

FACTORS INFLUENCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP
INTENTION AMONG DISABLED STUDENTS: A
STUDY OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN MALAYSIA

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates factors influencing disabled students toward Entrepreneurship Intention (EI) by employing the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) model. Three antecedents of EI were tested, namely Attitude, Subjective Norm (SN) and Perceived Behavioural Control. Focused on the disabled students in public universities in Klang Valley, the respondents are those students who currently study at the universities regardless of any mode, status and level of study. This study used a quantitative approach, where a survey was the research instrument. Out of 500 questionnaires distributed online through social media like WhatsApp and email, 154 responded to the questionnaires. The result of correlation found that all constructs were positively related to EI; however, when regression analysis was performed, the SN was found to be insignificant. This study has several limitations, such as the small number of respondents due to impairments of the respondents. It only focused on disabled students studying at public universities in Klang Valley. This study contributed to fill the gap of TPB since it focused on EI in disabled students' context where most of the previous studies focused on nondisabled students at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This study could spark the research from future researcher to study EI on other Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) context, such as disabled Millennia, private HEIs, etc.

ملخص البحث

يُعنى هذا البحث بالعوامل المؤثرة على الطلاب المُعاقين في قصد الأعمال (EI) بواسطة نموذج نظرية السلوك المنهجي (TPB). هذا وقد اُخْتُبِرَت ثلاثُ عَيِّنَاتٍ سابقة وخاصةً المواقف، والمعايير الذاتية (SN)، وكذلك التحكم السلوكي المُدْرَك. ومع أن البحث يركّز في المقام الأول على الطلاب المُعاقين في الجامعات الحكومية في منطقة كلانج فالي، إلا أن المُسْتَجَوِينَ كانوا من طلاب جامعيين بغض النظر عن نوع وحالة ومستوى دراستهم. ويستخدم هذا البحث المنهج الكمي مُعْتَمِداً على الإِسْتِبيان كأداة للبحث. ومن أصل 500 استبيان تم توزيعه عبر الإنترنت من خلال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مثل برنامج الواتساب والبريد الإلكتروني، استجاب 154 شخص للاستبيانات المذكورة. نتيجة الارتباط النَّاجمة منها، ترى بأن جميع التركيبات مرتبطة بشكل إيجابي بقصد الأعمال (EI). في حين تَبَيَّنَ بعد إجراء عملية الإِنْجَادار، أنَّ المَعَايير الذاتية (SN) لا تكون ذات أهمية. ويُعَدُّ نِطَاق الدَّرَاسة مَحْدُودًا في حالات معينة، من ضِمْنِهَا قَلَّةُ أَعْدَادِ المُسْتَجَوِينَ النَّاجمة عن عدم قدرتهم على الإجابة بسبب الإعاقة، واقتصار البحث على الجامعات الحكومية في منطقة كلانج فقط. تُسَهِّمُ هذه الدَّرَاسة في سدِّ ثَغْرَةٍ نَاجمة من نموذج نظرية السلوك المُمنهج (TPB)؛ إذ تَتَمَخَّرُ حَوْلَ الطَّلَّابِ المُعَاقِينَ في قصد الأعمال (EI). في حين أنَّ الدَّرَاسَاتِ السَّابِقَةَ ركزت على الطَّلَّابِ غير المُعَاقِينَ في مؤسسات التعليم العالي (HEIs). وبهذا، نأمل أن يكون هذا البحث دافعًا وحافزًا لأبحاث مُسْتَقْبَلِيَّةٍ تَهْدَفُ إلى دراسة قصد الأعمال (EI) مع التَّركيز على ذوي الإعاقة الآخرين (PWDs) مثل الألفية المعوقين، ومؤسسات التعليم العالي الخاصة، وما إلى ذلك.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Science (Marketing).

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Mohd Khairun Nizam Bin Ab Ghani

Signature

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INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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This thesis is dedicated to my beloved mother Norazizan Binti Masran and my father Ab Ghani Bin Ahmad that relentlessly provided the insight for my journey in postgraduate study.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This chapter explains the definition of Persons with disabilities (PWDs) and their population in Malaysia. It further explains disabled student's enrollment at public universities in Malaysia. Besides, the success story and the issue on disabled entrepreneurship would give insight into the real situation of disabled students' participation in the entrepreneurship.

1.1 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDS) IN MALAYSIA

According to United Nation Convention on Right of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the term Persons with disabilities (PWDs) includes those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (UNCRPD, 2006). Under the Malaysian Disability Act (2008), there are seven types of disabilities registered by the Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat (JKM) namely hearing impairment (DE), blindness (BL), physical disability (PH), speech disability (SD), learning disability (LD), mental disability (ME) and multiple disabilities (MD)(JKM, 2019).

Furthermore, the purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity

(UNCRPD, 2006). With old age, health decline, and ever-changing environmental conditions, it's clear that illness has now become a human rights problem.

The word OKU is widely used in Malaysia's printed media, and the subsequent discussion suggests that there has been a significant shift in interpretation from 'orang kurang upaya' to 'orang kelainan upaya/orang kelebihan upaya.'(Norazit& Razak, 2010).

Table 1.1 Registration of PWDs by State 2016 & 2017

STATE	2016	2017
Johor	50,312	54,310
Kedah	36,435	40,057
Kelantan	29,264	32,403
Melaka	20,059	21,882
Negeri Sembilan	19,171	20,979
Pahang	24,350	26,823
Perak	36,099	39,415
Perlis	5,002	5,673
Pulau Pinang	24,775	27,306
Sabah	25,593	28,683
Sarawak	28,159	31,002
Selangor	63,514	71,399
Terengganu	20,467	22,633
W.P. Kuala Lumpur	24,913	29,372
W.P. Labuan	1,156	1,321
<i>Jumlah/ Total</i>	409,269	453,258

Source: Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat (JKM, 2016 &2017)

Table 1.1 describes the registration of PWDs according to the states of Malaysia for the years 2016 and 2017. Out of the 409, 269 PWDs registered in 2016,

Selangor includes most of the PWDs registered with (63,514), followed by Johor (50,312), Kedah (36,435), Perak (36,099), Kelantan (29,264) and the rest of the states. Meanwhile, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur reported 24,913 registered PWDs.

Furthermore, the numbers of PWDs registration increased for each state in 2017 with the total number of 453,238; of the number, Selangor (71,399) was still on top in terms of the numbers of registration while Kuala Lumpur is (29,372). Besides, according to the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia and also the Minister of Women, Family, and Community Development (KPWKM), Dato' Seri Dr. Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, the numbers of PWDs registered with Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat (JKM) were 513, 519 as 31 December 2018 - 1.58% of the total PWDs population in Malaysia. She said that the population of the country is around 32.4 million, of the number, 4.86 million are PWDs. Therefore, still large numbers of PWDs have yet registered with JKM (Nik Min, 2019)

It is because registering is not mandatory and many of them lack information; therefore, they will disregard their right to register and obtain privileges entitled. Nevertheless, persons with disabilities are members of the population and as legal citizens, they have the right to access all the existing facilities of the country and engage in all facets of national growth, including labor market jobs without prejudice. People with disabilities should not be treated simply out of sympathy or to satisfy government quota criteria (Norazit & Razak, 2010). Often, due to insufficient documentation, service providers and users, for example, government departments have difficulty to render the benefits and rights that PWDs citizens are entitled to enjoy because data is not updated (Islam, 2015).

The entrepreneurship program provided by the government is an example to encourage their involvement in entrepreneurship. Norafandi & Diah (2017) urges on

the significant efforts that should be made to raise awareness among Malaysians of the rationale of PWDs involvement in entrepreneurship, As PWDs is an integral part of Malaysian society, it is the responsibility of society to allow them to live a dignified life and contribute effectively to nation-building.

1.1.1 Disabled Students in Malaysia’s Public Universities

The improvement in the facilities in public universities, the number of PWDs who are going to higher institutions is on the rise in order to improve their quality of life.

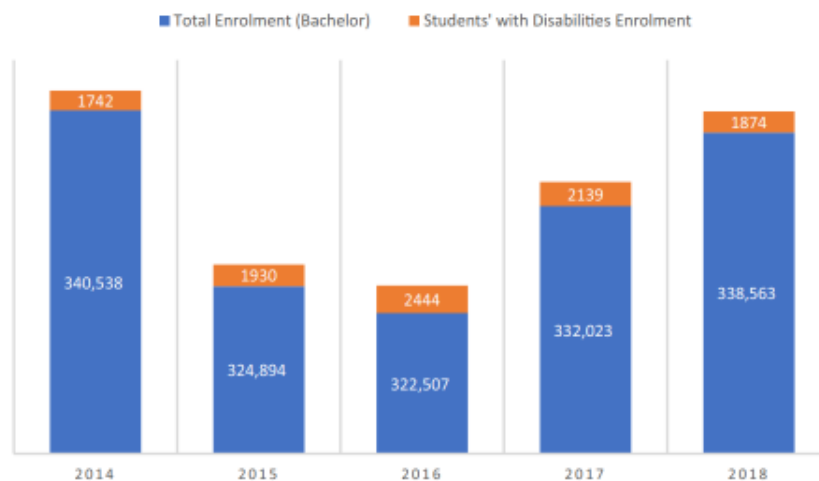


Figure 1.1 Number of Undergraduate Students’ Enrolment in Public Universities from 2014 to 2018.

Source: (Yusof et al., 2019)

Figure 1.1 shows the number of undergraduate students’ enrolment in Malaysian public universities from 2014 to 2018, published by the Ministry of Education (MOE). The statistics show a steady rise of disabled students’ enrolment in Malaysian public universities starting from 2014 with 1742 students, 1930 students in 2015; and 2444 students in 2016. In addition, the numbers slightly declined in 2017 with (2139 students) and 1874 students in 2018 enrolment (MOE, 2018). Yet, this

number is minuscule when compared to the overall enrolment of students in Malaysian public universities, which is approximately 1.2 million. The dearth of information concerning disability within Malaysian higher education spearheaded this MOE funded research (Yusof et al., 2019).

Success Story of a Student Entrepreneur

An inspirational story about successful entrepreneurs motivates disabled students to grow further in business. Story on successful PWDs entrepreneurs, Azila Alias, 46 is an example of how the disabled graduate would choose to be an entrepreneur despite the limitation that she has. A physical PWD who graduated from Bachelor of Mathematics from the University of Malaya was rejected from administration work from a company due to her disability. Honestly, she felt that she was discriminated against even she felt that it is useless to graduate since it doesn't guarantee a stable job.

Moreover, she used a wheelchair since 2008 due to the leg amputation due to the infection; she used to give tuition to the children in the neighborhood while selling cake and pastry. Her fate was changed when she was offered to join Rich Independent Sustainable Entrepreneurship (RISE) organized by Maybank Foundation and people System Consultancy. The organization helps poor people. After going to the training, she saw the opportunity to expand her expertise and setup the business in a systematic way through tuition class and pastry business. She manages to expand her business from three students to 30 students at the same time she was able to market the cake and pastry to a bigger market.

Now her income increased from RM1,500 to RM4,000 per month after the enrolled RISE program due to her business expansion. The RISE is one of the corporate social responsibilities of Maybank with the mission to give the financial service to entrepreneurs. The definition of rising is to provide financial service to all with affordable terms to help minor groups like PWDs and the poor, to have the same opportunity as ordinary people. In conclusion, government policy to encourage the involvement of disabled students is by organizing entrepreneurship training despite government agency programs which would encourage the disabled graduate, especially from public universities to grow with entrepreneurship as an alternative and viable option to normal salaried workers (Sulaiman, 2018)

The involvement of the public and private organizations in organizing the entrepreneurship program as part of their social responsibility would enrich the disabled students in entrepreneurship which would be their career choice and alternative to the normal workforce in which the negative stigma is still happening.

1.1.2 Issues of PWDs in Entrepreneurship Participation

Although several entrepreneurship efforts are made by the government and other parties such as entrepreneurship training, very few PWDs entrepreneurs participate in the entrepreneurship program. For example, Program Outreach Pemerkasaan Usahawan PWDs Tahun 2019 (an outreach program for strengthening PWDs entrepreneurship in 2019) organized recently by JKM to encourage their participation in entrepreneurship. The program was able to attract participation of only 144 PWDs nationwide. Of the total participants based on the types of disability, PWDs with a physical disability were the highest numbers with (68) participants followed by

learning disability (24), hearing impairment (19), blindness (19), multiple disabilities (8), speech disability (4) and the least participation by individuals with mental disability (3). Moreover, 70 of them have yet to setup a new venture but have the intention to do so in various industries like food beverages, fashion designing even consultancy firm. Meanwhile, 73 of them who already own business have the intention to continue with it (ISM, 2019). Consequently, this study will help them find the influential factor that supports them to become entrepreneurs. The number of participants is considered low compared to the total PWDs registered in the country, which continues to increase year after another.

However, few answers to the government's entrepreneurship training program often suggest graduate interest in entrepreneurship. According to (Nasharudin & Harun, 2010), with many entrepreneurship programs either in the context of a curriculum or co-curriculum, the number of public university students expressing their intention to be entrepreneurs is still low with 58.8 percent of the total student sample, although they have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship as a career option (80.8 percent). Moreover, while the university has the financial support of the Ministry of Entrepreneurship Development and Corporation (MECD) to coordinate entrepreneurship training and education, fewer students reported attending the university or other organizers although the course is offered on free-of-charge basis (33%).

Nevertheless, this poor response still happens to disabled students despite the introduction of entrepreneurship education to the disabled as early as primary and tertiary education, with very low numbers of disabilities becoming entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, unemployment among the PWDs needs to be solved urgently due to rising unemployment figures (Osman & Rahim, 2014). Thus, entrepreneurship is the

most viable career choice for the disabled to get out of dependency and poverty (Oyewumi & Adeniyi, 2013)

Furthermore, several incentives have been given for the PWDs to entice the involvement of PWDs toward entrepreneurship, for example, Elaun Pekerja Cacat (EPC) PWDs worker allowance for RM400 for those Malaysian PWDs, aged 16, who work with a salary below RM1,200 to encourage them to work and be independent and productive people in society. (JKM) Additionally, Skim Bantuan Galakan Perniagaan Orang Kurang Upaya (Business Aid Scheme for PWDs) - RM22 million over the next five years (9th Malaysia Plan) would give advantage to the PWDs people to pursue the entrepreneurship (Norazit & Razak, 2010). The business grant starting from RM2,000 from JKM to OPWDs is one of the government's supports to help lower-income PWDs that have the intention to setup small new ventures. As the business grows, they are entitled to have an additional grant to make their business grow bigger (Rosli et al., 2015). Therefore, disabled students who intend to set-up a new venture would have the opportunity to apply for this grant after they graduate from university.

Furthermore, Department of Labour Peninsular Malaysia (JTKSM), Ministry of Human Resource offers the Skim Bantuan Galakan Perniagaan Orang Kurang Upaya (SBGP-OKU) which is a business grant given to disabled entrepreneurs based on the concept "*bantu usahawan OKU membantu OKU mendapatkan pekerjaan*" (assist PWDs entrepreneurs in helping other PWDs to get employed) through the development of enterprise by the PWDs entrepreneur. Thus, the requirement to apply for the grant is that PWDs entrepreneur must employ PWDs workers. Most of the PWDs entrepreneurs who received the grant are from small entrepreneurs. According to the JTKSM, the majority of PWDs entrepreneurs who

have received the fund have successfully grown their businesses. Meanwhile, the number of recipients of the fund is increasing since then, and some of them were able to hire more PWDs people to meet the objectives of the fund; otherwise, all the efforts made by the government would be worthless. (JTKSM, 2019)

This, however, would go to the drain if disabled students do not benefit from the incentive provided by the government to empower them toward the betterment of their lives.

1.1.3 Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurship Intention

The key purpose of defining entrepreneurship is to have a clear idea of variables. Several scholars have defined entrepreneurship in terms of opportunities, risk-taking, and innovation. Entrepreneurship is an activity to start new companies or to rejuvenate old businesses by focusing on opportunities available (Onuoha, 2007). Therefore, entrepreneurs are those individuals who would take advantage of the technical and/or organizational innovation and market opportunity (Schumpeter, 1965). The importance of risk was emphasized by (Knight, 1921) and according to Drucker (1970), "Entrepreneurship is about risk." Therefore, Bolton & Thompson (2000) defined an entrepreneur as a person who continually creates and innovates a product and services to construct something of recognized value on that perceived opportunity. Hisrich (1990) defined an entrepreneur's characteristic as an individual showing ambition and creative thinking that can coordinate social and economic mechanisms to make effective use of resources and circumstances and accept risk and failure.

The discussion on the nature of entrepreneurial intention (EI), such as factors influencing certain individuals' desire/motivation to participate in entrepreneurial activities is especially important for entrepreneurial scholars. (Bagozzi et al., 1989;

Bird & Schjoedt, 2009; De Clercq et al., 2013; Kautonen et al., 2011, 2015; Kolvereid, 1996; J. N. F. Krueger et al., 1993; N. F. Krueger et al., 2000; Liñán & Fayolle, 2015; Maalaoui et al., 2020; Van Gelderen et al., 2018). The entrepreneurial scholars have used theories and concepts from psychology scholarly works, and cognitive psychology for instance, one very popular theory is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by (Ajzen, 1991). From the late 1960s, Professor Ajzen was among the first to research intentions and behaviour, especially with Fishbein. Since its inception, TPB has studied, developed, and questioned in many fields of social science (Armitage & Conner, 2001; Sheeran, 2002), particularly in entrepreneurship. To date, Ajzen 's seminal 1991 paper alone has 60,000 citations.

Furthermore, in Malaysia, the principle has been used on university and college student EI, e.g., college society EI (Mustapha, 2016), social entrepreneurship, public university (Wahid et al., 2016), and educational and graduation intention (Mohamed et al., 2012). However, few studies focused on how the theory predicts the intention of PWDs students to be an entrepreneur in Malaysia. Thus, this study would extend the theory to demonstrate the contact fit into the context of the disabled students in public universities in the Klang Valley area. This research employed the TPB to determine whether the EI of the PWDs students are linked to Attitudes toward entrepreneurship, Subjective Norms (SN), and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC).

EI is important as an aspect of business that should be inculcated in the mind of disabled students since their study in university. EI refers to the conscious intention to pursue entrepreneurship as an income avenue. Van Gelderen et al. (2018) stated that individuals who have a strong intention to do something have a high tendency to act upon the intention as soon as possible. Therefore, the intention is a crucial thing

for the disabled student to choose entrepreneurship as their career since entrepreneurship is seen as a solution for the PWDs disabled students as it can empower them to take charge of their lives and to live a more meaningful life. Hence, disabled students should plan to start their business and allow other PWDs to be part of their workforce.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The study would like to highlight the importance of disabled students in public universities to have entrepreneurship intention (EI) since tertiary education. (Nasharudin & Harun, 2010) reported that the students' EI is (58.8%). The percentage could be further improved despite several incentives and entrepreneurship training given at universities and government level. Consequently, if the numbers of graduates generally and disabled graduates specifically who choose to be an entrepreneur is decreasing, the government would not be achieving its mission of turning them into job creators. The grant allocated also might be unutilized, thus decreasing their chance to have a more promising career away to lead their life in a dignified way from the discrimination in the normal workplace.

Furthermore, despite so many EI studies published, research on the factors that influence students' intentions to launch a new start-up or entrepreneurship effort is still lacking, even though entrepreneurship has been viewed as essential to economic development and growth (Fayolle and Linan, 2013; Karimi et al., 2014). The contemporary task of the university is to develop entrepreneurial attitudes and to inspire creative thinking (Žur, 2014), as well as to awaken EI among students (Kuehn, 2008). Entrepreneurship education is not only important in the development of

entrepreneurial attitudes, but in stimulating entrepreneurship in general (Daszkiewicz, 2014; Urbaniec, 2014), and especially in the family business (Rachwał, 2010).

Many studies have applied the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to predict the intention to start a business often using convenience samples of non-disabled university students in different contexts and countries (Kolvereid, 1996; Krueger et al., 2000; Fayolle and Gailly, 2015; Luthje and Franke, 2003); VanGelderenet.al., 2018). Although TPB is so robust in predicting the EI of the higher education institution (HEIs) students, little research has been done to predict the EI of disabled students. Hence, this study would add to the scarcity of the literature on the disabled students' EI by employing the TPB.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To evaluate the relationship between Attitude toward Entrepreneurship Intention (EI) among disabled students.
2. To determine the relationship between Subjective Norm (SN) and Entrepreneurship Intention (EI) among disabled students.
3. To investigate the relationship between Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) and Entrepreneurship Intention among disabled students.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between Attitude and Entrepreneurship Intention (EI)?