

DETERMINANT FACTORS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN TERENGGANU

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Abstract: This study was conducted to assess how entrepreneurship experience, family background, and societal factors influence university students in Terengganu to embark on entrepreneurial activities. It cannot be denied that entrepreneurship exposure on campus may drive university students to engage in activities which may enhance their academic achievements, boost confidence, and instill relevant qualities and skills to be successful graduates in the future. Such valuable experiences may be value added to the graduates. To see the impact of such an experience together with other relevant factors, this study has tested the relationship between entrepreneurship experience, family background, social factors and the subsequent effects among students of Universiti Malaysia Terengganu after graduation. The data were collected from 370 targeted respondents and were analysed using the multiple regression analysis. It was found that entrepreneurship experience and family background have significant relationships with entrepreneurship intention while societal factor was found to be insignificant.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship experience, family background, societal factor, university students

Introduction

The prominent role of entrepreneur in the economy cannot be denied as an entrepreneur usually creates a new business, is willing to bear all risks and of course will reap all the benefits (Yusof, 2010). From the Islamic perspective, the Prophet S.A.W. highlighted that nine from ten doors of livelihood come from entrepreneurship activities. To highlight the importance of business activities, Allah says:

“When you have finished the Prayer, then disperse in the land (to take care of each other) and look for what you want from the All-Wise Allah and remember Allah abundantly (in all circumstances so that you succeed in this world and hereafter)”.

(Surah Al-Jumaat:10)

The community with many entrepreneurs is the best community as they are the most

dynamic, creative and innovative individuals. They are ready to deal with uncertainties through creativity and sincerity to achieve success. This spirit has caused them to see a tomorrow with full opportunities and the confidence to seize it. Thus, entrepreneurs need to create and venture into new areas to enhance their competitiveness by giving more options to the community as well as for their well-being. Entrepreneurship nowadays has become one of the important alternatives for countries to combat unemployment issues as such activities can create job opportunities for the community (Abdullah *et al.*, 2010). Entrepreneurial growth is not only important to boost a country's economy (Dickson *et al.*, 2008), but also to create and shape a stable economy (Nafukho & Muyia, 2010). It is advisable for the authority to start with undergraduates in the universities in the process of promoting entrepreneurship activities so that they would consider to pursuing their career as an entrepreneur (Roudaki, 2009).

In Malaysia, almost 5 million people that fall under the definition of labour force in Malaysia were is unemployed in both 2018 and 2019 (DOSM, 2018; 2019) and the government is keen on reducing the numbers. Although IPTs in Malaysia produce thousands of graduates each year, it is worrying when the majority of them are unable to meet the labour market demands due to a lack of soft skills gained during their study period (Ismail *et al.* 2012). This study was conducted with the purpose of examining factors which influence entrepreneurship intention after graduation.

Entrepreneur

Zain, *et al.* (2010) describes an entrepreneur as a person whom usually has inner courage, ideals and feelings to be independent without relying on others. In fact, having great potential to become an entrepreneur will not ensure success unless they have the intention and are brave enough to face the risk. Many studies have been carried out to determine and analyse all factors that affect the entrepreneurship intention in a country. Turker and Selcuk (2009) conducted a study that focused on factors such as educational background, relational, and structural support. It was found that educational background and structural support were important to trigger students' entrepreneurial intention.

By utilizing graduates and alumni from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia Osman (2007) identified four factors that might be important when making a decision to become an entrepreneur that include family background, motivation, attitude, and skills. Results show that only the family background factor was insignificant. Contradictory finding was reported by Othman and Buang (2009) when they found that the choice for entrepreneurship career is associated with family background especially when the families themselves are also entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship intention

Many definitions are available to describe what entrepreneurship intention is. Remeikiene

and Startiene (2013) defined entrepreneurship intention as the growing conscious state of mind to begin a new business or to inject new idea in the existing business. It also can be associated with an individual reaction on the results of any actions and an individual's own ability (Douglas & Fitzsimmon, 2008). Going deeper, entrepreneurial intention can be described as self-enthusiasm to accomplish entrepreneurial behaviour, to be involved in an entrepreneurial action, to be self-employed, or to establish a new business (Dell, 2008). It usually involves innermost spirit, ambition and the feeling to become independent (Zain *et al.*, 2010). One can be an entrepreneur, but to achieve success the said attention should exist (Ismail *et al.*, 2009).

It is very unlikely for an individual to be accidentally engaged in business activity but one that is well planned (Krueger *et al.*, 2000; Krueger, 2007). Krueger (2007) highlighted that intention serves as mediating factor in influencing the relationship between entrepreneurial action and potential exogenous influence including traits, demographics background, various skills, and social, cultural and financial support. The findings of this study emphasise the role of entrepreneurial intention in—motivating individuals to embark on a business journey. In addition, entrepreneurs will definitely benefit if they have a clear picture of their reasons for embarking on an entrepreneur journey, whilst intention assists in understanding the relevant factors that influence the process to becoming an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurship experience

Entrepreneurship experience together with the level of entrepreneurship education will assist in ensuring that graduates will be able to succeed as an entrepreneur (Pickernell *et al.*, 2011). Experience in business upon graduation may encourage graduates to form own businesses and equip them with all necessary skills that will allow them to plan well on future undertaking (Mazura & Norasmah, 2011). In fact, the role of entrepreneurship education has been identified as one of the key factors in helping

young generation in understanding and shaping entrepreneurial attitudes (Gorman *et al.*, 1997). Increased awareness can also be obtained by undertaking entrepreneurship courses where students will be equipped with sufficient information which may trigger them to begin the journey as an entrepreneur. Such courses usually expose the students to real-life situations and provide them with hands-on activities (Hynes *et al.*, 2011), encourage the students to think beyond normal norms (Hamidi *et al.*, 2008) and motivate the students in observing the potential of starting new businesses (Delmar & Davidson, 2000).

Family

Responsibility for a family becomes a pivotal sociological factor that affects entrepreneurship, especially towards the decision to begin a new business. The decision to start a new business is easier when a person at the young age does not have any commitments (Bygrave, 2004). Thus, a person with commitments, especially a married one, would usually be reluctant to take the risk. Families are seen as an important factor in influencing business connectivity as management and ownership are usually run within the family circle. Generally, heirs or of descendants will have a mentor to coach them in understanding the business nature which leads to a high probability of existing business expansion (Krueger, 1993; Delmar & Davidsson, 2000; Fairlie & Robb, 2005). These entrepreneurs prove that they can develop the skills, boost confidence and foster values that are necessary to form own businesses within their family business context (Altınay, 2008).

Societal factor

According to Guerrero *et al.* (2008), the idea of culture and status of an entrepreneur is vital to in determining a student's intention to become an entrepreneur. A highly supportive society may create many entrepreneurs as compared to a less supportive society where entrepreneurship cannot prosper. Culture usually influences entrepreneurial intentions through social rules and assessments and creates variances across national as well as regional restrictions (Lent *et al.*, 2000). Lastly, it cannot be denied that universities play a pivotal role in promoting entrepreneurship through structural education (Binks, *et al.*, 2006; Co & Mitchell 2006).

As a provider of training courses related to entrepreneurship, universities should support the creation of more entrepreneurs by providing activities that can boost student motivation (Roffe, 1999). One should know that in the environment that portrays a bad image or impression about a career in entrepreneurship, which would render entrepreneurial knowledge and skills less useful in ensuring that students opt for this career in the future (Alberti, *et al.*, 2004). Thus, a university should create a positive environment on entrepreneurship across campus which will later instill the passion on becoming successful entrepreneurs. This is when students' decision is usually being influenced by *environmental* exposure as during this age when they are still looking at the best option to be decided on as their future undertakings (Gnyawali & Fogel 1994; Fayolle & Degeorge, 2006). Based on the literature, the conceptual framework that may explain the prolonged effect of entrepreneurship experience in campus after graduation is as in Figure 1. This conceptual framework was adapted from Suhaila *et al.* (2015) and Ozaralli and Rivenburgh (2016).

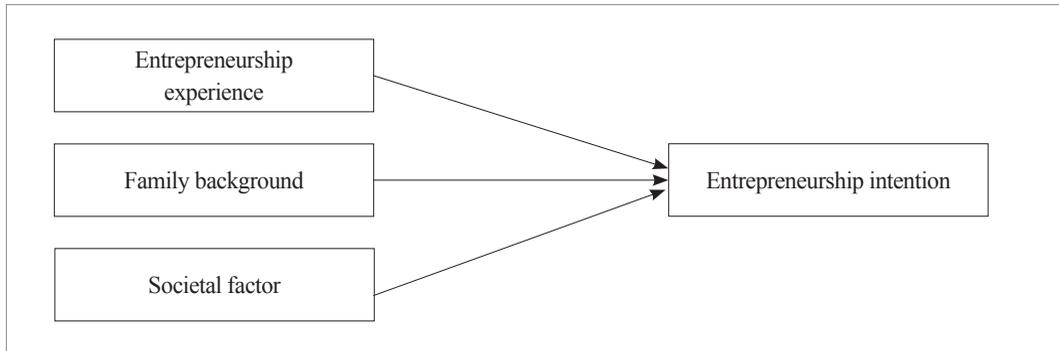


Figure 1: Conceptual framework adapted from Suhaila *et al.* (2015); Ozaralli and Rivenburgh (2016)

From the above discussion three hypotheses have been developed and are as follows:

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- H1: There is significant relationship between entrepreneurship experience and entrepreneurial intention.
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- H2: There is significant relationship between family background and entrepreneurial intention.
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- H3: There is significant relationship between societal factor and entrepreneurial intention.
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Research Methodology

This study adopted a common quantitative research technique that uses questionnaire survey with the respondents identified. The collected data were analysed using statistical package and the results were discussed accordingly.

Research Design

This study utilises quantitative techniques (Fouche & Delpont, 2005) with questionnaires distributed to obtain responses from student respondents to examine the factors that affect entrepreneurial intention. The questionnaires were distributed personally and online by the researcher to the respondents. The population of this study was around 11,700 students consisting of students from different courses in Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) in 2018. Most of the respondents completed

the questionnaire within 10 to 15 minutes. It is common for exploratory research to utilise convenience sampling which may provide up to 370 respondents quickly and economically (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010; Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The respondents' education levels cover both graduates and postgraduates students.

Research Instruments

This study uses self-administered survey where the questionnaire was developed and distributed. Both Zikmund *et al.* (2010) and Sekaran and Bougie (2010) suggested that this approach is an efficient data collection approach to ensure relevancy and consistency of information gathered. In addition, the responses are believed to be more objective, standardised and comparable. 370 sets of the questionnaire were used and answering each took approximately 10 to 15 minutes. The questionnaire was prepared to the level that the respondents could understand and would manage to provide meaningful answers based on their own perceptions (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010).

The questionnaire used the Likert Scale as a measurement for all the independent items constructed denoting from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The measurements allowed flexibility in the collection of data. It was easy to answer, save time and help the respondents to keep focus on the topic. The questionnaire was divided into Section A and Section B where the former consists of respondents' demographic

profiles and the latter includes three independent variables (entrepreneurship experience, family background and societal factor) and one dependent variable (entrepreneurial intention) and every variable consists of 6 to 8 questions.

Data Analysis and Results

This section presents the results and data analysis from the pilot test, frequency analysis, data screening, preliminary analysis, and data

normality, Pearson correlation coefficient analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The pilot test was conducted prior to the actual study to test the research approach and to improve on the prepared questionnaire. The data collected was considered suitable for factor analysis based on several tests such as Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) and Barlett Test Sphericity. For factor extraction, two techniques were employed: Kaiser’s Criterion (eigenvalue >1) and Scree Plot (Rule Of Thumb-elbow for turning point).

Table 1: Summary Results of EFA

Variable		DV	IV		
Construct		Entrepreneurship experience	Family Background	Societal Factor	
Factor	Bartlett Test (p<.05)	.000	.000	.000	.000
Suitability	Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO> 0.60)	0.895	0.833	0.784	0.826
Factor Extraction	Eigen Value	Factor 1 4.547	Factor 1 4.035	Factor 2 4.195 1.331	Factor 1 3.537
	Variance Explained (%)	75.779	57.643	52.443 16.637	58.954
	Scree Plot	One Factor	One Factor	One Factor	One Factor

Based on variable factor extraction, analysis of each of the four variables with 27 items revealed 1 item had to be discarded. Results from factor extraction as per Table 1, i.e. eigenvalues and Scree Plot produced one factor for entrepreneurship intention, entrepreneurship experience and societal factor. Therefore, all the

questions could be used in the final analysis. For family background, eigenvalue produces 2 factors, therefore the researcher did a factor rotation. The results from factor rotation show that component 1 from structure matrix (see Table 2) is more interpretable.

Table 2: Structure Matrix

	Component	
	1	2
My parents are positively oriented towards my future career as an entrepreneur.	.906	.394
My families encourage me to be an entrepreneur.	.867	.386
Parents are a main source of business-related information.	.812	.467

My families are doing a business.	.802	
Lecturers are a main source of business-related information.	.639	.639
Friends are a main source of business-related information.	.332	.853
I have many friends who are in business.		.828
Entrepreneurial club in UMT are is main source of business-related information.	.514	.741

Reliability of Instruments

The final step is to check construct reliability by utilising Cronbach's Alpha. The Cronbach's Alpha result for all variables produces high reliability with values above 0.70 which is entrepreneurship intention (0.942),

entrepreneurship experience (0.868), family background (0.869) and societal factor (0.856). Hence, high reliability indicates good internal consistency between items particularly in the context of exploratory research. The reliability coefficients for each of the four variables after item-deletion process are as in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of Reliability Statistics

Variable	Before item-deletion		After item-deletion	
	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Entrepreneurship intention	6	0.935	4	0.942
Entrepreneurship experience	7	0.868	7	0.868
Family Background	7	0.864	6	0.869
Societal Factor	6	0.856	6	0.856

Frequency Analysis

Frequencies refer to the number of times each subcategory of a certain event occurs, from which the percentage and the cumulative percentage of their occurrence can be easily calculated (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). This analysis summarised the respondents' demography for this research. Out of the total number of respondents (N=370), 104 respondents (28%) are in the group of 18-20 years old, 213 respondents (58%) are in the group of 21-23 years old and 53 respondents (14%) are between 24-26 years old.

Data Normality

Normality testing is important as it is a prerequisite for any statistical technique. The researcher used Histograms, Normal Q-Q Plot and Boxplots to review all variables and data. The following table shows the summary of the normality result for all four variables. Table 4 shows that the statistics of Skewness and Kurtosis for all variables is around negative 0. The value for Skewness and Kurtosis between -2 and +2 are considered acceptable in order to prove normal univariate distribution (George & Mallery, 2010; Gravetter, & Wallnau, 2014). Therefore, it shows that the data for this study is normally distributed.

Table 4: Normality Results

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
Entrepreneurship Intention (EI)	-0.538	-0.711
Entrepreneurship Experience (EE)	-0.007	-0.691
Family Background (FB)	-0.086	-0.994
Societal Factor (SF)	-0.046	-0.433

Multiple Regression Analysis

As the previous correlation assessment has provided evidence on the suitability of the three proposed predictors of entrepreneurial intention,

this section presents the results of the multiple regression test based on the following equation:

$$EI = \beta_1 EE + \beta_2 FB + \beta_3 SF + \xi$$

Using SPSS, this test was conducted and yielded the following results.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.722	.522	.518	2.88640

R Square for this model is 0.522. This means that 52.2% of the variation of the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intention) can be

explained by the three independent variables (entrepreneurship experience, family background and societal factors).

Table 6: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	3326.781	3	1108.927	133.103	.000
Residual	3049.262	366	8.331		
Total	6376.043	369			

Based on Table 6, the F value is 133.103 with a p-value $0.000 < 0.01$ for significance level. Thus, the overall regression model for these

three predictors has explained the variation in entrepreneurial intention.

Table 7: Summary of Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.445	.909		.490	.624
Entrepreneurship_experience (EE)	.217	.046	.283	4.691	.000
Family_Background (FB)	.396	.044	.482	9.004	.000
Societal_Factors (SF)	.018	.063	.016	.280	.779

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurship Intention

Based on Table 4.21, the regression equation for the entrepreneurial intention (EI) is:

$$EI = 0.445 + 0.217EE + 0.396FB + 0.018SF.$$

According to the equation above, entrepreneurship experience, family background and societal factors have positive relationships with entrepreneurial intention. Family background is the predictor variable that contributes the highest to the variation of the entrepreneurship intention. With every unit increase in family background, it will increase a total of 0.396 unit of entrepreneurship intention if other independent variables remain constant.

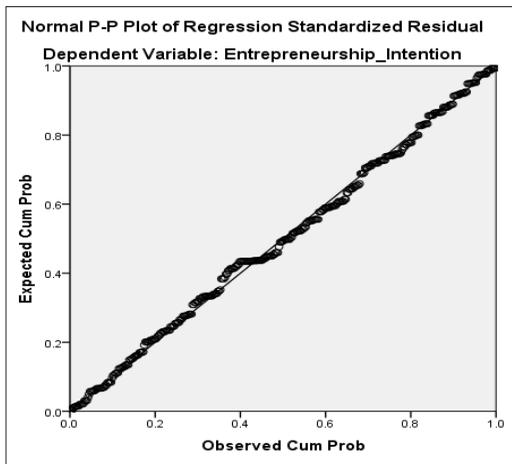


Figure 2: Normal Probability Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Figure 2 shows the estimated equation: $0.445 + 0.217 EE + 0.396 FB + 0.018 SF$ is almost linearly related. All independent variables (entrepreneurship experience, family background and societal factors) are almost linearly related to the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intention). Not all independent variables are having a significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention. The significant value for entrepreneurship intention and family background relationship is below 1%. Therefore, it has a significant relationship with entrepreneurship intention. The significant values for societal factors are 0.779 and thus it does not have a significant relationship with entrepreneurship intention.

Table 8: Summary of the Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	p-value	Decision
Hypothesis 1 H1: There is significant relationship between entrepreneurship experience and entrepreneurial intention.	0.01	Supported
Hypothesis 2 H2: There is significant relationship between family background and entrepreneurial intention.	0.01	Supported
Hypothesis 3 H3: There is no significant relationship between societal factors and entrepreneurial intention.	0.779	Not supported

Conclusion

The discussion of this study shed a new light in assisting the reader to have a deeper understanding on entrepreneurship experience, family background and societal factors that affect student entrepreneurial intention after graduation. The existence of significant nexus between entrepreneurship experience and entrepreneurial intention is in line with McStay (2008), Peterman and Kennedy (2003) and Kolvereid (1996) showing that an individual’s business experience, mentor and linkages with past business knowledge may affect the decision-making process to become an entrepreneur. It is as expected where people who have initial exposure in entrepreneurial activities have a higher entrepreneurial intention as compared to those without any experience. The significant relationship was found between family background and entrepreneurial intention showing that entrepreneurship intention is influenced by the type of employment of the parents.

Future studies should be conducted to have deeper understanding of such topics as entrepreneurship has a very important position in the hastily changing socioeconomic scenario

in the world. Entrepreneurs also play a pivotal role in the development of nations as they can provide employment opportunities. Thus, it is hoped that this study will be an eye opener to the graduates on the potential of what a career as an entrepreneur may offer them.

Acknowledgements

Authors wish to thank the university for the research opportunity and reviewers and editors for the comments on this article.

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