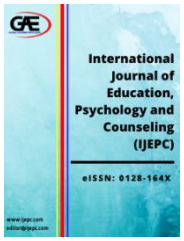
International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELLING (IJEPC)
https://gaexcellence.com/ijepc

A STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION AMONG STUDENTS IN MALAYSIAN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Shien-Peng Low[1], Xiao-Yue Chow[2], See-Haw Ha[3], Yong-Hooi Lim[4*]

[1]Department of Business and Public Administration, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia
shienpeng.low@1utar.my https://orcid.org/0009-0002-8402-6365
[2] Department of Business and Public Administration, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia
xiaoyue521@1utar.my https://orcid.org/0009-0005-1451-3813
[3]Department of Business and Public Administration, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia
haseehaw02@1utar.my https://orcid.org/0009-0005-1536-0708
[4]Department of Business and Public Administration, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia
limyh@utar.edu.my https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2663-0882
*Corresponding Author

Article Info:

Article history:
Received date: 12.04.2026
Revised date: 23.04.2026
Accepted date: 04.05.2026
Published date: 11.06.2026

To cite this document:

Low, S. P., Chow, X, Y., Ha, S. H., & Lim, Y. H. (2026). A Study on Factors Affecting Digital Entrepreneurial Intention Among Students in Malaysian Private Universities. *International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling, 11*(63), 379-396.

Abstract:

Digital entrepreneurship is now an important innovative economic driver, especially in Malaysia's rapidly developing digital economy. Through the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this study investigates the factors that determines students' digital entrepreneurial intentions at a private university in Malaysia. The impact of perceived behavioral control (PCB), personal attitude (PA) and subjective norm (SN) on intention of students to participate in digital entrepreneurship have been analysed empirically. This study adopted a quantitative research design and distributed structured questionnaire to 388 private university students in Malaysia. The findings showed that PCB, PA and SN are all significantly influenced digital entrepreneurship intention. The findings highlight the importance of developing relevant digital skills in students, fostering positive perceptions of digital entrepreneurship, and leveraging social influence to encourage entrepreneurship. Overall, this paper contributes in-depth understanding of digital entrepreneurial intentions and offer practical implications for fostering future young digital entrepreneurs in Malaysia.

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

DOI: 10.35631/IJEPC.1163021 **Keyword:**

Digital Entrepreneurial Intention; Malaysia Private Universities; Perceived Behavioral Control; Personal Attitudes; Subjective Norms

Introduction

In digital age nowadays, entrepreneurship has moved beyond traditional limits. The outbreak of coronavirus expedited the business transition to an online platform, changed consumer habits and created new opportunities for digital entrepreneurship (Gunaseelan et al., 2022). Digital entrepreneurship as a subset of entrepreneurship involving all or part of the physical components of a conventional business that have been converted to digital form. It involves using new technologies to create business models, products, or services (Hull et al., 2007). Digitalization has significantly altered the world today, with cutting-edge and creative digital technology having profound effects on many facets of human existence (Elnadi & Gheith, 2023). it has caused a significant change in business models toward digital environments along with new advancements in entrepreneurship (Kraus et al., 2019). Therefore, digital technologies have produced an environment that is favorable for entrepreneurship. Through digital platforms, it could help to lower initial costs, reach out to a wider market, and improve sustainability, making them especially appealing to contemporary entrepreneurs. Because they facilitate younger generations' tech-driven lifestyles and remove barriers to admission, these digital opportunities are even more important for student (Hull et al., 2007).

In Malaysia, the digital economy is a major driver of national growth. The government is promoting digital entrepreneurship to boost economic growth and innovation (Khazanah Research Institute, 2024). Initiatives like the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 (NEP2030), the Social Entrepreneurship Blueprint for Malaysia 2030 (SEMy2030), the 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP), and Budget 2023 provide support through funding, infrastructure, and institutions to foster a positive environment for young entrepreneurs, especially in the digital sector (Khazanah Research Institute, 2024). According to Zarith et al. (2023), Malaysian public universities trained 5% of their graduates to become entrepreneurs from 2016 to 2020, supported by over 2,000 qualified educators and structured entrepreneurship courses. In contrast, Malaysian private universities lack reliable data and consistent practices in entrepreneurship education. This leads to concerns that students at private university may receive less entrepreneurial support. The private universities struggle in promoting entrepreneurial readiness among students. Only few university students are stepping up to enter the digital entrepreneurial space. Students' digital entrepreneurial intentions, defined as their desire to pursue digital ventures, remain low. This raises questions about how to improve the entrepreneurial intentions among young people in higher education as they play a key role as future digital entrepreneurs (Zarith et al., 2023).

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

According to Ajzen (1991), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) identifies perceived behavioral control (PCB), personal attitude (PA) and subjective norms (SN) as key determinants of entrepreneurial intention. Some previous research has investigated how well PBC predicts digital entrepreneurial intentions. In the study of Ajzen (1991), it shows that stronger intentions are correlated with a behavior's perceived level of control. Simultaneously, Alkhalaileh et. al. (2023); Aloulou (2016); Guerrero et al. (2009); Noor and Malek (2021); found that PBC have significant and positive relationship with digital entrepreneurial intention. Alkhalaileh (2023) claims that the likelihood of expressing plans to engage in digital entrepreneurial activities was higher among those who believed they had the requisite opportunities, resources, and abilities. However, some studies have reported different arguments with PBC. Shah and Soomro (2017) claim that PBC and digital entrepreneurial intention did not show a statistically significant correlation. Additionally, Cynthia et al. (2020) also failed to show that PBC and digital entrepreneurial intention were significantly correlated.

Besides, some past studies have consistently showed that a positive attitude significantly enhance university students' entrepreneurial intention (Barba- Sánchez et al., 2022; Teoh et al., 2024; Tošović & Jovanović, 2021; Vamvaka et al., 2020; Younis et al., 2020). However, the fact that not all study findings are consistent should be noted. The relevance between attitude and entrepreneurial intention in the context of cultural pragmatism such as Chinese culture may not be so direct (Lai & To, 2020). Furthermore, Ozaralli and Rivenburgh (2016) argue that the connection between personal attitude and entrepreneurial intention is not always consistent or certain because they found a negative correlation between these variables.

In addition, the importance of subjective norms varies by culture; in collectivist societies like Malaysia, they tend to carry more weight, but some research shows that students might prioritize personal goals over societal expectations in career decisions. Universities must acknowledge these behavioral factors to create programs that align with both policies and student needs. Such programs should reflect students' values, needs, and digital aspirations. Without this alignment, even well-funded initiatives may not inspire true entrepreneurial activity among students.

Given the mixed findings from the past studies, there is still uncertainty regarding the connection between PBC, PA, SN and digital entrepreneurial intention. Consequently, this study is to examine how PCB, PA and SN affect Malaysian Private University students' intentions to pursue digital entrepreneurship by applying TPB (Ajzen, 1991) to close these gaps. Furthermore, research applying TPB to digital entrepreneurship in Malaysian private universities is still limited, creating a gap in understanding how these factors influence students' intentions in private universities. Most existing research has examined general entrepreneurship and targeted public universities, where entrepreneurship education is more established. The perspectives of private university students, who represent a significant part of Malaysia's higher education population, have not been thoroughly examined. This research gap emphasizes the need to learn more about private university students' intention to pursue digital entrepreneurship. There are three research questions (RQs) in this study: 1) RQ1- Does PBC has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention? 2) RQ2-Does PA has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention? 3) RQ3-Does SN has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention? Hence, this study could provide practical recommendations for universities and policymakers to support the design of targeted

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396
educational programs and strategies that effectively nurture the young generation of digital business owners.

Literature Review

Digital Entrepreneurial Intention (DEI)

The intention is commonly acknowledged as a key predictor of human behavior, reflecting a person's deliberate commitment to achieve a goal and fostering initiative, risk-taking, and independence (Al-Mamary & Alraja, 2022; Bird, 1988; Liñán & Chen, 2009). With regard to entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial intention represents the willingness to start a business and is essential for initiating, developing, and expanding entrepreneurial ventures. The rise of digitalization has transformed business models, giving rise to digital entrepreneurship, which involves conducting business entirely or partly online (Elnadi & Gheith, 2023; Hull et al., 2007; Kraus et al., 2019). Digital platforms reduce startup costs, expand market reach, and enhance sustainability, making entrepreneurship more accessible, especially for students. Digital entrepreneurial intention specifically refers to the desire of an individual to launch technology/internet-based businesses. Intention remains the most reliable predictor of behavior, and understanding digital entrepreneurial intention is vital for fostering entrepreneurship in the digital era.

Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)

Perceived behavioral control (PBC), which is also part of the elements of Ajzen's TPB, which is essential for clarifying how people judge their capacity to carry out a certain activity. According to Alkhalaileh (2023), PBC measures how confident a person is in their capacity to get over challenges and carry out the desired activity. It is closely related to self-efficacy, encompassing both perceived control over behavior and belief in one's abilities (Bandura, 1991; Liñán & Chen, 2009). Owing to PBC stands for self-confidence of people in running and starting a new business within the scope of entrepreneurship, and thus this idea is essential to comprehend digital entrepreneurial intention since motivation can be significantly impacted by how easy or difficult it is viewed to launch a digital business (Alkhalaileh, 2023).

Dinc and Budic (2016) point out that PBC is a key component of the theory of planned behavior. They also proposed that PBC and behavioral intention may be a reliable indicator of a person's success in a particular sector according to TPB. According to Ajzen (1991), perceived behavioral control was introduced to address circumstances when individuals might not have whole volitional control over the activity of interest. He also proposed that the theory of planned behavior was modified to incorporate the idea of perceived behavioral control in order to account for the nonvolitional components that are present in all behaviors, at least in principle. More than that, Liñán and Chen (2009) also proposed that PBC would encompass both the sense of control over the behavior and the sense of ability. Hence, perceived behavioral control can be utilized as an extra determinant of behavior since it is accurate and gives valuable information about the real control that individuals can exert in the circumstance.

PBC is particularly relevant in entrepreneurship, as it influences motivation and the likelihood of starting and managing a digital business. Some research suggests that perceived behavioral control is a strong predictor of entrepreneurial intention.

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

Students are more likely to pursue entrepreneurship if they have self-confidence. (Vamvaka et al., 2020). Overall, PBC is an essential component of TPB and a critical indicator of the intention to pursue digital entrepreneurship. It encompasses both the perceived accessibility of outside resources and the internal confidence in one's own abilities, two elements that are particularly important in the fast-paced, dynamic digital world. Therefore, it is expected that PBC will have a major impact on digital entrepreneurial intention. H1 can be converted from RQ1.

RQ1: Does perceived behavioral control has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention?
H1: Perceived behavioral control has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention.

Personal Attitude (PA)

A fundamental element of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), personal attitude (PA) represents a person's favorable or unfavorable assessment of entrepreneurship and has a direct impact on entrepreneurial intention. (Ajzen, 1987, 1991; Autio et al., 2001; Liñán & Chen, 2009). PA pointed in TPB theory is a core element of the entrepreneurial intention model (Ajzen, 2011), mainly because it directly affects a person's entrepreneurial intention (Ajzen, 1991; Liñán & Chen, 2009). It is often referred to as attitude towards entrepreneurship, as well as attitude towards behavior, typically defined as the degree to which a person believes that starting their own business as an entrepreneur is either beneficial or detrimental (Autio et al., 2001; Liñán & Chen, 2009). Ajzen (1987) defined it as positive/negative evaluation of a specific behavior for a person. Regarding a study by Bazan et al. (2019) emphasized attitude is the extent to which a someone holds a positive/negative perspective of a certain behavior, commonly known as desirability. An individual's positive evaluation of entrepreneurship is called his or her attitude towards e-entrepreneurship (Lai & To, 2020). PA assesses a person's inclination to engage in entrepreneurial activities, including digital entrepreneurship, and is often linked to perceived desirability and personal evaluation of entrepreneurial behavior (Bazan et al., 2019; Lai & To, 2020). While many studies agree that positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship encourage intentions, a few contend that these attitudes alone are not sufficient without supportive environments or encouragement from peers.

As a result, PA is expected to have a major impact on digital entrepreneurial intention. From RQ2, H2 can be converted.

RQ2: Does personal attitude have significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention?
H2: Personal attitude has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention.

Subjective Norms (SN)

Subjective norms (SN) is an essential element in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). It refers to the social pressures individuals experience from influential figures such as family, friends, mentors, and cultural role models when choosing should participate in a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). These norms can encourage or discourage entrepreneurial activities, making them particularly important for university students in the early stages of career exploration. For university students, who are often just beginning their career exploration, subjective norms are especially important. Students often rely on social validation and approval when making decisions about their careers.

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

Research shows that SN significantly predicts entrepreneurial intentions, especially in collectivist cultures like Malaysia, where family and community support strongly influence decision-making (Arrindell, 2003; Joseph, 2017; Liñán & Chen, 2009). SN can affect intentions both directly and indirectly by shaping personal attitudes and perceived behavioral control, enhancing self-efficacy and motivation (Saeed et al., 2013). Concerning digital entrepreneurship, support from mentors, peers, and institutional networks further normalizes and reduces the perceived risks of technology-based ventures, boosting students' entrepreneurial intentions (Barba-Sánchez et al., 2022; Bazan et al., 2019; Yit, 2023). Overall, SN is a crucial social factor that affects Malaysian private university students' intentions to pursue digital entrepreneurship. It is, therefore, expected that SN will have a substantial impact on digital entrepreneurial intention. Hence, RQ3 can be turned into H3.

RQ3: Does subjective norms has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention?
H3: Subjective norms has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention.

Research Framework

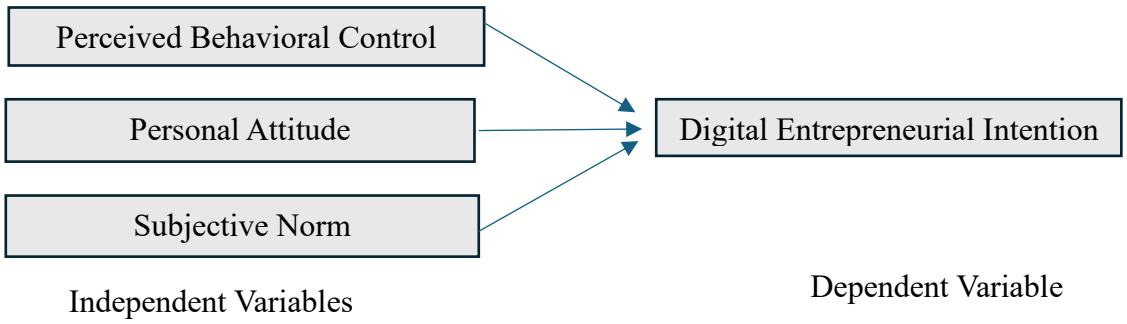


Figure 1: Research Model

Based on the discussion in the literature above, Figure 1 shows the suggested research framework for this study. According to the Theory of Plan Behavior (TPB), digital entrepreneur intention is anticipated to be directly impacted by PBC, PA and SN. TPB claims that the intention of a person in digital entrepreneurship reflects the effort they plan to put forth in order to engage in that entrepreneurial behavior (Liñán & Chen, 2009). Several studies such as Ajzen (1991); Alkhalaileh et al. (2023); Aloulou (2016); Liñán and Chen (2009); Rhodes and Courneya (2003) proved that TPB is the most accurate indicator of digital entrepreneurial intention, independent of cultural environment. Despite TPB has been extensively used in numerous studies, little empirical research has examined digital entrepreneurial intention among Malaysian private university students. The majority of current research focuses on public universities and general entrepreneurship. Additionally, previous research using the Theory of Planned Behavior has shown conflicting results about the relationship between PBC, PA, SN and behavioural intention, which may differ depending on the population and context. Thus, this study expands the empirical corpus by investigating TPB in a novel contextual setting. This study aims to bridge these gaps by re-examining TPB connections in this underexplored context.

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

Methodology

A quantitative, cross-sectional, deductive research approach was used in this study. This study uses the Theory of Plan Behavior (TPB) to investigate how students in Malaysian private universities' intentions to pursue digital entrepreneurship are impacted by perceived behavioral control, personal attitude, and subjective norms. The cross-sectional design allowed for the collecting of data at one particular moment in time to examine correlations between variables, while the quantitative technique was suitable for testing theory-driven hypotheses using measurable constructs. The study focused on students from Malaysia's top five private universities according to the QS World University Rankings (2024), as they might serve as a useful guide for other private universities in Malaysia.

A structured/standardized, self-administered online survey was used to gather data and it was sent via email, social media and university learning management systems. Convenience sampling under non-probability was used in this study to collect data from top 5 Malaysian private university students due to the respondents' accessibility and the practical difficulties in acquiring a full sampling frame of Malaysian private university students. This sampling technique has been extensively employed in educational research. Since this study's target respondents were students who were used to using digital media, the online questionnaire made it feasible to efficiently reach them. The Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling table indicated that a minimum of 379 responses were required for the sample size in a population of 20,672 students. The collection of 388 usable responses was accomplished, exceeding the minimum requirement and ensuring adequate statistical power for analysis.

The questionnaire consisted of five sections covering demographic information, perceived behavioral control, personal attitude, subjective norms, and digital entrepreneurial intention. Every construct was assessed using a Likert scale with five points adapted from validated instruments in prior studies. Perceived behavioral control was measured using a multidimensional approach distinguishing internal self-efficacy and external controllability (Ajzen, 2002), while personal attitude was assessed using a two-component model comprising instrumental and affective attitudes (Vamvaka et al., 2020). Subjective norms captured the influence of family and peers (Bazan et al., 2019). Furthermore, digital entrepreneurial intention was measured using a pure intention scale (Liñán & Chen, 2009) to maintain conceptual clarity. A pilot study involving 30-50 respondents was conducted to assess reliability and feasibility prior to the full-scale survey.

Data processing involved careful editing and coding to ensure completeness and accuracy before analysis using SPSS. Descriptive analysis was used to summarize respondents' demographic profiles and examine the central tendencies of the study constructs. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha indicated acceptable to excellent internal consistency for all variables. Preliminary analyses, including normality and multicollinearity tests, confirmed that the data met the assumptions required for regression analysis.

Inferential analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression to test the hypothesized relationships between PBC, PA, SN and digital entrepreneurial intention. This method enabled the assessment of the individual and combined effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable while controlling for interrelationships among predictors. Model fit was evaluated using R^2 and F-statistics, and hypothesis testing was based on the significance of regression coefficients. However, more sophisticated methods might offer more robust model

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

validation and concurrent evaluation of measurement and structural models. Nevertheless, when testing direct impact between constructs in this study, Multiple Regression Analysis is still a common and acceptable method.

Overall, the methodology adopted in this study ensured systematic, transparent, and reliable examination of the factors influencing digital entrepreneurial intention among private university students in Malaysia.

Results

Table 1: Summary of Demographic Information

Demographic Factor	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	132	34%
	Female	256	66%
Race	Malay	28	7.2%
	Chinese	325	83.8%
	Indian	32	8.2%
	Others	3	0.8%
Age	18 to 20	95	24.5%
	21 to 23	229	59%
	24 and above	64	16.5%
Education	STPM/A-Level/Foundation	37	9.5%
	Diploma	26	6.7%
	Bachelor's Degree	294	75.8%
	Master's Degree	29	7.5%
	Others	2	0.5%
Year of Study	1st Year	109	28.1%
	2nd Year	67	17.3%
	3rd Year	164	42.3%
	4th Year	35	9%
	Others	13	3.4%
University	Taylor's University	93	24%
	UCSI University	60	15.5%
	Universiti Teknologi PERTRONAS (UTP)	73	18.8%
	INTI International University	75	19.3%
	Sunway University	87	22.4%
Digital Platform	Lazada	33	8.5%
	Shopee	95	24.5%
	Instagram	139	35.8%
	Facebook	34	8.8%
	Tiktok	57	14.7%
	Youtube	28	7.2%
	Others	2	0.5%
Gadget	Smartphone	254	65.5%
	Laptop / Computer	86	22.2%
	Tablet	48	12.4%

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

Digital Platform Do You Prefer to Launch a Startup	Media Sharing Platform	86	22.2%
	Social Media Sites	207	53.4%
	Marketplace Platform	94	24.2%
Interest	Yes	321	82.7%
	No	67	17.3%

Descriptive analysis (Table 1) revealed that the majority of respondents were female (66%), Chinese (84%), and aged between 21 and 23 years (59%). Most respondents were undergraduate students (75.8%), particularly in their third year of study (42.3%), indicating that participants were at a critical stage of career decision-making. The sample was relatively evenly distributed across the top five selected private universities, ensuring adequate institutional representation. In terms of digital engagement, Instagram emerged as the most frequently used platform (35.8%), while smartphones were the primary devices used for digital activities (65.5%). There are 53.4% of respondents indicated that they preferred social media sites. Furthermore, a substantial proportion of respondents (82.7%) expressed interest in using digital platforms to launch their own online entrepreneurial projects or start new businesses,

Table 2: Central Tendencies Measurement of Constructs

Variables	N	Mean	Std.Deviation
Perceived Behavioral Control	388	3.7841	0.85804
Personal Attitude	388	3.9320	0.78270
Subjective Norms	388	3.8419	0.81996
Digital Entrepreneurial Intention	388	3.7826	0.98138

Central tendency analysis (Table 2) showed that personal attitude (mean=3.9320, SD=0.78270) and subjective norms (mean=3.8419, SD=0.81996) recorded the highest and second highest mean score, suggesting that students generally held positive perceptions toward digital entrepreneurship and receive social support. However, the mean score for perceived behavioral control was slightly lower, at 3.7841 (SD = 0.85804), reflecting moderate confidence in respondents' ability to engage in digital entrepreneurship. Finally, the mean score for digital entrepreneurial intention was 3.7826 (SD = 0.98138), indicating the students' digital entrepreneurial intention can be considered good and positive also, as it is still above 3.00.

Table 3: Reliability Analysis

	Pilot Study	
	Cronbach's Alpha	**Reliability Level**
Perceived Behavioral Control	0.860	Good
Personal Attitude	0.871	Good
Subjective Norms	0.798	Acceptable
Digital Entrepreneurial Intention	0.948	Excellent

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

Reliability analysis (Table3) demonstrated strong internal consistency for all constructs in pilot study. For each variable, the values of Cronbach's alpha were higher than the acceptable cutoff of 0.70. These findings verify the reliability and suitability of the measurement employed in this study for subsequent statistical analysis.

Table 4: Preliminary Data Analysis

Variables	Skewness		Kurtosis		Collinearity Statistics	
	Statistic	Std.Error	Statistic	Std.Error	Tolerance	VIF
Perceived Behavioral Control Average	-.890	.124	.421	.247	.294	3.398
Personal Attitude Average	-1.005	.124	1.102	.247	.316	3.169
Subjective Norms Average	-.977	.124	1.230	.247	.375	2.669
Digital Entrepreneurial Intention Average	-1.144	.124	.844	.247	-	-

According to Table 4, skewness and kurtosis values examined by this study values to evaluate the normality of the data distribution. Skewness values for symmetric distributions are generally expected to be between -2 and +2, while skewness values for normal distributions are generally considered acceptable between -1 and +1 (Hair et al., 2019). All variables fell within the acceptable range in this study, indicating that the data were approximately normally distributed.

Besides, Table 4 shows the tolerance levels and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) used to evaluate the multicollinearity of independent variables. Perceived behavioral control showed a tolerance of 0.294 and a VIF of 3.398, personal attitude has a tolerance of 0.316 and a VIF of 3.169, while subjective norms has a tolerance of 0.375 and a VIF of 2.669. There is no evidence of multicollinearity among the independent variables, as evidenced by tolerance values that are greater than 0.20 and VIF values lower than 5.0. Therefore, multicollinearity is not an issue in this analysis. As all variables in this study fell within the recommended thresholds, there was no evidence of multicollinearity among the independent variables. Therefore, multicollinearity was not considered a problem in this analysis

. **Table 6: Multiple Regression (ANOVA)Table 5: Multiple Regression (R Square)**

R	*R Square*	*Adjusted R Square*	*Std. Error of the Estimate*
0.877[a]	*0.768*	*0.766*	*0.47426*

	Sum of Squares	*df*	*Mean Square*	*F*	*Sig*
Regression	*286.356*	*3*	*95.452*	*424.384*	*.000[a]*
Residual	*86.369*	*384*	*.225*		
Total	*372.725*	*387*			

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

Table 7: Inferential Analysis - Multiple Regression (Coefficients)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-.578	.128		-4.509	.000
Perceived Behavioral Control	.439	.052	.383	8.468	.000
Personal Attitude	.333	.055	.266	6.073	.000
Subjective Norms	.362	.048	.303	7.544	.000

Inferential analysis using multiple linear regression revealed that the overall model was statistically significant and explained a substantial proportion of variance in digital entrepreneurial intention. Table 6 shows that the total regression model is statistically significant ($p<0.05$)

The F-statistic further confirms that the model effectively explains how independent variables (perceived behavioral control, personal attitude, and subjective norms) and the dependent variable (digital entrepreneurship intention) are related. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.768$) indicates a strong positive correlation between the independent variables and dependent variable. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.768$) indicates that 76.8% of the variance in digital entrepreneurship intention can be explained by those three independent variables, while the remaining 23.2% may be due to other factors not covered in this study.

According to hypothesis testing, the intention to pursue digital entrepreneurship is significantly influenced by each of the three independent factors and the p-value of each variable (0.000) lower than the threshold of 0.05. Specifically:

H1: Perceived behavioral control has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention.
H2: Personal attitude has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention.
H3: Subjective norm has significant impact on digital entrepreneurial intention.

Perceived behavioral control is the predictor variable that contributes the most to the variance of the dependent variable (digital entrepreneurial intention) as it has the largest beta value (0.383). This means that when all other predictors in the model are controlled for, perceived behavioral control contributes the most to the variance of the dependent variable (digital entrepreneurial intention). The next largest predictor is subjective norms, as this predictor has the second-largest beta value (0.303). This means that when all other predictors in the model are controlled for, subjective norms contribute the second-largest amount of variance to the dependent variable. The smallest predictor is personal attitudes, as this predictor has a beta value (0.266). This means that, when all other predictors in the model are controlled for, personal attitudes contribute the least amount of variance to the dependent variable (digital entrepreneurial intention).

Overall, the findings indicate that all three independent variables are important in explaining digital entrepreneurial intention, with perceived behavioral control being the strongest determinant.

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

Discussion

Based on the results, there is a significant impact of perceived behavioral control on digital entrepreneurial intention ($p<0.05$). H1 therefore is supported. Hassan (2020) and Karimi et al. (2017) similarly discovered that people were more likely to declare their intention to participate in digital entrepreneurship activities if they believed they had the requisite opportunities, resources, and abilities. Furthermore, Vamvaka et al. (2020) also showed that PBC, particularly self-efficacy, was a strong predictor of entrepreneurial intention among Greek IT undergraduates. The outcome from this study is being supported by Alkhalaileh et al (2023); Aloulou (2016); Dinc and Budic (2016); Guerrero et al. (2009); Noor and Malek (2021) who demonstrated that PBC have significant and positive relationship with digital entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, Dinc and Budic (2016) showed that PBC may be a reliable indicator of an individual's success in a particular sector in accordance with the theory of planned behavior. This study's results strongly support the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), with PCB emerging as significant factor with strongest influence on digital entrepreneurial intention ($p<0.05$, highest beta value under standardized coefficients = 0.383). According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), PBC represents student's perceived competence and control over carrying out an activity, which is particularly relevant to digital entrepreneurship. Unlike conventional business models, digital entrepreneurship is highly dependent on individual abilities such as digital literacy, familiarity with online platforms and the ability to adapt to rapidly evolving technological systems. As such, Malaysian Private University students are more likely to increase their digital entrepreneurial intention if they are confident in their abilities to perform such activities.

Furthermore, the findings also revealed that there is also a significant impact of subjective norms on digital entrepreneurial intention ($p<0.05$). H3 is hence supported. It has been observed that students who perceived strong social support were more likely to believe that they could succeed in the study of Saeed et al. (2013). The outcome from this study is being supported by Yit (2023) who supported that the subjective norm has significant and positive relationship with digital entrepreneurial intention, and it showed that when students in emerging economies believed there was substantial institutional and community support for digital projects, they were more likely to declare plans to pursue digital entrepreneurship. Furthermore, subjective norm is a significant factor with the second largest influence on digital entrepreneurial intention ($p<0.05$, second highest beta value under standardized coefficients = 0.303). According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), this is particularly important in the case of intention to pursue in digital entrepreneurship for Malaysian Private University students as their career choices can be influenced by social norms from friends, family, university, government and other important people in their lives. Social impact (through comparisons and observations of friends and family pursuing digital entrepreneurship) affects the normative appeal of entrepreneurship whereas parental, friends, university or government support affects the acceptability of digital entrepreneurship as their career. Therefore, subjective norm shapes the Malaysian Private University students' beliefs of what is perceived as desirable, acceptable and thus their intention to become a digital entrepreneur.

Besides, the results revealed that there is a significant impact of personal attitude on digital entrepreneurial intention ($p<0.05$). H2 is thus supported. According to Ahmad et al. (2022), emotions, beliefs, and judgements against various possibilities were used to stimulate an individual's attitude, and it plays a significant role in determining the future actions of individuals. The outcome from this study is being supported by Barba- Sánchez et al.

(2022); Teoh et al. (2024); Tošović and Jovanović (2021); Vamvaka et al. (2020); Younis et al. (2020) who stated that personal attitude has significant and positive relationship with digital entrepreneurial intention. Hence, it has been shown in several past studies that a positive entrepreneurial attitude could increase the intention of individuals in launching digital business (Luthje & Franke, 2003; Phan et al., 2002; Robinson et al., 1991). Despite personal attitude is a significant factor affecting digital entrepreneurial intention, the comparatively low contribution ($p<0.05$, lowest beta value under standardized coefficients = 0.266) indicates that personal attitude is not strongly drive behavioral intention. Even though Malaysian Private University students may have a positive attitude toward digital entrepreneurship, this does not always translate into action unless they also believe they can succeed in it and find social support. This implies that although students from the private universities in Malaysia may have a positive personal attitude on digital entrepreneurship, their intention is more strongly influenced by whether they believe they have the abilities and necessary skills needed to succeed as well as receive social support. Thus, among students at private universities in Malaysia, positive personal attitudes are merely cognitive, and it could not strongly drive digital entrepreneurial intention.

Conclusion

The study highlights some important managerial implications for universities, government agencies and industry stakeholders. For the universities, they play a crucial role in building students' entrepreneurial skills. This study would like to propose some ways to improve students' perceived control over their behaviors by 1. offering training in digital business tools like website development, digital marketing and analytics platforms, 2. organizing workshops and boot camps on e-commerce, drop shipping, and online marketplaces and 3. creating university-based entrepreneurial incubators and accelerators that provide mentorship, funding, and workspace. Additionally, including entrepreneurial case studies in the curriculum and inviting successful digital entrepreneurs as guest speakers can positively impact students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship. This can help them see entrepreneurship as something achievable and appealing (Yit, 2023). In additional, for government and policymakers, this study would like to propose to connect national initiatives with university programs to build a supportive environment for digital entrepreneurs. This can be done by 1. aligning the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 (NEP2030) and the 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP) with higher education entrepreneurship efforts, 2. expanding financial support for young entrepreneurs through grants, low-interest loans, and tax incentives and 3. strengthening mentorship programs by linking students with government- supported entrepreneur networks and advisory services. These efforts will not only encourage positive views of entrepreneurship by showing institutional support but also boost students' confidence in pursuing entrepreneurial careers. Besides, for industry stakeholders, they also play a significant role in developing future young digital entrepreneurs. This study would like to propose the collaborative efforts between universities and businesses can include 1. offering internships and apprenticeships that allow students to gain practical entrepreneurial and digital skills, 2. organizing business plan competitions and hackathons to inspire creativity and real-world application of entrepreneurial knowledge and 3. providing consultancy projects where students work with companies to address digital business challenges. These initiatives help connect academic knowledge with practical entrepreneurial experience, giving students the confidence, connections, and skills needed to start their own businesses (Gunaseelan et al., 2022). Despite its contributions, the study has limitations related to sampling method, cross-sectional approach and use of self-reported information. Future studies

are recommended to adopt probability sampling, longitudinal designs, and additional explanatory variables such as digital literacy and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Overall, the study concludes that strengthening individual capabilities, social support systems and mindsets are crucial for promoting digital entrepreneurial intention and supporting Malaysia's innovation-driven economic growth.

Acknowledgements: The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman for providing the necessary resources and support throughout the course of this research. Special appreciation is extended to colleagues and peers who contributed valuable insights and constructive feedback, which greatly enhanced the quality of this paper.

Funding Statement: No Funding

Conflict of Interest Statement: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper. All authors have contributed to this work and approved the final version of the manuscript for submission to the International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counselling (IJEPC).

Ethics Statement: This study was conducted in accordance with ethical research standards. All procedures involving human participants were reviewed and approved by UTAR Scientific and Ethical Review Committee, approval number U/SERC/78-520/2025. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. The data collected were used solely for academic purposes.

Author Contribution Statement: All authors contributed significantly to the development of this manuscript. All authors were responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, and overall supervision of the study. Author 1, 2 and 3 handled data collection, analysis and interpretation of results. All authors contributed to the literature review, drafting and critical revision of the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript prior to submission.

International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling
IJEPC
EISSN : 0128-164X
Volume 11 Issue 63 (June 2026) PP. 379-396

References

Ahmad, K. S., Rahim, N. A., Samad, K. A., Mohamad, M. S., & Juhari, J. (2022). Assessing factors of digital entrepreneurial intention among young generation. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 12*(10), 1284-1295. https://hrmars.com/papers_submitted/14995/assessing-factors-of-digital-entrepreneurial-intention-among-young-generation.pdf

Ajzen, I. (1987). Attitudes, traits and actions: Dispositional prediction of behavior in personality and social psychology. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *20*, 1–63. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0065-2601(08)60411-6

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50*(2), 179–211. https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T

Ajzen, I. (2002). Perceived behavioral control, self-efficacy, locus of control and the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *32*(4), 665–683. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2002.tb00236.x

Ajzen, I. (2011). The theory of planned behavior: Reactions and reflections. *Psychology & Health*, *26*(9), 1113–1127. https://doi.org/10.1080/08870446.2011.613995

Alkhalaileh, M. Y. M., Kovács, S., & Katonáné Kovács, J. (2023). Factors influencing digital entrepreneurship intention among undergraduate business students in Jordan. *Human Technology*, *19*(3), 400–418. https://doi.org/10.14254/1795-6889.2023.19-3.5

Al-Mamary, Y. H. S., & Alraja, M. M. (2022). Understanding entrepreneurship intention and behavior in the light of TPB model from the digital entrepreneurship perspective. *International Journal of Information Management Data Insights*, *2*(2), 100106. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2667096822000490#sec0002

Aloulou, W. J. (2016). Predicting entrepreneurial intentions of final year Saudi University business students by applying the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 23*(4), 1142–1164. https://doi.org/10.1108/jsbed-02-2016-0028

Arrindell, W. (2003). Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations. *Behavior Research and Therapy*, *41*(7), 861–862. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0005-7967(02)00184-5

Autio, E., H. Keeley, R., Klofsten, M., G. C. Parker, G., & Hay, M. (2001). Entrepreneurial intent among students in Scandinavia and in the USA. *Enterprise and Innovation Management Studies*, *2*(2), 145–160. https://doi.org/10.1080/14632440110094632

Bandura, A. (1991). Social cognitive theory of self-regulation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50(*2), 248-287.

Barba-Sánchez, V., Mitre-Aranda, M., & Brío-González, J. del. (2022). The entrepreneurial intention of university students: An environmental perspective. *European Research on Management and Business Economics*, *28*(2), 100184. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iedeen.2021.100184

Bazan, C., Shaikh, A., Frederick, S., Amjad, A., Yap, S., Finn, C., & Rayner, J. (2019). *Effect of memorial university's environment & support system in shaping entrepreneurial intention of students.* ***Journal of Entrepreneurship Education, 22***(1), 1–35. https://www.abacademies.org/articles/Effect-of-memorial-university-environment-support-system-1528-2651-22-1-267.pdf

Bird, B. (1988). Implementing entrepreneurial ideas: The case for intention. *Academy of Management Review, 13*(3), 442–453. https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/258091.pdf

Cynthia, A. U., Ameh, A. A., & Alabi, J. O. (2020). Perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention: Empirical evidence from selected tertiary institutions in Kogi

State. *Ilorin Journal of Human Resource Management, 4*(2), 66-77. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Cynthia-Alogwuja/publication/344631349_PERCEIVED_BEHAVIOURAL_CONTROL_AND_ENTREPRENEURIAL_INTENTION_EMPIRICAL_EVIDENCE_FROM_SELECTED_TERTIARY_INSTITUTIONS_IN_KOGI_STATE/links/6197b24f3068c54fa500b0ce/PERCEIVED-BEHAVIOURAL-CONTROL-AND-ENTREPRENEURIAL-INTENTION-EMPIRICAL-EVIDENCE-FROM-SELECTED-TERTIARY-INSTITUTIONS-IN-KOGI-STATE.pdf

Dinc, M. S., & Budic, S. (2016). The impact of personal attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control on entrepreneurial intentions of women. *Eurasian Journal of Business and Economics, 9*(17), 23-35. https://doi.org/10.17015/ejbe.2016.017.02

Elnadi, M., & Gheith, M. H. (2023). The role of individual characteristics in shaping digital entrepreneurial intention among university students: Evidence from Saudi Arabia. *Thinking Skills and Creativity, 47*, 101236. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2023.101236

Guerrero, M., Lavín, J., & Álvarez, M. (2009). The role of education on start-up intentions: A structural equation model of Mexican university students. In the *35th Annual Conference Proceedings of the Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship.* https://doi.org/10.2307/258091

Gunaseelan, K., Subramaniam, T. S., Rathakrishnan, G., Jabor, M. K., & Sern, L. C. (2022). Impact of digital entrepreneurship in Malaysia in the era of covid-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, *12*(10). https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v12-i10/13296

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning. https://eli.johogo.com/Class/CCU/SEM/_Multivariate%20Data%20Analysis_Hair.pdf

Hassan, H. M. K. (2020). Intention towards social entrepreneurship of university students in an emerging economy: The influence of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurship education. *On the Horizon, 28*(3), 133–151. https://doi.org/10.1108/OTH-04-2020-0012

Hull, C. E. K., Hung, Y. T. C., Hair, N., Perotti, V., & DeMartino, R. (2007). Taking advantage of digital opportunities: A typology of digital entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Networking and Virtual Organisations, 4*(3), 290-303. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJNVO.2007.015166

Joseph, I. (2017). Factors influencing international student entrepreneurial intention in Malaysia. *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management*, *07*(04), 424–428. https://doi.org/10.4236/ajibm.2017.74030

Karimi, S., Biemans, H. J. A., Mahdei, K. N., Lans, T., Chizari, M., & Mulder, M. (2017). Testing the relationship between personality characteristics, contextual factors and entrepreneurial intentions in a developing country. *International Journal of Psychology, 52*(3), 227–240. https://doi.org/10.1002/ijop.12209

Khazanah Research Institute. (2024). *Breaking barriers*. Khazanah Research Institute. https://www.krinstitute.org/Views-@-Breaking_Barriers

Kraus, S., Roig-Tierno, N., & Bouncken, R. B. (2019). Digital innovation and venturing: An introduction into the digitalization of entrepreneurship. *Review of Managerial Science, 13*(3), 519–528. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11846-019-00333-8

Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and psychological measurement*, *30*(3), 607-610. https://doi.org/10.1177/001316447003000308

Lai, L. S. L., & To, W. M. (2020). E-Entrepreneurial intention among young Chinese adults. *Asian Journal of Technology Innovation*, *28*(1), 119–137. https://doi.org/10.1080/19761597.2020.1713832

Liñán, F., & Chen, Y.-W. (2009). Development and cross-cultural application of a specific instrument to measure entrepreneurial intentions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *33*(3), 593–617. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2009.00318.x.

Luthje, C., & Franke, N. (2003), The 'making' of an entrepreneur: Testing a model of entrepreneurial intent among engineering students at MIT. *R&D Management, 33*(2), 135-147, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9310.00288.

Noor, N. H. M., & Malek, E. N. (2021). An application of theory of planned behavior in determining student entrepreneurship intention. *Jurnal Intelek, 16*(1), 207-214. http://10.24191/ji.v16i1.382

Ozaralli, N., & Rivenburgh, N. K. (2016). Entrepreneurial intention: Antecedents to entrepreneurial behavior in the U.S.A. and Turkey. *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research*, *6*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40497-016-0047-x

Phan, P. H., Wong, P. K., & Wang, C. K. (2002). Antecedents to entrepreneurship among university students in Singapore: Beliefs, attitudes and background. *Journal of Enterprising Culture,10*(2),151-174. https://doi.org/10.1142/S0218495802000189.

Rhodes, R. E., & Courneya, K. S. (2003). Investigating multiple components of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived control: An examination of the theory of planned behaviour in the exercise domain. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 42*(1), 129–146. https://doi.org/10.1348/014466603763276162

Robinson, P. B., Stimpson, D. V., Huefner, J. C., & Hunt, H. K. (1991). An attitude approach to the prediction of entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice.15*(4), 13-32. https://doi.org/10.1177/104225879101500405

Saeed, S., Yousafzai, S. Y., Yani-De-Soriano, M., & Muffatto, M. (2013). The role of perceived university support in the formation of students' entrepreneurial intention. *Journal of Small Business Management*, *53*(4), 1127–1145. https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12090

Shah, N., & Soomro, B. A. (2017). Investigating entrepreneurial intention among public sector university students of Pakistan. *Education + Training, 59*(7-8), 841-855. https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-11-2016-0168

Teoh, W. M. Y., Chong, S. C., Yuen, Y. Y., Ravichander, S., & Chong, C. W. (2024). Entrepreneurial intentions among business undergraduates: The Malaysian case. *Journal of Education for Business*, *99*(7-8), 411-421. https://doi.org/10.1080/08832323.2024.2424181

Tošović, M. N., & Jovanović, V. (2021). Entrepreneurial intention model: Empirical results with management students in Serbia. *Management: Journal of Sustainable Business and Management Solutions in Emerging Economies*, *26*(2), 15-28. https://doi.org/10.7595/management.fon.2020.0023

Vamvaka, V., Stoforos, C., Palaskas, T., & Botsaris, C. (2020). Attitude toward entrepreneurship, perceived behavioral control, and entrepreneurial intention: Dimensionality, structural relationships, and gender differences. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, *9*(1), 5. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-020-0112-0

Yit, A. (2023). A comparative study of equity markets in developed and emerging economies. https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.24025.90725

Younis, H., Katsioloudes, M., & Al Bakri, A. (2020). Digital entrepreneurship intentions of qatar university students motivational factors identification. *International Journal of E-Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, *10*(1), 56–74. https://doi.org/10.4018/ijeei.2020010105

Zarith, N. K., Shuhaimi, M. S., & Mahani, A. (2023). Entrepreneurship education at Higher Learning Institutions (HLI): Policy mismatch and recommendations. *Malaysian Journal of Business Economics and Management*, 27–33. https://doi.org/10.56532/mjbem.v2i1.8