



**JOURNAL OF TOURISM,
HOSPITALITY AND
ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT
(JTHER)**

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ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS AMONG FINAL YEAR HOSPITALITY STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA (UiTM)

Nur Azah Farhana Mohamed Fadzil^{1*}, Mohd Raziff Jamaluddin², Faradewi Bee A. Rahman³, Koe Wei Loon⁴

¹Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management Universiti Teknologi MARA, UiTM Puncak Alam, Malaysia

 farhanafadzil1991@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5344-7023>

²Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management Universiti Teknologi MARA, UiTM Puncak Alam, Malaysia

 raziff@uitm.edu.my

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8585-3771>

³Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management Universiti Teknologi MARA, UiTM Puncak Alam, Malaysia

 fara1234@uitm.edu.my

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-1029-760X>

⁴Faculty of Business Management Universiti Teknologi MARA, UiTM Bandaraya Melaka, Malaysia

 koewei516@uitm.edu.my

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3977-1884>

*Corresponding Author

Article Info:

Article history:

Received date: 28.04.2026

Revised date: 21.06.2026

Accepted date: 25.06.2026

Published date: 30.06.2026

To cite this document:

Fadzil, N. A. F. M., Jamaluddin, M. R., Rahman, F. B. A., & Koe, W. L. (2026). Entrepreneurial Intentions Among Final Year Hospitality Students in Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM). *Journal of Tourism Hospitality and Environment Management*, 11 (44), 404-422.

Abstract:

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a key mechanism for economic growth, innovation, and employment generation, particularly in developing economies such as Malaysia. Despite significant investments in entrepreneurship education across higher education institutions, findings regarding the determinants of entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students remain mixed and context-dependent across different studies. This study aims to examine the determinants of entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), with a particular emphasis on the mediating role of psychological capital (PsyCap). Drawing upon the Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this study investigates the influence of perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, propensity to act, and subjective norms on entrepreneurial intention. A quantitative research design was employed using a structured questionnaire administered to undergraduate students. Data were analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The findings indicate that psychological capital significantly influences entrepreneurial intention and partially mediates the relationship between key antecedents and entrepreneurial intention. The study contributes to the literature by integrating psychological capital into established entrepreneurial intention models within the Malaysian higher education context. The

findings provide important implications for educators, policymakers, and curriculum designers in enhancing entrepreneurship education.

DOI:10.35631/JTHER.1144025 **Keyword:**

Entrepreneurial Intention, Final-Year, Hospitality, Psychological Capital, UiTM, Malaysia, PLS-SEM



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Introduction

Entrepreneurship is widely recognised as a fundamental driver of economic development, innovation, and job creation (Al-Qadasi et al., 2023). In the context of Malaysia, entrepreneurship has been positioned as a strategic priority to address graduate unemployment and enhance national competitiveness. Government initiatives such as the National Entrepreneurship Policy (NEP) 2030 highlight the importance of cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets among youth, particularly within higher education institutions (Othman et al., 2021). Universities play a critical role in fostering entrepreneurship by equipping students with knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for venture creation (Mustafa et al., 2023). According to Lajin et al. (2022), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), as one of Malaysia's largest public universities, has actively integrated entrepreneurship education into its curriculum. However, despite these efforts, not all students demonstrate strong entrepreneurial intention, suggesting that additional factors beyond formal education may influence their decision to pursue entrepreneurship (Campaner et al., 2025).

Entrepreneurial intention (EI) is defined as the conscious state of mind that precedes action toward starting a new business (Esfandiar et al., 2019; Fayolle et al., 2014). According to Rahim and Mukhtar (2021), entrepreneurial intention is the mindset and desire of an individual to go into business as their career. It is widely acknowledged as the most immediate predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour. Existing models such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and the Entrepreneurial Event Model (Shapero & Sokol, 1982) have been extensively used to explain entrepreneurial intention. These models emphasise cognitive and social factors such as attitudes, perceived feasibility, and subjective norms.

However, recent research suggests that psychological factors also play a crucial role in shaping entrepreneurial intention (Balgiu et al., 2025; Fadzil & Jamaluddin, 2025; Iga et al., 2025). Psychological capital (PsyCap), which comprises self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, has gained increasing attention as a positive psychological resource that influences motivation and performance (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). In the context of entrepreneurship, PsyCap may enhance individuals' ability to cope with uncertainty (Kromidha & Bachtiar, 2024), overcome challenges, and persist in the face of setbacks (Ho & Chan, 2025). Despite its relevance, the integration of psychological capital into entrepreneurial intention models remains limited, particularly in the Malaysian higher education context. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the mediating role of psychological capital in the relationship between key antecedents and entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students at UiTM.

Research Objectives

This study aims to:

1. To examine the relationship between perceived desirability and entrepreneurial intention among final-year hospitality students at Universiti Teknologi MARA.
2. To examine the relationship between perceived feasibility and entrepreneurial intention among final-year hospitality students at UiTM.
3. To examine the relationship between propensity to act and entrepreneurial intention among final-year hospitality students at UiTM.
4. To examine the relationship between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention among final-year hospitality students at UiTM.
5. To examine the mediating role of psychological capital in the relationship between the antecedents and entrepreneurial intention.

The primary purpose of this research was to examine the theoretical relationships among perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, propensity to act, subjective norms, psychological capital, and entrepreneurial intention, rather than to compare entrepreneurial intentions across different universities. UiTM was selected as the research setting because it has one of the largest hospitality student populations in Malaysia, comprising students from various academic levels and demographic backgrounds. This diversity provides an appropriate context for evaluating the proposed theoretical model. In addition, UiTM has consistently embedded entrepreneurship education within its hospitality programmes, making it a relevant institution for investigating the factors that influence students' entrepreneurial intention. Although the findings are specific to the UiTM context and should not be interpreted as statistically representative of all hospitality students in Malaysia, they contribute to the broader understanding of entrepreneurial intention in comparable higher education environments. Future studies are encouraged to replicate and validate the proposed model using samples from both public and private higher education institutions to strengthen the generalisability of the findings.

Problem Statement

Despite the growing emphasis on entrepreneurship education in Malaysian universities, findings regarding the determinants of entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students remain mixed and context-dependent across different studies. Many graduates continue to prefer traditional employment over entrepreneurial careers, raising concerns about the effectiveness of existing educational initiatives (Hao & Da, 2023). One major issue is that

entrepreneurship education often focuses on technical and business-related knowledge, such as business planning, marketing strategies, and financial management. While these skills are important, they may not be sufficient to motivate students to pursue entrepreneurship. Students may possess the necessary knowledge but lack the confidence, resilience, and psychological readiness required to initiate entrepreneurial activities (Iga et al., 2025). Furthermore, existing studies on entrepreneurial intention have predominantly focused on cognitive and social factors, such as perceived desirability and subjective norms. While these factors are important, they do not fully capture the internal psychological processes that influence entrepreneurial behaviour. This highlights the need to incorporate psychological constructs, such as psychological capital, into entrepreneurial intention models.

Another limitation in the current literature is the lack of recent empirical studies in the Malaysian context, particularly within UiTM. Many studies rely on outdated data or do not consider the evolving challenges faced by students in today's dynamic economic environment. Therefore, this study aims to address these gaps by examining the role of psychological capital as a mediating variable in the relationship between key antecedents and entrepreneurial intention among final-year hospitality students at UiTM.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurship could be one of the best strategies to overcome the unemployment problem among fresh graduates in Malaysia (Din et al., 2017; Omar & Rajoo, 2016). As suggested by Hossain et al. (2018), unemployment among fresh graduates is a continuing increase in the current economic environment, and to overcome the unemployment problem, the universities are urged to play a leading role in the development of student entrepreneurs (Fattah et al., 2021). For instance, introducing entrepreneurship courses to equip students with the skills, values, and behaviours necessary to undertake successful business ventures (Hartika, 2023). Indeed, the Malaysian government is aware of the importance of entrepreneurship activities among university students (Musa et al., 2023). Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a theory that is used to forecast the voluntary behaviors of individuals and to assist in recognizing their psychological factors (Fishbein & Ajzen 1980, as cited in Maheshwari et al., 2023). Many behaviours in daily life may be under voluntary control as these behaviors can easily be performed if we have the desire to do so. The theory is designed given the assumption that human beings usually behave in a manner that is reasonable as they will take into account the available surrounding information and the implications of their actions.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is derived from TRA by Fishbein and Ajzen to forecast and illuminate human behavior in a specific context, it would allow prediction of behaviors that were not under complete voluntary control (Ajzen, 1991). Although the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) was able to predict behaviour, intention alone was considered insufficient to explain behaviours that are not under complete volitional control. Therefore, Perceived Behavioral Control was incorporated into the Theory of Planned Behavior to account for factors that may facilitate or hinder behavioural performance. Perceived behavioral control is formed through control beliefs that influence individuals' perceptions of the ease or difficulty of performing a behaviour. TPB is adopted in this study because it has been widely proven effective in explaining behavioural intentions towards performing a particular behavior (JR et al., 2000) in various field of studies such as psychology, sociology, health, and information technology. Empirical data have shown that TPB is a useful model since the whole model was significant and it enables researchers to know a lot of information and have a better

understanding of predicting entrepreneurial intention by considering all factors or the determinants of entrepreneurial intention (Abdelfattah et al., 2022; Bağış et al., 2024; Chen, 2024; Sargani et al., 2021). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has been extensively applied in various areas of research to explain and predict both behavioural intention and actual behaviour (Fan et al., 2024; Le et al., 2023; Pham et al., 2023). Past research confirmed the validity of using TPB in explaining entrepreneurial intention across various cultures. It can be concluded that According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, the more favourable the attitude and perceived behavioral control, the stronger an individual's intention to engage in entrepreneurship (Ajzen, 1991; Liñán & Chen, 2009). TPB is adopted in this study due to the solid support.

Definition of Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurial intention is defined as an individual's willingness to perform and take part in entrepreneurial activities, perform entrepreneurial behavior or actions, to be self-employed, or to establish a new business in the future (Bird, 1988; Thompson, 2009; Lam et al., 2024). Besides, entrepreneurship intention also can be defined as a self-acknowledged conviction by any individual that he or she is a willingness to initiate a new business enterprise and continuously plans to accomplish this in the future (Thompson, 2009). The entrepreneurial intention also is considered as a first step towards initiating new business (Shahzad et al., 2021). Thus, it is very important to understand the entrepreneurial intention to undermine the concept of entrepreneurship. Based on empirical evidence, experts and scholars have shown that entrepreneurial intention is a valid factor for entrepreneurial behavior as it falls under intentional behaviour (Neneh & Dzomonda, 2024). Studies about entrepreneurial intention provide valuable information for the researchers to get a better understanding of the entrepreneurial process and predict entrepreneurial activities in a better way through identifying antecedents of entrepreneurial intention (Sleiman et al., 2026). The study of entrepreneurial intention is important as entrepreneurial intention does not always lead to entrepreneurial action (Roos & Botha, 2022). According to Sleiman et al. (2026), a lot of people have the intention to involve in entrepreneurship, but only a few have the desire or ability to carry it out. This study proposed four key independent variables which are perceived desirability, propensity to act, perceived feasibility, and subjective norms which are predicted to influence entrepreneurship intention.

Perceived Desirability

Perceived desirability refers to the attractiveness of entrepreneurship as a career option (Ahmad et al., 2019). It is influenced by personal values, expected outcomes, and social recognition (Astiana et al., 2022). While many studies have found a positive relationship between perceived desirability and entrepreneurial intention (Shook & Bratianu, 2010), some researchers argue that desirability alone may not be sufficient to drive action, particularly when individuals lack confidence or resources (Fitzsimmons & Douglas, 2011).

Perceived Feasibility

Perceived feasibility reflects an individual's belief in their ability to successfully start a business (Shapero & Sokol, 1982). It is closely linked to self-efficacy and access to resources. Empirical studies consistently show that perceived feasibility is one of the strongest predictors

of entrepreneurial intention (Krueger et al., 2000; Liñán & Chen, 2009). However, feasibility perceptions may be influenced by psychological factors such as confidence and resilience.

Propensity to Act

Propensity to act is a personality trait that facilitates entrepreneurial interest, describes the urge to take action, and its strength varies greatly with individuals (Riyanti et al., 2016). Propensity to act refers to an individual's tendency to take action when opportunities arise (Shapero & Sokol, 1982). It is associated with proactiveness, risk-taking, and decision-making behaviour (Bui et al., 2020).

Subjective Norms

Subjective norms refer to perceived social pressure from significant others, such as family and friends (López-Muñoz et al., 2023; Pham et al., 2023). In collectivist cultures like Malaysia, subjective norms play a crucial role in shaping career decisions (Fadzil & Jamaluddin, 2025). However, findings on the relationship between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention are mixed, suggesting the need for further investigation.

Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

Psychological Capital (PsyCap), commonly conceptualised through the HERO dimensions consist of hope, efficacy (self-efficacy), resilience, and optimism, refers to a positive and developable psychological state that influences how individuals think, feel, and act in challenging situations (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Although PsyCap has been extensively examined within organisational behaviour, particularly in relation to employee performance, satisfaction, and well-being (Kodisinghe, 2025), its application within entrepreneurship research is still emerging, especially in the context of students and early-stage entrepreneurs. Within this construct, hope reflects an individual's ability to set meaningful goals, identify pathways to achieve them, and maintain the motivation to pursue those goals despite obstacles (Hadiyati & Astuti, 2023). Self-efficacy, on the other hand, represents a strong belief in one's capability to successfully perform entrepreneurial tasks, such as opportunity recognition, business planning, and risk management (Alshebami, 2022). Resilience is critical in entrepreneurship, as it equips individuals with the capacity to recover from setbacks, adapt to uncertainty, and persist in the face of failure or adversity, which are common in entrepreneurial journeys (Ho & Chan, 2025). Meanwhile, optimism shapes an individual's tendency to form positive expectations about future outcomes (Astiana et al., 2022), encouraging persistence and proactive behaviour even in uncertain environments. Collectively, these four components interact synergistically to strengthen an individual's overall psychological capacity, making them more prepared to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Recent empirical studies suggest that PsyCap not only has a direct influence on entrepreneurial intention by enhancing confidence, motivation, and positive outlook, but it may also operate indirectly by strengthening the effects of key antecedents such as perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, propensity to act, and subjective norms (Alshebami, 2022; Al-Qadasi et al., 2023; Bağış et al., 2024). Despite this growing recognition, the mediating role of Psychological Capital in the relationship between these antecedents and entrepreneurial intention remains underexplored, particularly within the context of hospitality students in Malaysian Higher Education Institutions, thereby highlighting a significant gap that this study seeks to address.

Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education refers to the courses or subjects that provide students with entrepreneurial knowledge and skills in pursuing an entrepreneurial career in the future (Fadzil et al., 2022). There are past researches that have proved that entrepreneurship education is a factor that inspires student's intentions towards entrepreneurial career and entrepreneurial actions (Maslakçı et al., 2021). Entrepreneurship is confronted with uncertainties due to challenges to pursue entrepreneurship as a career (Ukil & Almashayekhi, 2024). Inadequate business knowledge is very risky and a lot of experience is needed to reduce entrepreneurial uncertainty (Bağış et al., 2024; Ratten & Jones, 2021). Additionally, entrepreneurship education will provide students with adequate business knowledge and eventually, it will increase the interest of students towards entrepreneurial careers (López-Muñoz et al., 2023). Education also will lead a student's readiness in dealing with complex decision making (Boldureanu et al., 2020). Education can help to reduce barriers and risks of entrepreneurship such as human capital, financial capital, material acquisition, and technology adaptation (Ahmed et al., 2020; Hu & Li, 2025; López-Muñoz et al., 2023; Zaini et al., 2023).

Justification for Integrating EEM and TPB

This study integrates the Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to provide a more comprehensive explanation of entrepreneurial intention. The integration of these two models is necessary because each theory captures different dimension of entrepreneurial decision-making. TPB explains entrepreneurial intention through three determinants consists of attitude related evaluations (perceived desirability), perceived behavioural control (perceived feasibility), and subjective norms. However, TPB alone does not fully capture the nature if entrepreneurial action. In contrast, EEM emphasises entrepreneurship as an event- driven process, where intention is triggered by perceived desirability and propensity to act in response specific opportunities. Propensity to act is particularly important as it captures an individual's willingness to act upon entrepreneurial opportunities when they arise, which is not explicitly addressed in TPB. Last but not least, this combined framework enhances power and allows a more robust prediction of entrepreneurial intention among hospitality students.

Conceptual Framework

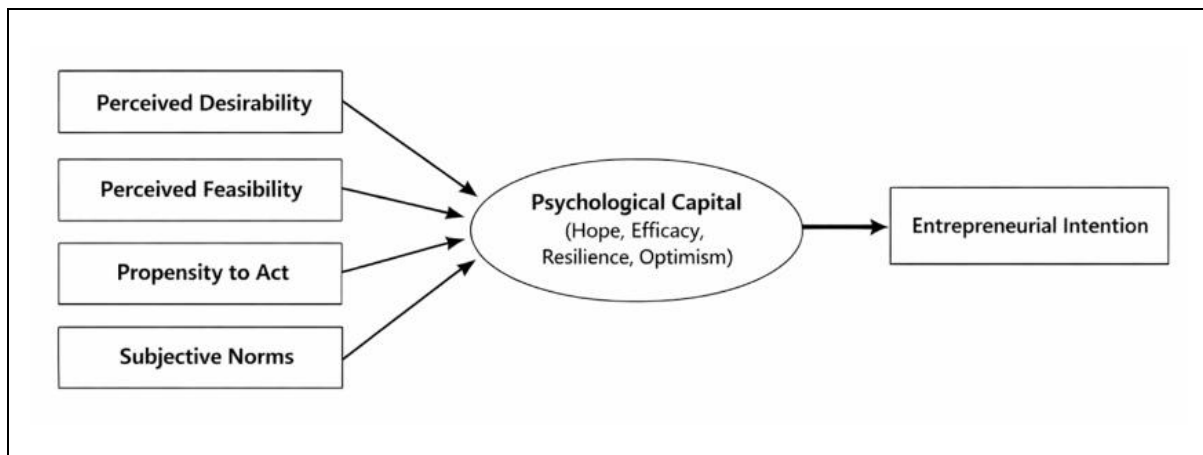


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Own illustration

Note: The conceptual framework was adapted from previous studies in entrepreneurship, psychological capital, and hospitality education.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study. The framework proposes that perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, propensity to act, and subjective norms function as independent variables, while entrepreneurial intention is treated as the dependent variable. In addition, psychological capital, which consists of hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism, acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between the independent variables and entrepreneurial intention. The framework suggests that these antecedent factors may directly and indirectly influence entrepreneurial intention through psychological capital.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design, where data were collected through a survey using self-administered questionnaires. The total population comprised approximately 140 final-year undergraduate hospitality students of Universiti Teknologi MARA who had taken an entrepreneurship course. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table, the minimum required sample size for this study was 103 respondents. To account for non-response and incomplete questionnaires, approximately 180 sets of questionnaires were distributed. After data screening and excluding incomplete or biased responses, a total of 110 usable questionnaires were obtained for analysis. This study employed purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, whereby respondents were selected based on specific criteria, namely final-year undergraduate hospitality students who had completed an entrepreneurship course (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In this study, the respondents must fulfil two conditions before being selected to answer the survey: they must be final-year hospitality students of Universiti Teknologi MARA regardless of campus, and they must have taken an entrepreneurship course. A self-administered survey questionnaire was used as the research instrument to ensure the relevance and consistency of the information gathered (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The survey was conducted in dual languages (i.e., English and Malay). The 5-points Likert Scale is adopted to allow respondents to express how much they agree or disagree with a particular statement. It ranges from "strongly disagree = 1" to "strongly agree = 5" (Saul, 2008).

Findings

The Conceptual Model

The conceptual model of this study was tested using SmartPLS Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine the relationships among perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, propensity to act, subjective norms, psychological capital, and entrepreneurial intention among hospitality students at Universiti Teknologi MARA. Figure 2 presents the PLS-SEM path model, including the standardised path coefficients obtained from the analysis. The figure provides a visual representation of the hypothesised relationships and the strength of the direct and mediating effects between the constructs.

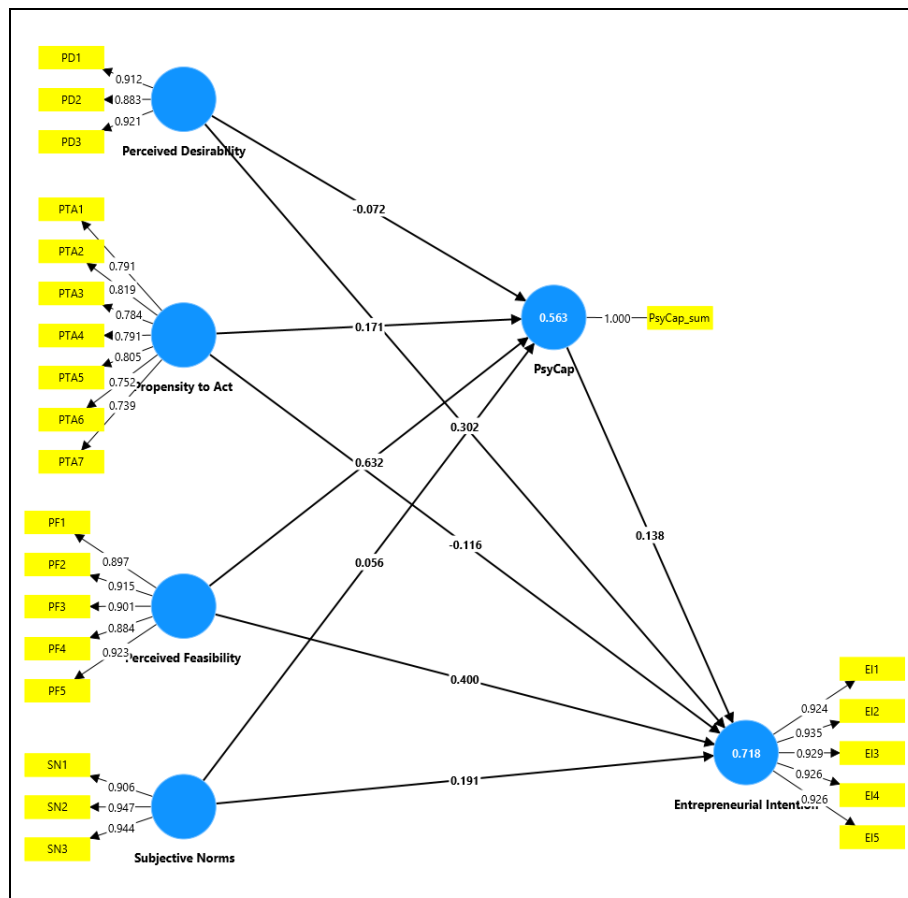


Figure 2: PLS-SEM Path Model

PLS-SEM Path Model of Perceived Desirability, Perceived Feasibility, Propensity to Act, Subjective Norms, Psychological Capital, and Entrepreneurial Intention

This study's sample comprised 110 full-time final-year hospitality students from Universiti Teknologi MARA. Based on the demographic profile of the respondents, the results show that the number of female respondents ($n = 63$) was higher than male respondents ($n = 47$). The percentage of females accounted for 57.3%, while males made up 42.7% of the sample. This pattern is consistent with previous studies indicating that female students typically outnumber male students in higher education institutions (Hamzah, 2021; Tienxhi, 2017). In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents were aged above 24 years old ($n = 62$; 56.4%),

followed by those aged 21–23 years old ($n = 29$; 26.4%), while the smallest group was aged 18–20 years old ($n = 19$; 17.3%).

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Characteristics	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Gender	Male:	47	42.7
	Female:	63	57.3
Age	18 – 20:	19	17.3
	21 – 23:	29	26.4
	Above 24:	62	56.4
Programme Mode	Diploma:	22	20.0
	Degree:	88	80.0
Programme	The entire Hospitality Programs	110	100
University	UiTM:	110	100
Participation in any entrepreneurship programs	Yes:	92	83.6
	No:	18	16.4
Working Experience	Yes:	83	75.5
	No:	27	24.5
Entrepreneurial Background	Yes:	72	65.5
	No:	38	34.5

Source: Data processing results (2025)

*Frequencies analysis: SPSS output

Note: The demographic profile provides an overview of the respondents' background characteristics. This information is used to understand the diversity of the sample and ensure representation of different subgroups in the analysis.

Regarding the level of education among the hospitality students who participated in this study, 80.0% ($n = 88$) of the respondents were pursuing a bachelor's degree, while 20.0% ($n = 22$) were at the diploma level. All participants were enrolled in hospitality programmes, representing 100% ($n = 110$) of the sample. In addition, 83.6% ($n = 92$) of the respondents had participated in entrepreneurship programmes organised by the university, while the remaining 16.4% ($n = 18$) had not participated in such programmes. Furthermore, 75.5% ($n = 83$) reported having either full-time or part-time working experience, whereas 24.5% ($n = 27$) had no prior working experience. Lastly, 65.5% ($n = 72$) of the respondents reported having an entrepreneurial family background, while 34.5% ($n = 38$) did not come from entrepreneurial families.

Aside from checking for outliers, the data set is also subjected to a normality test. The assumption of normality is based on the premise that the data are distributed symmetrically in the form of a bell-shaped curve (Kaur et al., 2018). The Shapiro-Wilk test is used to determine the normality of the data in this study. The test is well-known for its strength and versatility in terms of its ability to be applied to various sample sizes and types (González-Estrada et al., 2022). Table 2 shows the normality test results using the Shapiro-Wilk test.

Table 2: Normality Test

Construct	Item	Shapiro-Wilk	
		df	Sig
Perceived Desirability	PD1-PD3	110	.000
Propensity to Act	PTA1-PTA7	110	.000
Perceived Feasibility	PF1-PF5	110	.000
Subjective Norms	SN1-SN3	110	.000
Psychological Capital	PC1-PC14	110	.000
Entrepreneurial Intention	EI1-EI5	110	.000

The findings from the Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that the data for all constructs were not normally distributed, as the significance values were below the threshold of 0.05 ($p < .05$). The Shapiro–Wilk test results showed a significance value of 0.00 for all variables, further confirming the violation of the normality assumption. However, the use of SmartPLS in this study justifies the analysis despite the non-normality of the data, as PLS-SEM does not require data to be normally distributed. Furthermore, the sample size of 110 respondents is considered adequate for PLS-SEM analysis. Therefore, the application of SmartPLS, which is a non-parametric statistical analysis tool, was deemed appropriate for analysing the dataset (Cheah et al., 2020; Hair et al., 2017). Overall, the normality test results indicate that the data did not exhibit a normal distribution.

Table 3: Reliability Test

Construct	Type of Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Perceived Desirability	Independent variable	3	0.893
Propensity to Act		7	0.849
Perceived Feasibility		5	0.923
Subjective Norms		3	0.894
Psychological Capital	Mediating variable	14	0.957
Entrepreneurial Intention	Dependent variable	5	0.968

Note: All constructs demonstrated acceptable internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha (α) values above the threshold of 0.7

Based on the data, the reliability analysis presented in table 3 shows that all constructs achieved Cronbach's alpha values above 0.60, ranging from 0.849 to 0.968. These values indicate high to excellent internal consistency across all measurement constructs. Cronbach's alpha was used following the pilot study to assess the internal reliability of the instrument. Since all values exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, the instrument can be considered reliable and valid for measuring the intended constructs (Sarstedt et al., 2022; Tay & Jebb 2017). Since all constructs met or surpassed this benchmark, no items required removal based on standard reliability guidelines.

Table 4: Structural Model Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Result
H1	Perceived Desirability → Entrepreneurial Intention	Supported
H2	Perceived Feasibility → Entrepreneurial Intention	Supported
H3	Propensity to Act → Entrepreneurial Intention	Supported
H4	Subjective Norms → Entrepreneurial Intention	Supported
H5	Psychological Capital → Entrepreneurial Intention	Supported
H6	Psychological Capital mediates the relationship between Perceived Desirability and Entrepreneurial Intention	Supported
H7	Psychological Capital mediates the relationship between Perceived Feasibility and Entrepreneurial Intention	Supported
H8	Psychological Capital mediates the relationship between Propensity to Act and Entrepreneurial Intention	Supported
H9	Psychological Capital mediates the relationship between Subjective Norms and Entrepreneurial Intention	Supported

The findings indicate that psychological capital plays a significant role in influencing entrepreneurial intention among final-year hospitality students. In particular, subjective norms and perceived feasibility were found to be strong predictors of psychological capital. The mediation analysis further revealed that psychological capital partially mediates the relationship between the antecedent variables and entrepreneurial intention. These findings suggest that entrepreneurial intention is not solely influenced by external or cognitive factors, but also by internal psychological strengths such as hope, resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the factors influencing entrepreneurial intention among final-year hospitality students at Universiti Teknologi MARA. Drawing upon the Theory of Planned Behavior and Entrepreneurial Event Model, the study investigated the influence of perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, propensity to act, and subjective norms on entrepreneurial intention, with psychological capital acting as a mediating variable. The findings revealed that psychological capital plays a significant role in influencing entrepreneurial intention among final-year hospitality students. In particular, subjective norms and perceived feasibility were found to positively influence psychological capital, which subsequently strengthened entrepreneurial intention. The mediation analysis further confirmed that psychological capital partially mediates the relationship between key antecedents and entrepreneurial intention. These findings suggest that entrepreneurial intention is influenced not only by cognitive and social factors, but also by internal psychological strengths such as hope, resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy. This study contributes to the existing entrepreneurship literature by integrating psychological capital into entrepreneurial intention models within the Malaysian higher education context. The findings provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and curriculum designers in developing entrepreneurship education programmes that strengthen students' psychological readiness towards entrepreneurial careers. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. As the study focused solely on students from Universiti Teknologi MARA, the findings may not fully represent the perspectives of all hospitality

students in Malaysia. In addition, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships between variables. Therefore, future studies are encouraged to employ longitudinal research designs and include respondents from different universities and ethnic backgrounds to improve the generalisability of the findings. Future research may also incorporate qualitative approaches such as interviews and focus group discussions to gain deeper insights into entrepreneurial intention among students.

Acknowledgements: The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to Global Academic Excellence (M) Sdn Bhd and Universiti Teknologi MARA 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 Tourism, Hospitality And Environment Management (JTHER).

Ethics Statement: This study was conducted in accordance with ethical research standards. All procedures involving human participants were reviewed and approved by the UiTM Research Ethics Committee, approval number REC/02/2025 (PG/MR/126). 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. Nur Azah Farhana Mohamed Fadzil was responsible for the overall development of the paper, including conceptualization, study design and methodology, manuscript drafting, and overall project coordination. Mohd Raziff Jamaluddin was responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, and overall supervision of the study. Faradewi Bee A. Rahman, and Koe Wei Loon 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.

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