaining entrepreneurial intention across various cultures. Due to the strong support, TPB is adopted in this study.

Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship

There is no precise definition of an entrepreneur, but there are numerous definitions encountered by various authors (Ahmad & Seymour, 2008). They further said that the word "entrepreneur" derives from the French verb "entreprendre", meaning to "undertake". defined as someone who uses their productive resources to create value for themselves and, more importantly, for society at large. This is a contradictory view of psychologists who find entrepreneurs as people looking for a goal or the outcome of a particular need in order to achieve a goal.

Besides, in keeping with Ahmad and Seymour (2008), Richard Cantillon is the primary character who used the word "entrepreneur" and he's relating to the individual that is willingly to take unsure risks, being capable of use all sources that allows you to produce items and offerings that later will having the ability in acquiring income and being progressive in making sure that the financial system is constantly developing. Entrepreneurship has a direct impact on economic growth, increases national revenues, makes the tax system more efficient, and plays a key role in creating employment opportunities that give countries the opportunity to experience innovation and creativity (Audretsch & Hart, 2003).

Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurship has a direct impact on economic growth, increases national revenues, streamlines the tax system, and plays a key role in creating employment opportunities that give the country the opportunity to experience innovation and creativity (Audretsch & Hart,

2003). Moreover, many researchers and policymakers agree that entrepreneurship is seen as a key factor in securing economic development.

As stated by Thompson (2009), entrepreneurial intention is a self-recognized judgment within an individual's mind-state regarding his/her possibility of joining a venture together with the feeling of dedication and sincerity in doing so. He further argued that the intention of starting up a business will eventually be explosive when supported with those passionate feelings by the potential entrepreneur. Besides, this is also supported by the assumptions relied on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) where he claimed that the higher the intention, there will be more possible or high the chances of seeing an individual display the behavior of becoming one (Ajzen, 1991).

Educational Support

Numerous studies have been conducted in exploring the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention, which showed several different results and findings. The study conducted by Shariff et al (2012), on "Entrepreneurship-Technopreneurship Education for Undergraduates: Practicality vs Curriculum". This study discusses on entrepreneurship and tech entrepreneurship education offered in science, technology and business majors at public universities. These two courses are offered in different sections of the study period across faculties and study programs. This finding also supported by who indicate that the participation and involvement among the public and private universities" students in the entrepreneurship classes have resulted in high degree of entrepreneurial intention. The courses were relevant and significant to graduate intention to become entrepreneur.

Besides, Hattab (2014) came out with a significant finding which showed that students with different academic majors showing different anticipation towards entrepreneurship, whereby, business major students are more interested in starting up the new venture as they were familiar and well exposed with the management, accounting, and marketing knowledge, meanwhile, the non-business students who are gaining lesser entrepreneurship exposure are more attentive in technical field. Different from entrepreneurship education through the course works and programs as earlier mentioned by Sesen and Pruett (2014), general education that took place within the university environment can be a crucial element in leading the students towards having the entrepreneurial intention.

According to Jalil et al (2021), they examined the factors (explained variables) that affect entrepreneurial intentions. Four independent variables were selected. (1) attitudes to behavior, (2) perceived behavior control, (3) subjective norms, and (4) entrepreneurial education. The study found that behavioral attitudes, subjective norms, and entrepreneurial education were significantly and positively associated with entrepreneurial intentions. Attitudes to action turned out to be the factor that most influenced entrepreneurial intentions.

Digital Marketing literacy

The definition of Digital literacy was the spectacular evolution of new digital technologies is reshaping economies and countries. Examples are 5G Wireless Communication, Smartphone, Mobile Computing, Quantum Computing, Cloud Storage, Big Data, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Blockchain, Virtual Reality /enhanced, Internet of Things (IoT) and Industrial, Internet of Things. These technologies, particularly through the use of. The

convergence of many technologies will radically change the way economies are organized and the way people live and work (World Bank, 2021).

Moorthy & Shahid (2021), stated that the dimensions of digital marketing literacy (knowledge of digital marketing literacy level, understanding of respondents' digital participation tendencies toward business information, and knowledge of elements of digital marketing) and entrepreneurial behavior (entrepreneurial tendencies and interests, attitudes). Towards starting a business and controlling behavior among students of public universities in Malaysia). This study is an explanatory study aimed at discovering and explaining causal relationships between variables.

Furthermore, this research is conducted to address the issues raised, achieve the stated goals, and test the hypotheses. This result indicates that the digital marketing literacy of students at the Malaysian Public University has a moderate level of impact on entrepreneurial behavior. The results also show a positive and significant association between digital marketing literacy and entrepreneurial behavior among students at public universities, where knowledge of the elements of digital marketing is the most influential aspect of entrepreneurial behavior. These indicate that there are implications of this survey in raising awareness among Malaysian public university students about digital marketing literacy as it relates to entrepreneurial behavior (Moorthy & Shahid, 2021)

The Research done by Yussef et al (2021), education policy should focus on the impact of higher education programs on students' entrepreneurial intentions. The policy could focus on technological change (digitization) of the economy and emphasize entrepreneurship in universities. Policy can directly change technology (digitization of the economy) toward business activities in universities. Higher Education Institutions benefit from digital technologies enabling the development of additional tools to drive university business processes.

This was supported by Mir et al (2022) Digital Entrepreneurship is a current, non-intensive and modern branch of entrepreneurship that offers an ever-expanding range of platforms for pursuing digital-related career options. Entrepreneurship in this study, this gap was addressed by identifying the major precursors of digital business intentions under the umbrella of capital theory. The analysis confirms the significant impact of the identified premises on the digital entrepreneurial will of potential entrepreneurs. Results demonstrate that innovation has the largest impact on the goal of creating new digital businesses, followed by the presence of role models. Digital competence also contributed significantly to improving the trend of starting a digital business, while digital competence had the least impact on this trend.

Personal Attitude

Attitudes are important because they determine the actions that individuals will take in the future. Attitudes can be defined as general judgments and appraisals of a person's behavior (Ajzen, 1991). According to Frazier and Niehm, entrepreneurship in 2006 can be measured by a positive attitude towards self-employment and confidence in one's ability to start and run a new business. Korvereid and Tkachev, 1999. Dohse and Walter 2009; Paco et al., 2011.

Entrepreneurship attitudes and intentions change as students are exposed to entrepreneurship education rather than providing technical knowledge about business. This is because it helps students develop a sense of self-confidence and self-efficacy (Tam, 2009; Byabashaija and Katono, 2011) and also influences the start-up process from companies and

companies. Also, overcoming relevant obstacles can influence an individual's decision to become an entrepreneur (Dohse and Walter, 2009; Paco et al., 2011).

Results

Table 1

Respondents' Demographic Frequency

Respondents' Demographic Frequency			%
Gender	Male	49	32.5
	Female	102	67.5
Age	18 to 20	130	86.1
	21 to 23	20	13.2
	24 to 26	1	0.7
Religion	Muslim	150	99.3
	Non-Muslim	1	0.7
Faculty	Business and Management	21	13.9
	Art and Design	23	15.2
	Hotel and Tourism Management	32	21.2
	Communication and Media Studies	4	2.6
	Plantation and Agrotechnology	1	0.7
	Computer and Mathematical Science	57	37.7
	Academy of Language Studies	13	8.6
State of Origin	Melaka	42	27.8
	Johor	23	15.2
	Negeri Sembilan	41	27.2
	Kuala Lumpur	4	2.6
	Selangor	31	20.5
	Putrajaya	2	1.3
	Perak	3	2.0
	Terengganu	1	0.7
	Kelantan	2	1.3
	Sabah	1	0.7
	Sarawak	1	0.7
Highest Education	SPM	32	21.2
	Diploma	119	78.8

This section reports the demographic background of the respondents such as gender, age, religion, faculty, state of origin and level of education. The analysis of the data in Table 1 indicated that 102 female respondents (67.5%) and 49 male respondents (32.5%) participated in this study. The age groups of 18 – 20 years old (86.1%) are the largest share of the sample, followed by the ages of 21 – 23 years old (13.2%) and 24 – 26 years old (0.7%), respectively. Most of the respondents, 99.3% of them are Muslim and another 0.7% are non-Muslim. The study showed that 37.7% of the respondents are from the Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Science and only 0.7% from the Faculty of Plantation and Agrotechnology. As

illustrated in Table 1, most of the respondents, 27.8% of them from Melaka. It was found that 78.8% of the respondents had a Diploma as compared to 21.2% with SPM.

Table 2

Cronbach Alpha

Instruments	No. of Item	Result
Educational Support	6	0.863
Digital Marketing Literacy	15	0.887
Personal Attitude	6	0.826
Entrepreneurial Intention	7	0.855

The actual results show that all Cronbach's alpha for the variables is above 0.6. Therefore, the internal consistency reliability of the measures used in this study is acceptably good (Sakaran, 1992).

Table 3

Correlation

		Educational Support	Digital Marketing Literacy	Personal Attitude	Digital Entrepreneurial Intention
Educational Support	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1			0.141 0.083
Digital Marketing Literacy	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)		1		0.219** 0.007
Personal Attitude	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)			1	0.386** 0.000
Digital Entrepreneurial Intention	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.141 0.083	0.219** 0.007	0.386** 0.000	1

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

Pearson's correlation reflects the degree of linear relationship between two variables. If the p value > 0.05 the correlation is not significant, when p value < 0.05 the correlation is significant. From the table 3, it seems to indicate that digital marketing literacy and personal attitude are significant for this study.

Table 4

Summary of Regression Analysis

Dependent variable	Digital Entrepreneurial Intention		
Independent Variable	Coefficient	P-Value	Standard Error
Educational Support	-0.024	0.780	-.280
Digital Marketing Literacy	0.103	0.225	1.218
Personal Attitude	0.358	0.000	4.291
Anova			
F-Statistic	9.162	0.000	
R-square	0.140		

To determine the best set of predictor variables for predicting Digital Entrepreneurial Intention, a stepwise regression method was used. Overall, the R-squared of 0.397 implies that the three predictor variables explain about 39.7% of the variance in the dependent variable. The ANOVA table revealed that the F-statistics (9.162) and the corresponding p-value are significant (0.000) or lower than the alpha value of 0.05. Based on the stepwise method used, only one predictor variable was found to be significant in explaining Digital Entrepreneurial Intention. The one predictor variable is personal attitude ($\beta = 0.358$, $p = 0.000$). Educational support ($\beta = -0.024$, $p = 0.780$) and digital marketing literacy ($\beta = 0.103$, $p = 0.225$) are excluded because it did not contribute in significance to the variation of the dependent variable.

Discussion

The aim of this study is to investigate the determinants of entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, human intentions or behaviors are influenced by their attitude and belief. Using the stepwise method, it was found personal attitude is the only variable that has a significant relationship with digital entrepreneurship intention among students. The personal attitude seems to have a strong relationship with entrepreneurial intention. This variable also was the best predictor variable in predicting entrepreneurial intention while educational support and digital marketing literacy were found insignificant.

According to Hoyer and MacInis (2004), a person's attitude was stimulated based on a person's judgment, belief, and emotions against different options. The finding is consistent with Maes et al. (2014) the personal attitudes reflected the entrepreneurial intentions among the undergraduate students. Personal attitude in this study refers to the satisfaction of the students, their interests, the advantages of being entrepreneurs, and the level of confidence by adapting (Youssef et al., 2021). Their attitude was influenced by their background since the students were required to undertake entrepreneurship courses as part of the graduation requirement. One of the assignments is to involve with selling and marketing their own products and services. So, the students' work might have motivated their satisfaction and confidence in predicting their entrepreneurial intention. Past studies show that a positive entrepreneurial attitude enhances entrepreneurial intention (Robinson et al., 1991; Phan et al., 2002; Luthje and Franke, 2003). A recent study also found that attitude has a significant impact on entrepreneurial intention (Jena, 2020; Amofah and Saladrigues, 2022).

Conclusion

The study examines the factors that influence the youngster's intention to involve in digital entrepreneurship. According to the TPB, entrepreneurship education, personal

attitude, and digital marketing literacy are important factors in influencing digital entrepreneurial intention. Using multiple regression analysis of 151 respondents among students taking fundamental of entrepreneurship subject, digital entrepreneurship intention among students significantly depends on a personal attitude.

The study contributes to the literature by confirming that personal attitude has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students. Indeed, the human capital was moulded among the young generations to become promising entrepreneurs and directly contribute to the sustainable development of countries. The finding is important to policymakers to formulate suitable policies to be flexible with the nature of young generations to be an entrepreneur. Based on the findings, the current curriculum and prospectus designed in the higher learning institution is really beneficial and improve self-confidence and self-efficacy throughout the students' life experiences. Hence, the Ministry of Higher Education can provide more grants and incentives to the universities to involve students in improving their digital entrepreneurial skills. As such, the policy will benefit the students, educators and related stakeholders. Besides, the key authorities such as the Malaysian Economic Planning Unit realized that the young generations are prone to flexible working hours or be part of informal workers most of whom are entrepreneurs. So, the relevant activities and initiatives should be prepared respectively. As such, a suitable policy will boost the country's productivity following successful business management.

This study revealed only 39.7% of the three chosen variables explain the variance in the dependent variables. Thus, the future researcher might consider different genders and diversity of ethnics in the model and add some other variables that affect digital entrepreneurial intention among the young generation such as personality factors, social factors, and risk-taking propensity. In reference to research findings, it also stated that individuals with a greater risk acceptance had stronger levels of entrepreneurial intention. (Hmieleski and Corbett 2006). Thus, it is recommended for future researchers conduct a comprehensive investigation pertaining to other variables further.

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