

# Exploring Understanding of Entrepreneurship Education towards Secondary School

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## Abstract

Entrepreneurship education is fostered at the higher education level and as early as the secondary school level in Malaysia. Malaysia takes this matter seriously and through the Ministry of Education (MOE), entrepreneurship-related subjects such as business and accounting are incorporated into the curriculum. The components of trade and entrepreneurship applied to students aim to educate them in practising fundamental business principles, enabling them to act as responsible consumers or producers in line with business values and ethics. Therefore, this study aims to explore the level of understanding of Entrepreneurship Education among students in National Secondary Schools in Perlis state. This study involved 266 students from 13 secondary schools in Perlis. The study found that the majority of students understand the entrepreneurship learning they have received and perceive business as a good opportunity to venture into. Thus, to encourage student involvement in entrepreneurship, schools and the Ministry of Education need to provide practical training to motivate them to pursue entrepreneurship.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship Education, Secondary School, Intention, Entrepreneurship Skills

## Introduction

Silva and Koggalage (2021); SME Corporation (2021); Puvaneswari et al (2021); Popescul (2017); Chaudhary (2017) agree that entrepreneurship continues to be the engine and pulse of a nation's economic growth. Therefore, the implementation of an entrepreneurial culture must be instilled through entrepreneurship-based education at all levels of study. Lindster Norberg (2016) emphasises that schools and educational institutions play a crucial role in cultivating a progressive society. Entrepreneurship education has evolved into a teaching approach across multiple subject areas to introduce more students to the concepts and skills of entrepreneurship (Hannon, 2018). A broad perspective of entrepreneurship education is not limited to a strictly business creation approach (Neck and Corbett, 2018), but focuses on instilling an entrepreneurial mindset, behaviour, and identity in all students, regardless of context (Blenker et al., 2011).

Malaysia also takes this matter seriously through the Ministry of Education (MOE), where entrepreneurship-related subjects such as business and accounting are emphasized. Phile et

al (2002) state that entrepreneurship education focuses clearly on the components of trade and entrepreneurship. These components aim to educate students in practising fundamental business principles, enabling them to act as responsible consumers or producers in line with business values and ethics.

The selection of entrepreneurship-based subjects is not only important, but the determination of teaching subtopics also needs to be considered to achieve the goal of disseminating entrepreneurship knowledge. For example, to achieve the main goal of mastering entrepreneurship knowledge, the subject of Business, which is introduced, encompasses THREE (3) domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Following student performance assessment methods, the cognitive domain can be measured by testing the level of understanding of a student, which affects the affective and psychomotor aspects of the student's interest in pursuing entrepreneurship (Nurul Hidayah & Norasmah, 2021; Nur Asmaliza et al., 2020, and Nurul et al., 2019). Therefore, this study aims to explore the level of understanding of entrepreneurship-based education among school students in Perlis.

### **Literature Review**

Entrepreneurship Education is an instructional and learning activity that develops knowledge, fosters creative thinking, enhances problem-solving abilities, shapes behaviour, and improves an individual's personal qualities (The European Commission, 2009). According to Bae et al (2014), Entrepreneurship Education is not merely about how to start a business but also cultivating an open-minded and limitless mindset.

Therefore, Entrepreneurship Education has long been introduced and consistently encouraged to be implemented from the early stages of education, even at the primary school level. Malaysia and other countries that emphasize entrepreneurship education include Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Spain, and Slovakia. These countries have incorporated entrepreneurship elements into their school curricula and higher education institutions. This statement is supported by studies conducted by Fayolle et al (2005); Fayolle and Klant (2006); Solomom et al (2002), which indicate an increasing number of entrepreneurship courses or programs over time. This situation is also evident in the field of education worldwide, especially in Europe. Malaysia, as stated by Aishah (2012), also affirms that the country is not left behind in offering entrepreneurship courses at all levels of education, particularly in higher education institutions, to ensure that the society keeps pace with the transformation of economic growth and contributes to building a progressive nation.

Malaysia has also introduced the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 (NEP 2030) to create an entrepreneurial ecosystem that meets market demands through the New Development Model (Hidayah & Norasmah, 2021). Mustapha (2018) states that exposure to basic entrepreneurship in the education system begins at the school level with the establishment of school cooperatives initiated by the Cooperative Development Department. This situation fosters an entrepreneurial culture among school students, where they are trained to manage small-scale cooperative shops.

### **Methodology**

This study employed a quantitative approach and was conducted through a survey method by distributing a questionnaire to the respondents. Churchill et al (2010); Creswell (2009);

Sekaran (2003) assert that the quantitative method is the best approach to be used in statistical, objective, or numerical data-based research. The target population for this study was secondary school students from 22 secondary schools in Perlis state who were enrolled in entrepreneurship-related subjects such as Business and Accounting. A total of 266 respondents completed the distributed questionnaire. The findings were examined through correlation analysis (Pratiwi, 2006) to determine the significant relationship between students' level of understanding and Entrepreneurship Education. Correlation analysis is a statistical method used to measure the level of association between two variables (Pratiwi, 2006). Table 1 presents the coefficient scale to determine the level of correlation between students' level of understanding in Entrepreneurship Education.

Table 3

*Interval Scale Coefficient for the Level of Correlation Coefficient*

| Coefficient Interval | Correlation Coefficient |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 0                    | No Correlation          |
| 0-0.25               | Low correlation         |
| 0.25-0.50            | Moderately correlated   |
| 0.50-0.75            | Highly correlated       |
| 0.75-0.99            | Very highly correlated  |
| 1                    | Perfect correlation     |

Source: Pratiwi, 2006

**Findings and Discussion**

Table 2 shows the findings of the study for the correlation analysis between all levels of students' understanding in the field of entrepreneurship. The item 'acquiring business management knowledge in class' has a strong correlation with the item 'interest in entrepreneurship subjects' (0.522), 'learning techniques to promote products' (0.515), and 'exposure to business organizations in class' (0.684). There is a moderate correlation relationship between the item 'acquiring business management knowledge in class' and other items (correlation ranging from 0.25 to 0.50). There is a strong correlation between the item 'interest in entrepreneurship subjects' and the item 'perceiving entrepreneurship as a good field' (0.566), while the correlation relationship between 'interest in entrepreneurship subjects' and other items is moderate.

Besides, there is a strong correlation between the item 'perceiving entrepreneurship as a good field' and the item 'entrepreneurship requires continuous learning' (0.522), 'entrepreneurship means owning and managing a business' (0.532), 'knowing that business requires proper entrepreneurial skills' (0.502), 'entrepreneurs have a strong desire to succeed' (0.541), and 'entrepreneurship can generate income' (0.538). In the meantime, the item 'perceiving entrepreneurship as a good field' has a moderate correlation with other items.

There is a strong correlation between the item 'learning product promotion techniques' and 'learning effective communication techniques' (0.592), while there is a moderate correlation between the item 'learning product promotion techniques' and other items. Furthermore, there is a strong correlation between the item 'learning effective communication techniques' and the item 'frequently interacting in the classroom' (0.513), while the correlation between the item 'learning effective communication techniques' and other items is moderate.

Meanwhile, there is a strong correlation between the item 'business planning is important for obtaining business capital' and the item 'entrepreneurship requires continuous learning' (0.626), 'exposure to business organization in the classroom' (0.526), 'awareness of risks in business' (0.542), 'knowledge that business requires proper entrepreneurial skills' (0.537), 'entrepreneurs have a strong desire for success' (0.582), and 'entrepreneurship can generate income' (0.529). On the other hand, there is a moderate correlation between the item 'business planning is important for obtaining business capital' and other items.

The item 'entrepreneurship requires continuous learning' has a strong correlation with the item 'awareness of risks in business' (0.554), 'entrepreneurship requires continuous learning' (0.515), 'knowledge that business requires proper entrepreneurial skills' (0.627), 'entrepreneurs have a strong desire for success' (0.627), and 'entrepreneurship can generate income' (0.654). On the other hand, there is a moderate correlation between the item 'entrepreneurship requires continuous learning' and other items.

Furthermore, there is a strong correlation between the item 'exposure to business organization in the classroom' and the item 'knowledge that business requires proper entrepreneurial skills' (0.503), while there is a moderate correlation between the item 'exposure to business organization in the classroom' and other items. Meanwhile, there is a strong correlation between the item 'awareness that business involves the risk of loss' and the item 'knowledge that business requires proper entrepreneurial skills' (0.589), 'entrepreneurs have a strong desire for success' (0.585), and 'entrepreneurship can generate income' (0.603), while there is a moderate correlation between the item 'awareness that business involves the risk of loss' and other items.

There is a strong correlation between the item 'entrepreneurship means owning and managing a business' and the item 'knowledge that business requires proper entrepreneurial skills' (0.595), 'entrepreneurs have a strong desire for success' (0.527), and 'entrepreneurship can generate income' (0.532), while there is a moderate correlation between the item 'entrepreneurship means owning and managing a business' and other items. Next, there is a strong correlation between the item 'knowledge that business requires proper entrepreneurial skills' and the item 'entrepreneurs have a strong desire for success' (0.639) and the item 'entrepreneurship can generate income' (0.653), while there is a moderate correlation between the item 'knowledge that business requires proper entrepreneurial skills' and other items.

Additionally, there is a moderate correlation between the item 'frequent interaction in the classroom' and the item 'entrepreneurs have a strong desire for success' (0.378), 'entrepreneurship can generate income' (0.346), and 'understand that service matters involve financial transactions' (0.422). On the other hand, there is a strong correlation between 'entrepreneurs have a strong desire for success' and 'entrepreneurship can generate income' (0.705) and 'understand that service matters involve financial transactions' (0.522). Furthermore, there is a moderate correlation between 'entrepreneurship can generate income' and 'understanding that service matters involve financial transactions' (0.466).

Based on the items measuring students' understanding of entrepreneurship, the majority of students have a good understanding of the entrepreneurship concepts they have learned.

They strongly agree that entrepreneurship requires continuous learning and the acquisition of proper entrepreneurial skills. These findings are consistent with a study by Laipat and Othman (2021), which found a positive and significant relationship between business management skills and understanding entrepreneurship knowledge. Although the majority of students agree that entrepreneurship carries risks of losses, they also view it as a promising field worth pursuing. Additionally, they strongly agree that entrepreneurship can generate income, and real entrepreneurs possess a strong desire to succeed in the entrepreneurial field they pursue.

Table 2  
Correlation Test on Respondents' Understanding Level of Entrepreneurship Education

|      | (1)                        | (2)                        | (3)                        | (4)                        | (5)                        | (6)                        | (7)                        | (8)                        | (9)                        | (10)                       | (11)                       | (12)                       | (13)                       | (14)                       | (15)                       |
|------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| (1)  | 1                          | 0.522<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.470<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.515<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.496<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.440<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.417<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.684<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.413<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.362<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.414<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.329<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.494<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.382<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.337<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (2)  | 0.522<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.566<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.452<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.470<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.440<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.395<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.471<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.360<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.425<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.381<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.371<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.482<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.394<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.380<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (3)  | 0.470<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.566<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.393<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.405<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.451<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.522<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.466<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.427<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.532<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.502<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.347<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.541<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.538<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.428<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (4)  | 0.515<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.452<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.393<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.592<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.491<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.377<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.499<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.300<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.389<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.323<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.371<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.426<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.263<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.348<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (5)  | 0.496<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.470<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.405<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.592<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.411<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.420<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.470<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.389<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.367<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.378<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.513<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.434<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.325<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.409<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (6)  | 0.440<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.440<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.451<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.491<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.411<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.626<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.526<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.542<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.442<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.537<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.305<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.582<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.529<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.427<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (7)  | 0.417<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.395<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.522<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.377<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.420<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.626<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.472<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.554<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.515<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.627<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.285<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.627<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.654<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.383<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (8)  | 0.684<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.471<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.466<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.499<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.470<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.526<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.472<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.438<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.418<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.503<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.326<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.490<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.370<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.350<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (9)  | 0.413<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.360<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.427<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.300<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.389<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.542<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.554<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.438<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.482<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.589<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.298<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.585<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.603<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.424<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (10) | 0.362<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.425<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.532<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.389<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.367<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.442<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.515<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.418<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.482<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.595<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.305<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.527<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.532<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.437<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (11) | 0.414<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.381<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.502<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.323<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.378<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.537<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.627<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.503<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.589<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.595<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.282<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.639<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.653<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.382<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (12) | 0.329<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.371<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.347<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.371<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.513<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.305<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.285<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.326<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.298<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.305<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.282<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.387<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.346<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.422<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (13) | 0.494<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.482<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.541<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.426<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.434<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.582<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.627<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.490<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.585<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.527<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.639<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.387<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.705<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.522<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |

|      |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| (14) | 0.382<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.394<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.538<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.263<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.325<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.529<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.654<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.370<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.603<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.532<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.653<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.346<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.705<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          | 0.466<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) |
| (15) | 0.337<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.380<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.428<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.348<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.409<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.427<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.383<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.350<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.424<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.437<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.382<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.422<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.522<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 0.466<br>**<br>(0.00<br>0) | 1                          |

### Conclusion

This research seeks to provide an initial overview that will contribute to the field of entrepreneurship education, particularly among school students. To enhance their understanding of entrepreneurship knowledge, stakeholders such as schools and the Ministry of Education should make greater efforts to provide students with practical training, bringing them closer to the actual business environment. Similarly, teaching pedagogy and learning methods must be continuously updated to ensure that students can adapt their entrepreneurship knowledge to the changing times and technological advancements.

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