

EXPLORING ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION IN MALAYSIA: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH TRENDS FROM 2009 TO 2024.

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Abstract: *This study examines the research landscape on entrepreneurial intention in Malaysia from 2009 to 2024 through a bibliometric analysis of 148 academic publications indexed in the Scopus database. As Malaysia continues to establish itself as a significant player in entrepreneurship, understanding the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions becomes essential for economic growth and job creation. The analysis reveals an increasing trend in publications from 2014, reflecting a growing interest in this area, with a notable peak in 2023. Most publications are in the form of academic articles, primarily contributed by leading institution like Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia. Based on co-occurrence analysis using VOSviewer, the study identifies that much of the research is rooted in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), emphasizing attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms. Keywords such as "entrepreneurship education" and "self-efficacy" also indicate a strong focus on educational interventions to nurture entrepreneurial intentions. Despite the valuable insights gained, the study suggests expanding future research to explore social and cultural factors influencing entrepreneurial intention and include a more diverse demographic beyond university students. These findings serve as a resource for policymakers, educators, and researchers aiming to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Malaysia.*

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial intention, Malaysia, Bibliometric analysis, VOSviewer*

Introduction

Malaysia is widely recognized for its rapidly growing economy and has established itself as a hub for entrepreneurial ventures. The country offers a conducive environment for aspiring entrepreneurs, supported by a proactive government, a flourishing startup ecosystem, and an expanding middle class. As entrepreneurship gains momentum, an increasing number of individuals in Malaysia are venturing into business ownership (Kloepfer & Castrogiovanni, 2018). Entrepreneurship is regarded as a key strategy for addressing unemployment due to its substantial contributions to economic growth and job creation. Furthermore, it serves as a fundamental pillar for socio-economic development in Malaysia.

Historically, entrepreneurship was not a widely preferred career choice. Up until the late 1970s, most young graduates sought employment in the public sector. However, the introduction of the Privatization Policy in 1983 (Public Private Partnership Unit, 2019) encouraged a shift toward private-sector employment. The private sector has since played a crucial role in accelerating the nation's economic development. This transition was further reinforced by the establishment of the Ministry of Entrepreneur Development in 1995, which aimed to strengthen government support for entrepreneurship initiatives. To align with the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 was introduced to foster an entrepreneurial culture. Engaging in entrepreneurship not only provides employment opportunities for individuals but also contributes to economic growth by reducing unemployment (Shamsudin et al., 2017). Additionally, entrepreneurship drives market expansion, wealth creation, and increased national output (Abdul Kadir et al., 2012).

Given its pivotal role in economic development, understanding the factors influencing entrepreneurial intention (EI) among Malaysians is crucial. Entrepreneurial intention, defined as an individual's inclination to engage in entrepreneurial activities, has emerged as a significant area of research in the field of entrepreneurship. In Malaysia, fostering entrepreneurial intention is seen as essential for economic advancement and job creation, prompting the government to introduce various policies and initiatives, particularly targeting university students. The concept of entrepreneurial intention (EI) is grounded in multiple theoretical frameworks, notably the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which highlights the influence of attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms on entrepreneurial decision-making (Zhang et al., 2019; Liñán & Chen, 2009).

Extensive research has been conducted on entrepreneurial intention, with this study focusing specifically on its development within the Malaysian context. The primary objective of this study is to analyze academic publications indexed in the Scopus database. A total of 148 articles published between 2009 and 2024 (spanning 15 years) were selected for analysis. The study employs bibliometric analysis, a widely used method for examining publication trends, citation patterns, and other bibliographic metrics to gain deeper insights into the research landscape on entrepreneurial intention in Malaysia.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: The next section presents a literature review, followed by a detailed discussion of the methodology. The fourth section outlines the study's findings, while the final section discusses the results in the conclusion and provides recommendations for future research.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurial and Entrepreneurial intention

Entrepreneurship has gained significant attention in recent years as a driver of economic growth and innovation (Gomes et al., 2023). Entrepreneurship as a career option is of great importance in increasing the economic growth of national economies and in reducing the chronic problems of unemployment and poverty (Zacharias et al. 2021; Sahinidis et al. 2021). According to Laine and Kibler (2022), entrepreneurship is a social practice that involves creating something new, which can be a product, service, or organization, by identifying and exploiting opportunities in a particular socioeconomic context. The emergence of new ventures and start-ups has become a crucial component of many economies worldwide. Thus, in developing nations such as Malaysia, there is a concerted effort to promote student involvement in entrepreneurship, urging them to view it as a viable career path (Jin, 2022). The term entrepreneurship has always been associated with bearing risk, innovation and setting up companies mainly entrepreneurs as a risk taker which is also supported by the earliest definition of entrepreneurship that describes the process of bearing the risk when the entrepreneur involves in buying goods at certain prices and selling it at uncertain prices (Di-Masi, 2004).

Ajzen & Fishbein (1975) refers to entrepreneurial intentions as an act or intentional attitude toward a start-up or an existing firm attempting to start a new business or seeking new opportunities. Kuratko et al. (2007) assert that entrepreneurial intention refers to the development of a practical and specific plan for starting a business. It is also interpreted as a desire to own and start a private business, including plans to become entrepreneurs (Krueger et al., 2000). According to Carton et al. (2004), an individual decides to be self-employed when he or she embarks on an entrepreneurial venture. Intention, according to Alshebami et al. (2020), is the single most important determinant and motivator of entrepreneurial behavior and becoming an entrepreneur. Psychological research claims that intentions are a critical predictor of consequent planned behaviour (Bagozzi, Baumgartner & Yi, 1989). An individual with a stronger entrepreneurial intention is likelier to establish an entrepreneurial venture and pursue entrepreneurship (Fatoki, 2010). This study defines entrepreneurial intention as a critical element in initiating an entrepreneurial venture that determines the success, growth, and survival of the new entrepreneurial venture. Entrepreneurial intention (EI) has been a focal point in entrepreneurship research, particularly due to its significant role in shaping entrepreneurial behavior and economic development. Recent studies have explored EI through various theoretical frameworks, primarily the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991), which links attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms to the formation of entrepreneurial intentions. According to Al Halbusi et al. (2023), TPB remains one of the most dominant frameworks for understanding entrepreneurial intentions, given its robustness in predicting behavior. In Malaysia perspective, Akmaliah and Hisyamuddin (2009) concluded that Malaysian secondary school students were favorable towards becoming self-employed, but they don't have enough confidence to be an entrepreneur. which is reflected by low correlation value between attitudes and self-employment intentions. To become successful entrepreneurs, they should pose successful characteristics as entrepreneurs. Among the characteristics is entrepreneurial intention. According to Ajzen (1991), intention is an element which dominates the motivation factors in influencing individual behaviour. Intention is closely related with the real behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Summer, 1998; Krueger et. al. 2000).

Methods

The data used in this study were generated and analysed from 2009 to 2024 using Google Scholar and bibliometric analysis. According to Donthu et al. (2021), bibliometric analysis is a widely used and rigorous method for examining large volumes of scientific data. It enables researchers to trace the evolution of a specific field while identifying emerging areas within it.

The search was conducted using two key terms which are “Entrepreneurial Intention” and “Malaysia”. The retrieved data were stored in a CSV file and categorized based on document by year, document by source, document by authors, and document by type. Additionally, this study employed VOSviewer software to construct and visualize bibliometric networks, allowing researchers to analyse relationships and patterns within the scientific literature, such as co-authorship, citation, and co-occurrence networks. The findings of this bibliometric analysis are presented in the following section.

Result and Discussion

Document by Year

Figure 1 illustrates the number of documents published per year related to entrepreneurial intention in Malaysia from year 2009 to 2024. From the graph, the number of documents published remained relatively low, fluctuating between 2 and 5 publications per year. There was minimal research interest in this field during these early years. A significant increase in publications is observed from 2014 onward. The number of documents rose sharply, reaching around 15 publications per year in 2017, indicating growing research interest.

From 2017 to 2019, the number of documents remained stable at around 15 publications per year. However, a slight decline occurred in 2020 and 2021, possibly due to external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have affected research activities. according to the finding by Ismail, A. (2020), since the imposition of the Movement Control Order (MCO) by the government of Malaysia on 18th March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, local universities have been obedient and acted in line with the government's policy. With this, research activities were put on hold and thus research has been greatly impacted especially for experimental-based research that requires physical experimentation in laboratory facilities. Similarly, community-based research was also being halted in this condition since no face-to-face data collection can be done during this period.

A notable increase in publications is seen from 2021 onwards, with a peak in 2023 at around 24 documents. In which it serves the highest number recorded in this dataset. The number of documents in 2024 shows a decline compared to 2023, indicating a possible stabilization or shift in research focus.

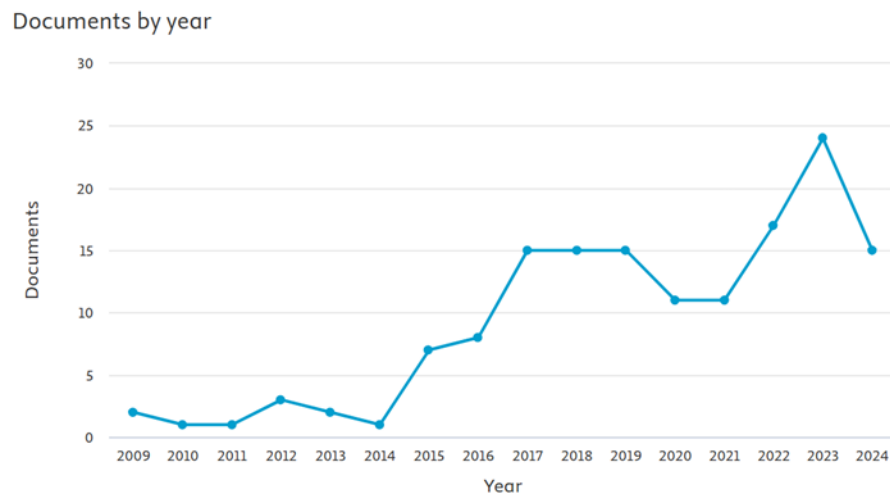


Figure 1: Number of Document Published by Year

Document by Source

Figure 2 shows the top sources of publications that is linked to entrepreneurship intention in Malaysia. It is observed that research publications about entrepreneurship in Malaysia have changed over time across different academic sources from 2009 to 2024. These sources include the Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies, International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business, Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems, and AIP Conference Proceedings. As figure 2 shows, these 5 sources of publication having maximum number of documents published related to entrepreneurship intention in Malaysia.

The maximum number of publications was published in the Lecturer Notes in Network and System (6). The second and third highest sources of publications are Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies and AIP Conference Proceedings (5 publications respectively), followed by International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business and Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities with the number of publications of 4 documents respectively.

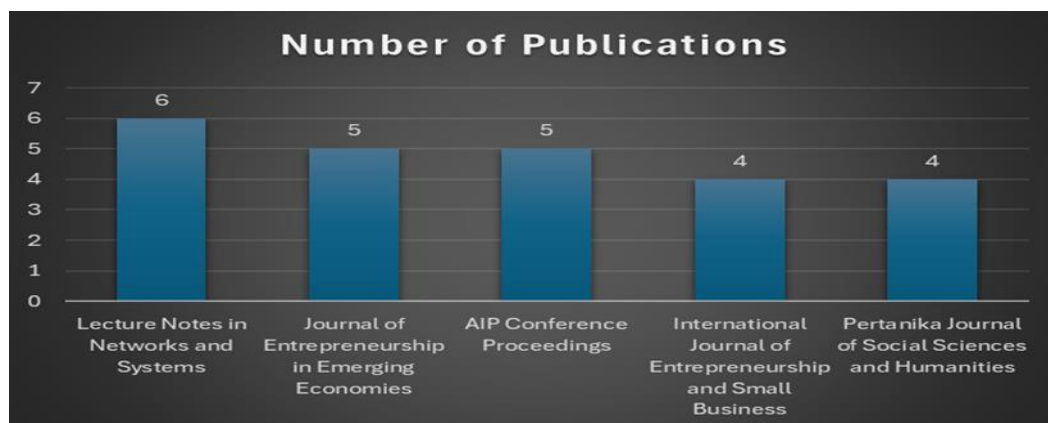


Figure 2: Document by Source of Entrepreneurship Intention in Malaysia

Document by Author

The list of authors, who published at least 3 number of articles publications, is presented in figure 3 with a total of 10 such authors. Al Mamun, A. and Mamun, A.A. produced the highest number of published articles related to entrepreneurship intention in Malaysia (4 articles respectively). Meanwhile, Ahmad, N.H., Al-Jubari, I., Bolong, J., Indiran, L., Lim, W.L., Looi, K.H., Mubarak, A. and Omar, S.Z each contributed to entrepreneurship intention in Malaysia with 3 published articles.

Documents by author

Compare the document counts for up to 15 authors.

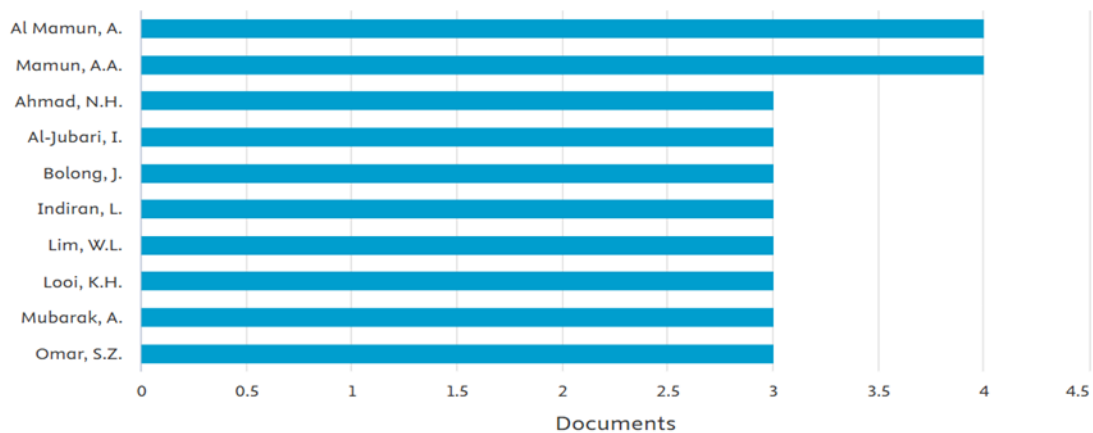


Figure 3: Documents by Author of Entrepreneurship Intention in Malaysia

Document by Type

Table 1 presents a breakdown of the total number of publications by document type in entrepreneurship intention studies in Malaysia. It shows a total of 6 publication types were identified in these 148 documents. The most frequent publication type for entrepreneurship intention's studies in Malaysia are in the form of articles with the amount of 114 articles, accounting for 77.0% of total publications. Conference paper (22 articles) is at second position with a proportion of 14.9%. Followed by book chapter with 8 published articles (5.4%). Table 1 also shows 2 articles were published in the form of conference review with the percentage of 1.4% from the total publication. Other document types consisting of book and editorial served 1 article respectively (0.7%).

Table 1: Types of Publication

Types Of Publication	Frequency	Percentage
Articles	114	77.0
Conference Paper	22	14.9
Book Chapter	8	5.4
Conference Review	2	1.4
Book	1	0.7
Editorial	1	0.7

Document by Affiliation

For document by affiliation (refer Figure 4), Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia has the maximum number of publications with 17 publications in the field of entrepreneurship intention in Malaysia. The Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia is in the second position with 15 publications followed by the Universiti Utara Malaysia and University Malaysia Kelantan with the total number of publications of 14 publications respectively. Besides, the Multimedia University Malaysia served 13 publications from the total of 148 documents. Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia, and UCSI University each contributed 9 published articles. Meanwhile, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia and Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman each published 6 articles from year 2009 to 2024.

Documents by affiliation

Compare the document counts for up to 15 affiliations.

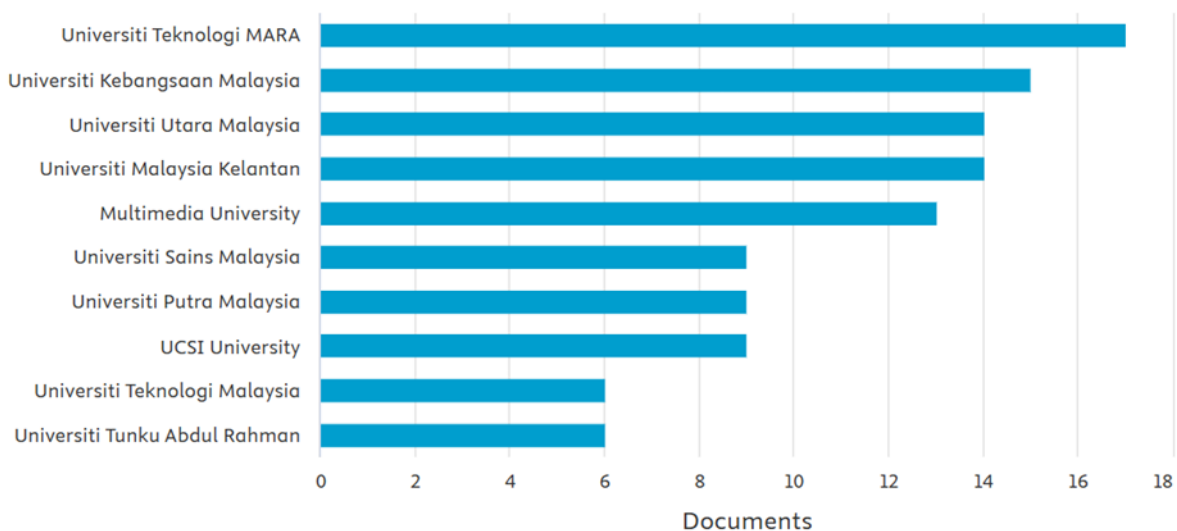


Figure 4: Documents by Affiliation

Keyword Analysis

The network visualization in Figure 5 displays the author keywords in this study that had a minimum of 5 occurrences. To map the authors' keywords, this study employed VOSviewer, a software tool for building and visualising bibliometric networks. The association of a keyword with the other keywords was visualised through font size, colour, or the thickness of connecting lines. This network visualization illustrates the relationships between keywords related to entrepreneurial intention research, specifically in a Malaysian context. Finding from the VOSviewer (refer figure 5), it shows that only 19 author's keywords out of 358 keywords meet the threshold. The network suggests that research on entrepreneurial intention in Malaysia is predominantly grounded in psychological theories like TPB, with a strong focus on the role of education and individual mindset factors. The connections imply an effort to understand how entrepreneurial intentions are formed and influenced by both personal attitudes and educational environments. Besides, the high occurrence and link strength of terms like entrepreneurial intention (82 occurrences, 100 total link strength), Malaysia (33 occurrences, 53 total link

strength), and entrepreneurship education (23 occurrences, 32 total link strength) indicate that most of the research published and appeared focuses on understanding the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions in a Malaysian context. Moreover, this is based on the number of times these keywords has been mentioned in other studies, making it the most influential keywords in the topic of entrepreneurial intentions in a Malaysian (refer Table 2).

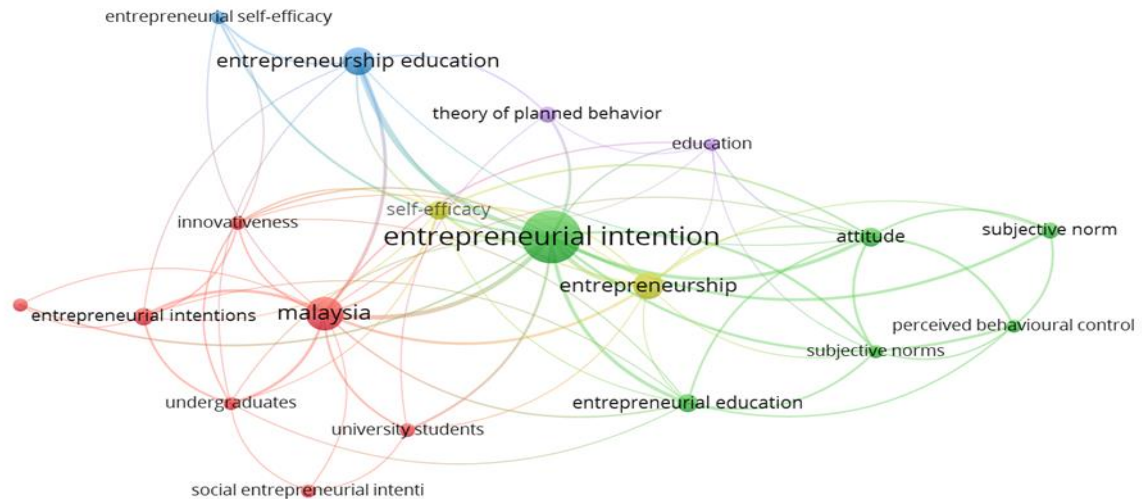


Figure 4: Author's Keywords Network with at least 5 occurrences.

Table 2: Keyword Appears Across Multiple Research Papers

Keyword	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
Entrepreneurial intention	82	100
Malaysia	33	53
Attitude	11	32
Entrepreneurship education	23	32
Entrepreneurship	21	29
Entrepreneurial education	10	23
Self- efficacy	11	23
Perceived behavioural control	5	16
Subjective norms	5	16
Entrepreneurial intentions	9	15
Undergraduates	5	15
Innovativeness	6	13
Subjective norm	8	13
Education	5	10
University students	6	10
Entrepreneurial self-efficacy	5	9
Theory of planned behavior	8	9
Theory of planned behaviour	5	5
Social entrepreneurial intention	5	3

Conclusion and Future Research

A bibliometric analysis of entrepreneurship intention literature can reveal research trends, influential publications, and knowledge gaps, ultimately aiding in understanding the field and identifying future research directions. Based on the papers analysed and retrieved from the Scopus database, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the research landscape on entrepreneurial intention in Malaysia from 2009 to 2024 with a group of 148 publications. From the above findings and analysis, there is a growing trend in entrepreneurial intentions studies in Malaysia within the selected time frame. The study on entrepreneurial intention in Malaysia has steadily increased from the year 2014 until 2023. Besides, most of the research that is linked to entrepreneurship intention in Malaysia were mostly published in the lecturer notes in network and system. The top contributing authors in this field study are Al Mamun, A. and Mamun, A.A. with 4 articles. From the findings, it is evident that most publications related to this study are in the form of academic articles. In addition, the significant contributions from major institution like Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia lead the study area with bulk publications than any other affiliate institutions.

The keyword analysis reveals that much of the research is grounded in psychological theories such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), emphasizing the role of attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms. The prominence of topics like entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy underscores the focus on understanding how educational interventions can nurture entrepreneurial intentions.

While the findings provide valuable insights, there is a need for future research to explore less-studied areas such as the role of social and cultural factors in shaping entrepreneurial intentions. Additionally, expanding research beyond university students to include other demographic groups may offer a more comprehensive understanding of entrepreneurship in Malaysia. Overall, this study serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, educators, and researchers aiming to foster a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem in Malaysia.

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