

# A STUDY OF ATTITUDES AND SOCIAL NORMS: AN APPLICATION OF MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

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**Abstract:** *This study investigates the influence of entrepreneurial attitude and subjective norms on entrepreneurial intention among university students. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior, the research aims to identify which psychological factors significantly shape students' intention to engage in entrepreneurship. Using quantitative methods, data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The results reveal that entrepreneurial attitude has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intention, suggesting that students with favorable perceptions of entrepreneurship are more likely to consider starting a business. In contrast, subjective norms were found to have no significant impact, indicating that social pressure from family, peers, or society does not play a critical role in shaping students' entrepreneurial aspirations. These findings underscore the importance of cultivating positive entrepreneurial attitudes through education and experiential learning, rather than relying on external social influence.*

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurial Intention, Attitude, Subjective Norms, University Students*

## Introduction

In Malaysia, the unemployment rate is 4.3% (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021), students who have recently graduated are urged to become self-employed as they have the knowledge and skills necessary to establish their own firms (Hamiruzzaman et al., 2020). It has become increasingly difficult for young graduates to find comfortable jobs that are commensurate with their qualifications compared to the difficulties that previous generations of graduates have faced in the past decade. With the current situation of surplus workforce due uncertainty market sentiment due to Covid-19 crisis, the situation is quite concerning because the negative impact does not only affect youths, but the consequences also have a significant impact on the economic stability of the country, potential for social problems, and waste of human capitals (D'Silva, 2020). In accordance with the rapid development of the country's economy and the trend toward globalisation, the importance of entrepreneurship appears to be more critical today than it was in the previous decade and economic cycle (Wei et al., 2019). Malaysia government promotes graduate students to engage in entrepreneurship and to consider it as a career option since it is crucial for economic growth and societal development (Ambad & Damit, 2016). Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the effect of attitude and subjective norms on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate university students.

## Literature Review

### Theory of Planned Behaviour

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) has been used in recent years as a theoretical framework to explain university students' entrepreneurial intention. TPB is the fundamental theory for explaining entrepreneurial intention (Duong et al, 2020). The theory offers a critical and appropriate framework to explain individual planned behavior and thus allows researchers to predict entrepreneurial intention with consideration of both individual and social factors concurrently (Liñán, F., & Chen, 2009). TPB contains three variables that affect entrepreneurial intention, namely perceived behavioral control (PBC, i.e., individuals evaluating a to-be-executed behavior according to its ease of execution), attitude toward entrepreneurship (personal belief in certain behaviors or actions, such as entrepreneurial spirit), and subjective norms (an individual's views on what people around them or people of influence, e.g., parents, friends, or coworkers, think about a certain behavior (starting business ventures). These variables were found to directly predict the entrepreneurial intention of entrepreneurs (Al-Jubari, 2019; Ajzen, 1991).

### Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurship intention (EI) defined as a person's goal that conned with his or her cognition and experience to design entrepreneur activities (Do & Dadvari, 2017). It is widely recognised as one of the most important motivational predictors that influence individual behaviour in the course of business creation (Nguyen et al., 2019). According to BarbaSánchez and Atienza Sahuquillo (2018), any entrepreneurial endeavour must begin with a clear sense of purpose in order to succeed. According to the findings of Wei et al (2019), EI has a considerable impact on students' attitudes regarding environmental issues. Similarly, Jena (2020) stated that attitudes are the most important factor in determining a person's EI. Do and Dadvari (2017) discovered that having an entrepreneurial spirit had a favourable impact on employee engagement. As a result, EI that is created and inculcated during the early stages of life is specifically targeted at students and is regarded a crucial process in preparing students to become entrepreneurs or to

participate in any entrepreneurial activity in the development stage. As a result, the higher a student's EI, the greater the likelihood that the student will pursue a career as an entrepreneur.

In addition, Wardana et al (2024) conducted research to study entrepreneurial intentions of students in Indonesia's East Java Province. The research focuses on how students' entrepreneurial intentions are influenced by their perception of their own abilities as entrepreneurs, as well as subjective criteria, role models, and success needs. The findings indicate that subjective norms, role models, and needs for achievement affect students' entrepreneurial intention. Al Qadasi et al (2023) examines the influence of personality traits and environmental and situational factors on the development of entrepreneurial intention among young students in Yemen. The study reveals that personality traits of the need for achievement (nAch) and locus of control (LoC) positively correlate with entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) and entrepreneurial intention.

### Attitude

Attitude toward a behavior refers to "the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question" (Ajzen, 1991). Student's own opinions about a particular habit or action, such as entrepreneurship, are reflected in their attitude (Al-Jubari, 2019). A positive attitude among students is more helpful to increase student's intention in engaging in entrepreneurship (Ambad et al., 2016). Empirical research had shown that a student's attitude about entrepreneurship has the biggest impact on their desire to become an entrepreneur (Al-Jubari, 2019; Ambad et al., 2016; Hamiruzzaman et al., 2020). Recent study by Taneja et al (2023) investigated direct impact of entrepreneurial attitude (EA) on entrepreneurial intention. Data was collected from 669 students, enrolled in entrepreneurial courses/programs. Punjab, Haryana, India. The finding found that there is a direct and strong influence of entrepreneurial attitude on entrepreneurial intention. In addition, Saufi and Hong (2023) showed attitude as key factors to social entrepreneurship intention between university students in Malaysia.

Thus, this study formulates the following hypothesis:

*H1: Entrepreneur Attitude (EA) has a positive effect on Entrepreneur Intention (EI).*

### Subjective Norms

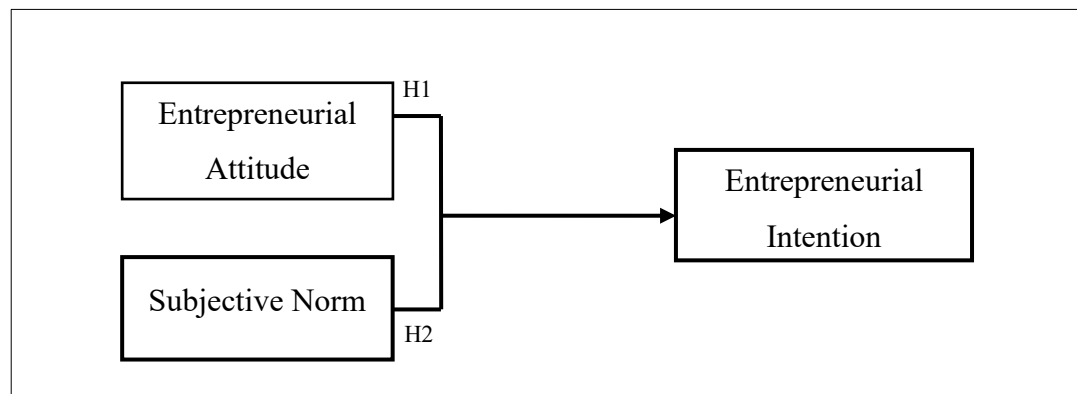
Subjective norms refer to an individual's personal impression about how others in their immediate social circle, such as parents, relatives, and neighbors, would react to them engaged in or not engaged in a particular behavior, such as entrepreneur (Al-Jubari, 2019). Students are more confident to become entrepreneurs if they have strong support from family and relatives (Ambad et al., 2016). Thus, students may seek guidance and encouragement from those around them, and their views may impact whether or not to participate in entrepreneurial action (Al Jubari, 2019). Subjective norm has a positive and considerable influence on the intention of young entrepreneurs, according to empirical research (Al-Jubari, 2019). Chin et al (2023) revealed subjective norms has positive effect entrepreneurial intentions based on responses from 220 final-year students registered from a final-year entrepreneurship module of private universities Malaysian students. Similarly, recent study by Martin et al (2023) found of family, institutional and peer support on entrepreneur intention positively impact entrepreneurial intention among master students in Pakistan.

Hence, the above discussion leads to the following hypothesis:

*H2: Subjective norm (SN) has direct effect on EI*

### Research Framework

The purpose of this study is to identify the determinants of students' entrepreneurial intention to become an entrepreneur. The theoretical framework depicted in Figure 1.



**Fig 1: Research Framework of the study**

### Methodology

#### Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research design. The research methodology utilized a cross-sectional strategy that collected data from participants at one time, providing a glimpse of information. This method is helpful for researching events that can be adequately captured in a defined timeframe, revealing linkages and patterns during a specific timeframe.

#### Data Collection and Analysis

The study utilized a survey methodology to gather data, employing a meticulously designed questionnaire as the primary tool to obtain information from the study participants. The questionnaire was constructed in both English and Malay languages to allow participants to select their preferred language for answering the questions. The questionnaire items were methodically designed after conducting a thorough analysis of current literature, guaranteeing their importance and thoroughness in addressing the research objectives. The dependent and independent variables instrumentation, which are entrepreneur attitude, subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention, were adapted from Zaremohzzabieh et al. 2016. All responses were measure using 10 points scale items, ranging from “1=Strongly Disagree”e and “10=Strongly Agree”.

The participants were undergraduate students from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). The criterion for the respondents is that they must have completed entrepreneurship course. The reasons is to ensure students understand the theories in entrepreneurship and they have involved in entrepreneurship activities during they courses. Participants were assured that all information was kept confidential and their participation was voluntary. The respondents were selected using

the random sampling method to prevent bias and ensure that every respondent has an equal chance of being chosen. In addition, a number of statistical techniques, including data analysis and hypothesis testing, were executed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 22.0. The hypotheses were examined, and the research model was analyzed using Multiple Regression Analysis.

### Findings

The respondents in the study majority female students (75.7%), mostly in the range age of 21-23 years old (55.8%) and 18-20 years old (34.4%). The range of age shows respondents are from diploma and degree level of studying at UiTM. Interestingly, majority of the respondents does not have entrepreneurial family background who have business 60.3%, while remaining 39.7% of the respondents come from entrepreneur family background.

### Reliability Analysis

The reliability of the scale is determined by computing the coefficient alpha. So, the traditional method specifically of Cronbach alpha was conducted to determine the reliability of the items included in the study. Based on Nunally's (1978) suggestions, the better coefficient alpha is above 0.70 and this has also been admitted by Sekaran and Bougie (2010).

**Table 1. Reliability Analysis**

Variables	Items	Cronbach Alpha
<b>Dependent variable</b>		
Entrepreneurial Intention	8	0.976
<b>Independent Variables</b>		
Entrepreneurial Attitude	6	0.911
Subjective Norm	5	0.722

Table 1 represents the result of Cronbach's Alpha for Entrepreneurial Intention, Entrepreneurial Attitude and Subjective Norms variables were above 0.7 as suggested by Sekaran and Bougie (2010). It showed the entire variables are acceptable and reliable in measuring the response.

### Multiple Regression Analysis

In this study, multiple regression analysis was applied because it had two independent variables of entrepreneurial attitude and subjective norms. The  $R^2$  value for the regression model is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Regression Model**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F Change	Sig Change	F
1	0.806	0.649	0.647	290.719	<.001	

$R^2$  value shown in Table 2 is 0.649. This indicates that 65% of entrepreneurial intention can be explained by entrepreneurial attitude and subjective norms. Meanwhile 35% other factors influence entrepreneurial intention which not included in this research.

**Table 3: ANOVA**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	994.908	2	497.454	290.719	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	537.290	314	1.711		
	Total	1532.198	316			

a. Dependent Variable: EI

b. Predictors: (Constant), SN, ATT

Table 3 shows that p value of the test data is <0.001 = significance, which indicates that the result is less than 0.001. Moreover, it can also be seen that the overall regression is significant, hence the regression model is considered as a good fit of the data.

**Table 4: Coefficient**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error		Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	-.945	.409		-2.312	.021
	ATT	1.065	.056	.829	18.851	<.001
	SN	-.058	.070	-.037	-.832	.406

a. Dependent Variable: EI

Table 4 illustrates the result of multiple regression for the two hypotheses. Based on the findings indicated that only entrepreneurial attitude has significant effect on entrepreneurial intention. Subjective norm on the other hand showed insignificant result which H2 is rejected.

### Multiple Regression Equation

X1 = Entrepreneurial Attitude

X2 = Subjective Norm

Y = Entrepreneurial Intention (Dependent Variable)

Therefore, the factors influence entrepreneurial intention can be summarizes as follow:

$$Y = -0.945 + 1.065X1 - 0.058X2 + e$$

The results presented in Table 4 shows that attitude is the most significant factor of entrepreneurial intention but not subjective norm.

**Table 5: Summary of Findings**

Hypothesis	Description	P Value	B Value	Result
H1	Entrepreneurial Attitude has a positive and significant effect towards entrepreneurial intention	<0.001	1.065	Supported
H2	Subjective Norm has a positive and significant effect towards entrepreneurial intention	0.406	-0.058	Not Supported



## Discussion of Findings

The main purpose of the present study was to investigate whether there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial attitude and subjective norms as independent variables with entrepreneurial intention.

The result of Hypothesis 1 discovered that there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention among UiTM undergraduate students in Malaysia. Table 5 showed that Hypothesis 1 is supported with level with B value = 1.065. In other words, there is a positive relationship between two variables whereby each unit of entrepreneurial attitude increases, the entrepreneurial intention increases by 1.065 unit. Previous studies on student entrepreneurship based on TPB have led to the theory's positive empirical verification and the conclusion of a clear, positive impact of attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control on entrepreneurial intentions.

On the other hand, subjective norms showed negative and insignificant relationship with entrepreneurial intention. Thus, H2 is rejected. The impact of subjective norms on student entrepreneurial intentions, however, remains ambiguous. The results of some authors' studies indicate the significance of this factor (Al-Jubari et al., 2019; Iakovleva et al., 2011; Karimi et al., 2017; Mirjana et al., 2018; Solesvik, 2013; Zhang et al., 2015), while the results of others provide contrasting findings (Che Nawi et al., 2022; Iglesias-Sánchez et al., 2016; Maresch et al., 2016; Wu & Wu, 2008).

## Conclusion and Future Recommendations

This study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing entrepreneurial intention among students. The findings reveal that entrepreneurial attitude plays a crucial role in shaping students' intentions to engage in entrepreneurial activities, indicating that students with a positive perception of entrepreneurship are more likely to pursue it as a career path. Conversely, subjective norms were found to have no significant effect, suggesting that students are less influenced by the opinions or expectations of others when forming their entrepreneurial intentions. These outcomes highlight the importance of fostering individual attitudes and self-driven motivation as key components in entrepreneurship education and policy design.

Future studies could explore additional psychological and environmental factors that may influence entrepreneurial intention, such as entrepreneurial self-efficacy, perceived behavioral control, or access to entrepreneurial resources. It would also be beneficial to conduct longitudinal studies to examine how entrepreneurial intention evolves over time and across different educational levels. Moreover, researchers may consider to include mediation between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention in future research.

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