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EMPOWERING YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS: THE ROLE OF FAMILY, EDUCATION, AND INDIVIDUAL DESIRE

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Abstract:

This research aims to analyze factors influencing students' interest in entrepreneurship through a comprehensive literature review. The study identifies three primary determinants of entrepreneurial interest among students: family background, education, and individual desire. The review synthesizes recent empirical findings, highlighting the significant role of exposure to entrepreneurial role models within the family, participation in entrepreneurship education programs, and intrinsic motivation in shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions. By enhancing understanding of these factors, the study provides valuable insights for policymakers and educators to develop targeted strategies that effectively promote entrepreneurship among university students. Ultimately, fostering entrepreneurial interest is crucial for driving economic growth and addressing graduate unemployment.

Keywords:

Young People, Family Background, Education, Public Participation, Individual Desire, Student, Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Interest

Introduction

Malaysia has intensified its efforts to promote entrepreneurship among students as a solution to graduate unemployment and underemployment. The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) launched the Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) Action Plan 2021–2025 to foster an entrepreneurial culture in higher education institutions. This plan focuses on three main strategies: strengthening the entrepreneurship ecosystem by enhancing collaboration between academic institutions, industries, and government agencies; empowering high-impact entrepreneurship networks by connecting students with mentors, investors, and industry leaders; and emphasizing innovation and technology-based entrepreneurship to encourage

students to create ventures that leverage technology to meet market demands (Astro Awani, 2023).

Universities such as Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak have adopted frameworks like the Authentic Entrepreneurship Practices (AEP), which integrate real-world industry experiences with academic learning. A 2024 study showed that 70% of students participating in such entrepreneurship programs felt more confident about starting their own businesses, and half of them successfully launched ventures within a year after graduation (Swinburne University, 2024, Yeon et al., 2016).

Additionally, the Malaysian government allocated RM15.11 billion in the 2024 national budget for 270 entrepreneurship programs under the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Integrated Action Plan (SMEIPA). These programs aim to support over 470,000 recipients nationwide, focusing on the development of graduate entrepreneurs and contributing to economic growth (The Star, 2024).

Overall, these initiatives reflect Malaysia's strong commitment to equipping students with entrepreneurial skills and opportunities, addressing unemployment challenges, and promoting economic development.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurial activity is the ability of human beings to shape environmental conditions in their favor through a visionary process of creating reality. According to Murphy et al. (2006), the increase in entrepreneurial activity is one of the factors contributing to the rise in a country's income. To achieve the objectives of this article, it is necessary to analyze the factors that improve entrepreneurial interest. These factors form the basis for the analyses developed below.

Family Background

Family background, education, and individual desire are key factors improving interest in entrepreneurship. The family environment is closest to students and plays an important role in influencing a student's attraction to entrepreneurship (Van Auken et al., Suhaimi et al. 2016). Families often serve as role models for students aspiring to become entrepreneurs. For example, fathers and mothers have a strong influence in motivating children toward entrepreneurship (Kirkwood, 2009). Alma (2013) noted that parental attention, support, and communication within the family have a significant impact on children's entrepreneurial interests.

Family background plays a crucial role in shaping students' entrepreneurial interest. Students with entrepreneurial parents or relatives are more likely to pursue business ventures themselves due to early exposure and familial encouragement (Suhaimi, 2021; Yeon et al., 2016). A study by Sidek et al. (2020) found that students from entrepreneurial families exhibited stronger entrepreneurial intentions. Furthermore, recent research by Kumar and Pérez Cuevas (2023) supports the idea that family experiences contribute to positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship by enhancing perceived behavioral control and motivation.

Influence of Education on Entrepreneurial Intentions

Education is another important factor influencing students to become entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship courses in academic institutions worldwide acknowledge that education is a key driver in the emergence of new businesses, especially in knowledge-based economies. Education, particularly at the university level, positively influences entrepreneurial behavior and encourages students to consider entrepreneurship as a successful career option after graduation.

Recent research confirms that entrepreneurship education significantly enhances students' entrepreneurial intentions by fostering positive attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms (Al Kharusi et al., 2024; Suhaimi & Abidin, 2022). For example, a study by Al Mahadin and Abdallah (2024) in Jordan found that entrepreneurship education had a direct and significant impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions, highlighting the importance of embedding such education within higher learning institutions.

Additionally, a large-scale study involving over 90,000 students across 100 universities revealed that both curricular and extracurricular entrepreneurship programs positively influenced students' entrepreneurial mindsets and intentions (Rodriguez et al., 2023). These findings align with the Theory of Planned Behavior, suggesting that structured entrepreneurship education improves students' ability to recognize opportunities, develop business ideas, and pursue entrepreneurship as a viable and fulfilling career path.

Individual Desire as a Catalyst

Individual desire also influences students to become entrepreneurs. Taylor and Thorpe (2004) identified previous exposure to business, role models, and networks as important reasons why individuals become entrepreneurs. Personality traits such as need for achievement, risk-taking propensity, and internal locus of control have been recognized as relevant for entrepreneurial intent and success. Interestingly, McStay (2008) found that students with low previous entrepreneurial experience showed greater intention to be self-employed than those with high previous experience.

While structural and educational support is essential, individual desire remains a core driver of entrepreneurial interest. Students with strong personal motivation, creativity, and risk-taking tendencies are more likely to develop business ideas and pursue them. Sidek et al. (2020) highlighted that internal motivation is closely linked to positive entrepreneurial intentions, especially when reinforced by family support and academic exposure. Additionally, Shahin et al. (2020) emphasized that access to financial resources further influences the realization of entrepreneurial ambitions.

Methodology

This study employs a systematic literature review to analyze factors influencing students' entrepreneurial interest. Academic articles, journals, and reports published between 2014 and 2024 were sourced from scholarly databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and JSTOR. The search used keywords including "entrepreneurial interest," "family background," "education," and "individual desire." Selected studies were critically evaluated based on relevance, methodology, and findings to identify common themes and relationships. The synthesis focused on how family environment, educational exposure, and personal motivation contribute to shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions, with an emphasis on recent empirical research

and theoretical developments in entrepreneurship education and psychology (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003; Nguyen, 2023).

Future Research

Future studies could examine the impact of digital entrepreneurship education on student interest, particularly in the post-pandemic era where online and hybrid learning have become widespread (Kuckertz et al., 2021). Exploring how cultural diversity within Malaysia influences entrepreneurial motivation could provide more nuanced insights, given the country's multiethnic composition (Halim et al., 2023). Longitudinal research tracking students from their educational experiences through to business start-up phases would offer valuable understanding of how early influences translate into actual entrepreneurial behavior (Liñán & Fayolle, 2023). Additionally, qualitative studies focusing on personal narratives and lived experiences could deepen the understanding of how family background and individual desire shape entrepreneurial aspirations (Yousafzai et al., 2024).

Conclusion

Fostering entrepreneurship among students requires a holistic approach that integrates family influence, educational support, and personal ambition. In Malaysia, government-led initiatives such as the Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) Action Plan, together with efforts from educational institutions and familial encouragement, are shaping a new generation of innovative and resilient entrepreneurs (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2024). By aligning these three factors—family background, education, and individual desire—the country can effectively nurture entrepreneurial interest and reduce graduate unemployment.

Students in Malaysia play a crucial role in helping the government achieve its goal of becoming a fully developed nation. Entrepreneurship presents a promising career path for graduates. Analysis indicates that public university students show strong interest in entrepreneurship, with education and individual desire identified as the most influential factors, while family background tends to have a neutral effect. The findings suggest that relevant information about entrepreneurship should be widely disseminated to students across Malaysia to encourage their participation and contribution to national economic development. Future research could expand to include private university students to capture a broader perspective on entrepreneurial interest across different educational contexts.

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