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PREDICTING FACTORS THAT INSPIRE ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION AMONG MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurs are economic leaders contributing to the country's economy and national development. Therefore, governments and academic institutions in the West and Asia take the initiative to provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills. This research aims to identify predicting factors that inspire entrepreneurial intention among Malaysians. The sample of this study consists of 90 undergraduate students in Malaysian public and private universities. The data was collected through a survey questionnaire using a simple random sampling technique. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis of SPSS were employed to analyse the data. This research revealed that entrepreneurial education, age, personal traits and culture predict entrepreneurial intention among Malaysian university students. Moreover, this study found a moderate level of entrepreneurial intention among Malaysian students to become entrepreneurs in the future. Hence, this study recommends that policymakers, including the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (MOHE) and Higher Learning Institutions, enhance entrepreneur education while promoting entrepreneur culture in academic institutions.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurship, predicting factors, business leaders, culture and entrepreneurial intention



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INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial intention (EI) is the commitment to start a new business and commercial institution (Krueger, 1993). Popescu et al. (2016) defined entrepreneurial intention as an aspiration to start a business or establish a new organisation. Hence, it is an aspiration or strong ambition to begin a new business venture or an institution that provides income.

Behavioural scientists tried to define entrepreneurial intention (EI) in different contexts. Moriano et al. (2012), for instance, defined entrepreneurial intention (EI) from a behavioural perspective and said, "the conscious state of mind that precedes action and directs attention toward entrepreneurial behaviours such as starting a new business and becoming an entrepreneur" (p. 165). According to this definition, entrepreneur intention (EI) is the consciousness of the mind towards regular action that can become a behaviour. It means a firm business intention of a person to the extent of becoming behaviour. Adekiya and Ibrahim (2016) also defined EI from a behavioural background. They defined it as "intentional behaviour perceived among university students to create a new venture after finishing their studies". According to Adekiya and Ibrahim (2016), entrepreneurial intention is an inspired behaviour which university students recognise to form a project once they complete their studies. For them, EI influenced the intention among university students to create an endeavour after graduation. This shows that EI is students' independent behaviour in terms of their careers.

Tomy & Pardede (2020) stated that EI is a "self-acknowledged conviction by an individual that they intend to set up a new business venture and consciously plan to do so at some point in the future". According to this definition, EI is self-oriented behaviour towards action to develop a new business and adequately plan.

These definitions show that almost all of them have emphasised consciousness of mind and inspired behaviour as EI, while they have different opinions on action plans. Therefore, behavioural scientists defined EI as the level of mind inspired by behaviour towards business action.

Shirokova et al. (2016) elaborated EI and discussed entrepreneurial intention (EI) as the basis of the entrepreneurial process. Hence, according to them, not all entrepreneurial intentions are transformed into actions; instead, entrepreneurial intention (EI) with contextual factors and environmental characteristics will be transformed into action (Shirokova et al., 2016). In explaining the contextual factors and environmental characteristics, they said they involve personal traits, age, and environmental characteristics, including academic environment and uncertainty avoidance (Shirokova et al., 2016). It has been further elaborated in recent research by Bogatyreva et al. (2019), for instance, that empirical evidence suggests that not every entrepreneurial intention is eventually transformed into actual entrepreneurial action (Bogatyreva et al., 2019).

The personal traits of an individual are influential factors in EI. Referring to previous literature, Şahin et al. (2019) explained the role of personality traits in determining entrepreneurial intention. A decade before, Jain and Ali (2013), for instance, found that personal traits transform entrepreneurial intentions into actions. Hence, personal traits are essential in transforming entrepreneurial intention into action.

Alvarez-Herranz et al. (2011) highlight age as another factor that significantly impacts the transformation of entrepreneurial intentions into actions. van Ewijk, A. R., & Belghiti-Mahut, S. (2019). Brieger et al. (2021) studied the relationship between individuals' age and entrepreneurial activity. According to them, the age differences of entrepreneurs are essential from the perspective of entrepreneurial motivation or life span and significant from the perspective of value creation (Brieger et al., 2021). Hence, age is an essential factor in transforming entrepreneurial intentions into actions.

Regarding environmental characteristics, Politis et al. (2012) considered the educational environment crucial in



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transforming entrepreneurial intentions into actions. Meanwhile, Rothaermel et al. (2007) highlight culture's role in promoting entrepreneurial intention into entrepreneurial action. According to Hofstede (2001), societal uncertainty is an individual's fear of facing uncertain or unknown circumstances. Shinnar et al. (2012) also found it to be a high level of discomfort an individual experiences in undefined situations. Hence, EI is more effective in uncertain social contexts.

Hence, contextual factors and environmental characteristics are more important for students to transform their entrepreneurial intentions into entrepreneurial action. In the current research, age and personal traits are considered contextual factors in entrepreneur education, and culture includes the environmental characteristics that combine the university environment and uncertainty avoidance (Shirokova et al., 2016).

Hence, this research aims to identify the predicting contextual factors and environmental characteristics that inspire tertiary students to become entrepreneurs in the future. The contextual factors and environmental characteristics are more important for students to transform their entrepreneurial intentions into entrepreneurial action.

This research, therefore, aims to identify the predicting contextual factors that inspire tertiary students to become entrepreneurs in the future. Although previous studies mainly focus on business and accounting students, the present research focuses on exploring the opinions of students with different faculty backgrounds on choosing an entrepreneur as their future career.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Identifying the predicting contextual factors is the objective of this research. Hence, this section explains entrepreneurship and discusses personal traits, age entrepreneur education and culture in previous studies.

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship develops, educates, and prepares students with relevant skills to start a new business. It can assist them to begin an entrepreneurial profession upon completing their studies. Bruyat and Julien (2001) stated that entrepreneurship is a concept that combines self-reliance, initiative, innovativeness, and risk-taking. Hence, entrepreneurship focuses on an individual's process of business intention that includes these work attitudes.

Many scholars have defined entrepreneurship based on their areas of expertise. For instance, Gerba (2012) defines entrepreneurship as an educational programme that supports students in attaining skills, knowledge, inspiration, competencies, and motivation that will empower them to become efficient entrepreneurs.

Xavier (2012) has discussed entrepreneurship and economic development. According to him, entrepreneurship is a solution to the unemployment rate. This aspect has been further elaborated and considered a powerful economic force. Moreover, entrepreneurship has become an international agenda due to its essential contribution to the economic status of a country and region. It assists in enhancing the country's economy by forming a robust competitive environment among business entities by creating an active marketplace (Ariff et al., 2010).

Shane and Venkataraman (2000) found entrepreneurship to be a behaviour that helps to discover, evaluate, and use an opportunity. In line with the theory of Planned Behavior, Van Gelderen et al. (2008) explained that students' entrepreneurial intentions and, as a result of their entrepreneurial behaviour, are formed by their attitude towards entrepreneurship. It shows different researchers have explained entrepreneurship from their background and found it educational and economic leadership that shapes students' behaviour to start a business institution. Hence, the main aspects of these definitions explain entrepreneurial nature, such as creativity, risk-taking, independence and rewards.



Personality Traits

Personal traits are an essential aspect of entrepreneur intention. While recent meta-analyses found that personality plays a vital role in entrepreneurship, previous empirical research highlighted specific personalities about entrepreneurial intention. Brandstätter (2011), for instance, summarised the findings of five meta-analyses on personality aspects of entrepreneurship and showed that patterns in meta-analyses are not reflected in the big five personality traits (Şahin et al., 2019).

Personality traits are “dispositions to exhibit a certain kind of response across various situations” (Rauch & Frese, 2007, p. 355) that are highly stable over time (Baum et al., 2014). Personal traits play an essential role in determining entrepreneurial intention. Paray and Kumar (2020) say that a person’s attitude towards business is an assessment of the target behaviour. In other words, the more positive intention to start a new business is the actual behaviour. Hence, attitude or personal traits are central to initiating a business or other enterprises.

Nasip et al. (2017) studied 676 UG students at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) to identify the relationship between individual psychological or personal traits and entrepreneurial intention. This research revealed that innovativeness, self-confidence, propensity to take risks, need for achievement and tolerance for ambiguity are positively connected to entrepreneurial intention.

Satriani et al. (2022) discussed six elements that positively determine entrepreneur intention among students in Indonesia. These factors are entrepreneurial self-efficacy, creativity, attitude towards entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial culture, and motivation. Hence, this research highlighted attitude that determined personal traits as an important factor in determining entrepreneur intention. This has been further elaborated in the research of Mahfud et al. (2020). According to Mahfud et al. (2020), positive attitudes in University-based learning experiences are fundamental and explain entrepreneur intention.

Due to the complexity of human personality, a comprehensive model, namely 'the Big Five model', was developed (Goldberg, 1990). This model categorises personal traits under five factors: (i) conscientiousness, (ii) openness to experience, (iii) emotional stability, (iv) extraversion and (v) agreeableness (Brandstätter, 2011).

Age

The age of an individual is another critical factor in entrepreneurial intention. Kristiansen and Indarti (2004) stated that age and gender impact an individual's entrepreneurial intention. This aspect is further discussed in the literature. For example, Choo and Wong (2006) said that people generally intend to establish their firms or businesses between the ages of 25 and 34. Although older people have more experience and exposure to the business, the risk-taking among them is less compared to young people (Hart et al., 2004; Kautonen, 2008). A study by Herranz et al. (2011) also discusses that young people are more likely to get involved in the entrepreneurial process as they are more dynamic, energetic, enthusiastic and willing to take any risks related to their goals. Furthermore, young individuals quickly get involved in entrepreneurial initiatives by engaging in capable strategies and effective mechanisms (Hulsink & Koek, 2014). Hence, age is an essential factor that determines the entrepreneurial intention.

It is further elaborated in the Middle East and African studies. Nasiri and Hamelin (2018) stated that 60% of the Middle East and North Africa workforce is under 25. This shows that young people contribute to their country's economy and have high entrepreneurial intentions.

In the case of Malaysia, the labour force participation rate in 2022 was 24.6 % for people aged 15 to 19 years, while 2.76 million people in the Malaysian labour force were between the ages of 25 and 29 years (Statista Research Department, 2023). It shows that age is a potential factor for entrepreneurial intention.



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Entrepreneur Education

Entrepreneurial education is another critical factor in entrepreneurial intention. Numerous studies have explored different methods and strategies to educate young people about entrepreneurship. Since educating young people about entrepreneurship includes cognitive, skills and attitude development, it is known as 'entrepreneurship education. According to UNESCO, Entrepreneurship education is "a collection of formalised teachings that informs, trains, and educates anyone interested in participating in socioeconomic development via a project to promote entrepreneurship awareness, business creation, or small business development" (Ariffin, 2021). Entrepreneurship education, therefore, is a combination of formal teachings that educate persons who like to be involved in socioeconomic advancement with knowledge, skills, and attitude development.

Hence, the first entrepreneurship education class was started in 1947 at Harvard University (Katz, 2003). Myers Maes (Myles Mace) in Harvard Business School took the initiative to include entrepreneurship education in the curriculum (Guan & Qi, 2013). Other universities like Sandford University and New York University followed Harvard University and introduced entrepreneurship education (Katz, 2003). However, it became popular in United States universities in 1980 (Li & Li, 2015), particularly after the University of Southern California offered this course in 1971 (Othman & Othman, 2019). Most American higher education institutions now offer entrepreneurship programs (Christy & Wu, 2022). Many other Western countries, including the United Kingdom and Sweden, introduced entrepreneurship education in higher educational institutions to minimise unemployment and increase economic development (Christy & Wu, 2022).

Entrepreneurial Education in Asia became famous in 1990 (Li & Li, 2015). As for entrepreneur knowledge and skills in Asian countries, traditionally transformed through clan associations and ethnic networks, the informal vocational education system played a role in educating young people through mentors and on-the-job training (Dana, 2001). Hence, clan and ethnic restriction practices were an essential barrier to transforming Entrepreneurship intention into entrepreneurship action in Asia.

Entrepreneurship education in Chinese Universities started in 1990. Since the world is moving towards the 4th Industrial Revelation (IR 4.0), entrepreneurial activities, innovation and entrepreneurship are the focal points of education. Therefore, Chinese universities have increased their attention to entrepreneurial education (Li & Li, 2015). According to Dana (2001), entrepreneurial education started in India in 1992. In Indonesia, entrepreneurial education was first introduced in the Third Five-Year Plan 1979-1984 (Dana, 2001).

In the case of Malaysia, although entrepreneurship education has been practised through the *tawkays* ethnic-based system, University Technology Mara and Malaysian Entrepreneurship Development Centre (MEDEC) 's government initiatives helped introduce entrepreneurship as a national agenda (Dana, 2001). However, systematic entrepreneurship education in higher learning institutions began in Malaysia with the establishment of the Kembara Usahawan (KEMUSA) co-curriculum in 1982 in Institut Teknologi MARA (ITM) (Rahim et al., 2015). Later, ITM introduced entrepreneurship subjects to all diploma students in 1988 (Rahim et al., 2015). Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) introduced an entrepreneurship bachelor's degree in business in 1995 (Nasip et al., 2017).

Like the USA and Europe, Malaysia encourages university graduates to become entrepreneurs to contribute to the national economy (Nabi & Holden, 2008). Since Malaysia considers entrepreneurship essential to its economic development (Embi et al., 2019), the government has introduced many education programmes and initiated different support programmes. For instance, the 'Higher Education Entrepreneurship Development Policy' is a plan that focuses on entrepreneurship education. This policy helped the government to form the Strategic Plan on Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (2013-2015). This plan helped higher educational institutions to focus on entrepreneurship in curriculum development and delivery. Furthermore, the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education requested that all public universities incorporate entrepreneurial perceptions in all programs in the teaching and learning process (Nasip et al., 2017). Hence, the fundamentals of entrepreneurship acculturation were



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introduced in universities in 2007 as a core subject for all students in public universities, including science and non-science streams (Rahim et al., 2015).

Khan et al. (2016), referring to Oshikoya and Hussain (1998) and Skuras et al. (2003), said that the Malaysian government has not only fortified entrepreneurship education in public universities; it also provides entrepreneur-friendly national policy and other supportive programs such as technical and training assistance, financial and credit assistance, infrastructure supports, extension and advisory services, marketing and market research and management expertise.

Furthermore, higher learning institutions used different strategies to enhance entrepreneurship knowledge through classroom discussions and seminars while developing relevant curricula and obtaining the required entrepreneurial ecosystem (Embi et al., 2019). The Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education requested that higher learning institutions incorporate entrepreneurship in the teaching and learning process (Nasip et al., 2017).

Hence, entrepreneurship education has experienced remarkable growth worldwide and in Malaysia. Within fifty years, the field has evolved from a single course offering to diverse educational opportunities available at more than 1500 colleges and universities worldwide, including Malaysia (University, 2014).

Although the Malaysian government initiated many plans and programmes through higher education institutions and others to promote entrepreneurship, the latest reports say that the students' intentions to be involved in business after graduation still need to be more satisfactory (Shamsudin et al., 2017). As far as the entrepreneurial process taking another form in the era of IR4.0, such as technology entrepreneurship or technopreneurship, the lack of interest among university students in entrepreneurship will be a great challenge to economic development in the country. Technopreneurship needs innovative, young, and information-communication technology (ICT) oriented individuals (Koe et al., 2018). For instance, the Global Entrepreneurial Monitor (GEM) records that Malaysians scored low in many entrepreneurial behaviours and attitudes (Koe et al., 2018). It shows a need for more interest among Malaysian university students to become entrepreneurs. In other words, the students need more motivation and a better environment to develop entrepreneurial intention.

Culture

The culture is closely connected to entrepreneurial intention. Although culture is a complex term, it can be understood as the behaviour of people inherited from one generation to another that explains the way of life, worldview, and all other aspects of life that distinguish one group from the other (Rodrigues, 2016). The national culture, therefore, is defined as the collective perception of the mind that differentiates the members of one group or category of people from others that comprises a set of specific learned norms, values, attitudes and beliefs of a group of people that fit into a similar nation (Kyriakopoulos et al., 2023). Hence, culture is a typical value that binds people together for a common goal.

Studies found that culture forms individual entrepreneurial behaviour and attitudes (Porfírio et al., 2016; 2018). Culture unites people by worldview and goal, and it helps promote entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, and attitudes among young people in a specific community. Hence, the culture plays a pivotal role in promoting entrepreneurial intention.

Since cultural values are deeply embedded in every society, they leave an imprint on entrepreneurship practices. While scholarly tradition relates to cultural values in a society and contributes to the behaviour of these individuals, the study on individual entrepreneurship can only be studied by referring to their culture (Bogatyreva et al., 2019). Guan and Qi (2013) explained the role of culture in developing entrepreneurship education and entrepreneur intention in the United States of America. According to them, four cultural factors contributed to entrepreneurship development in the USA, namely, (i) The Puritans movement and Thought, (ii) Immigrants cultural flow, (iii) The



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individualism of entrepreneurship education and (iv) Pragmatism to the Entrepreneurial Education Practice and Social Contact. It shows that culture is the core that influences entrepreneurial intention and subsequent action (Bogatyreva et al., 2019). However, specific studies have yet to be made to understand the country-level cultural context towards individual entrepreneurial intention (Bogatyreva et al., 2019).

Moreover, Al Bakri and Mehrez (2017) found that entrepreneurial intentions varied across countries. Students' entrepreneurial intentions are determined by their opinions of their countries' business policies and market procedures. If students' opinions were positive for these procedures, they are mainly motivated towards entrepreneurship. Hence, countries must focus on business policies and market procedures to be more suitable for efficient entrepreneurs.

Azim (2008), for instance, discusses socio-cultural factors as deeply fixed essentials in people of a particular group or society, and they inhabit similar values, norms, practices, institutions, and connected ways of society. Hence, from the above literature, it is realised that personal traits, age, entrepreneur education and culture contribute to entrepreneur intention.

Theoretical Framework

The entrepreneurial intention can be explained by several theories (Fragoso et al. (2020). Most discuss entrepreneurs' intentions to start a new business inspired by socio-cultural factors. The social cognitive theory (SCT) of Bandura (1986), the model of the Entrepreneurial Event of Shapero (1975) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour of Ajzen (1991) are some theories that the researchers used to study entrepreneurial intention in general.

The Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) of Bandura is a vital theory used to study entrepreneurial intention. Albert Bandura developed this theory to explain the dynamic interaction between people, their behaviour and their environments (Nwosu et al., 2022). This theory is based on the cause-and-effect concept, which includes dynamic social interaction among behaviours and personal factors, including cognition and the environment (Soon et al., 2022). Hence, SCT explains reinforcement through observation while highlighting the mental processes of interaction of the individual with others. In other words, this theory addresses the motivations that influence the actions (Wong & Monaghan, 2020). This theory has been further developed by Thorgren and Wincent (Thorgren & Wincent 2015).

According to SCT, the individuals' information may directly influence and be connected to observing another individual through social interactions, experiences, and outside media. Therefore, this theory is commonly used to study the behaviour of individuals. As entrepreneurial intention discusses the cognitive, skills, and attitude changes and the process of changing the intention into action, the researchers on entrepreneurial studies use this theory to explain the behavioural changes that happen through observation and imitation that inspire entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and behaviour.

The Entrepreneurial Event Model of Shapero and Sokol (1982) is another theory that helps to study entrepreneurial intention. The theory of the Entrepreneurial event focuses on two pre-requirements to start a new business: (i) an individual needs to be involved in the idea of starting a business, and (ii) starting a business begins with a specific type of displacing event, which can be a form of neural, negative or positive experience. Adverse circumstances include losing a job or having any personal issues, while positive events include things that make the mind happy (Shapero & Sokol, 1982). The displacement experience will show a behaviour change, and the individual will start a business sincerely based on the act upon the feeling (Shapero & Sokol, 1982). This model comprises perceived feasibility, desirability, and propensity to act upon the inspiration and change an individual's behaviour to start a business (Shapero & Sokol, 1982). Hence, this model discusses the influence of intention and its impact on an individual to start a new business. However, the entrepreneurial event model will not be suitable for the current study as it focuses on identifying predicting factors towards entrepreneurial intention.

The theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is a psychological theory that explains the relationship between belief and



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behaviour. Icek Ajzen elaborated this theory based on the theory of reasoned action (TRA). TPB is another vital theory used to study entrepreneurial intention (Nguyenn, 2018).

TPB consists of three independent factors for the intention to entrepreneurship: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behaviour control (Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen (1991) stated that attitude towards performing behaviour means the consciousness of personal preferences to perform a behaviour. It means a person is aware of the behavioural outcome from the personal impacts. A person's attitude towards behaviour involves evaluating behaviour based on personal impacts. The subjective norms represent a social influence from the context of the environment on the person to attain the behaviour. For instance, a friend's circle of encouraging and motivating individuals towards entrepreneurial intention allows a person to think positively to become entrepreneurs.

Perceived behaviour control involves identifying abilities to accomplish target behaviour (Ajzen & Driver, 1992; Ajzen & Schmidt, 2020). It is also connected to a person's opinion on the acceptance and issues in performing a behaviour. This factor impacts perceptions of access to required skills, resources, and chances to perform the behaviour (Ariff et al., 2010). It means that if a person feels that he or she controls the situational elements, he or she will develop the intention to do the target behaviour. However, if a person does not have control over the situation/context, he or she will have fewer intentions to perform a specific behaviour.

Hence, according to Ariff et al. (2010), TPB is a recommended method to describe and study entrepreneurial intention, as this model explains the connection between beliefs and behavioural patterns and actions. Therefore, TPB is commonly used in entrepreneurial studies as its adequacy predicts entrepreneurial intention (Schlaegel & Koenig, 2014).

Therefore, the current study adopted the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to study the entrepreneurial intention of undergraduate students in Malaysian universities. It uses three sources: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control to explain entrepreneurial intention (Arafat & Ibrahim, 2018). In this study, attitudes were applied for personal traits, followed by subjective norms for entrepreneur education, age, and perceived behavioural control for the culture to predict entrepreneurial intention.

In other words, TPB helps to study the entrepreneurial intention of the target group based on personal traits, entrepreneur education, age, and perceived behavioural control. Further, Table 3 shows the cluster of variables followed by the conceptual framework of this research.

Table 3: *The Cluster of Variables*

Variables of TPB	Variables of the study
Attitudes	Personal traits
Subjective norms	Entrepreneur education, age
Perceived behavioural control	Culture



The Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework*

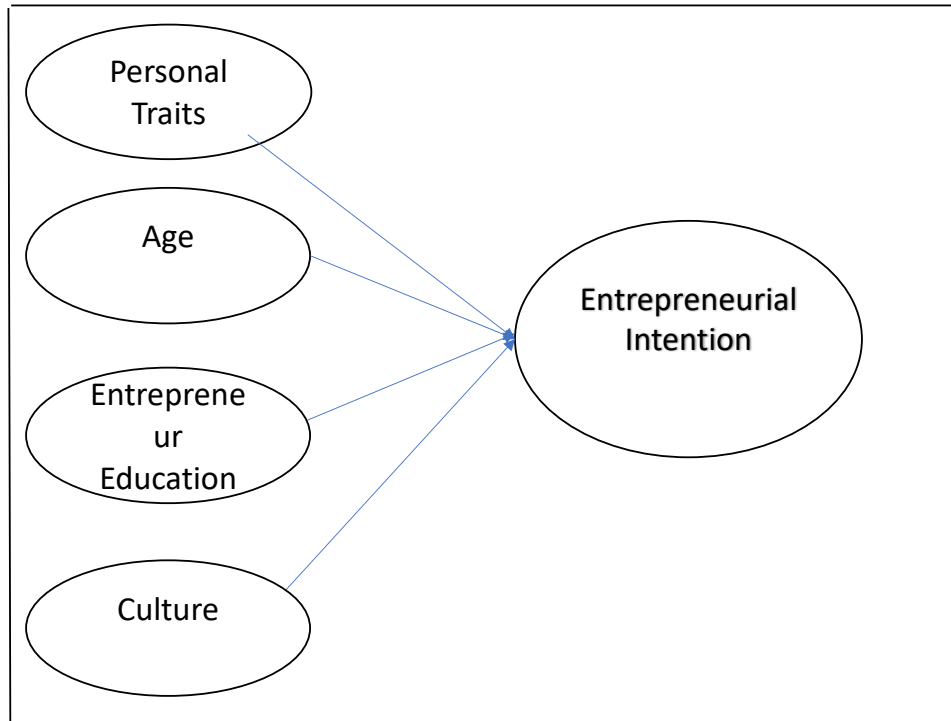


Figure 1 explains the formation of the students' entrepreneurial intention. According to this figure, a strong connection exists between personal traits, age, entrepreneur education and culture (independent variables) and entrepreneur intention (dependent variable). The process of this relationship predicts students' inspiration to become entrepreneurs in the future.

Research Question

1. What are the contextual factors and environmental characteristics that predict entrepreneurial intention among students in Malaysia?

Hypothesis Development

This section explains the hypothesis development. It consists of four hypotheses.

H1: Entrepreneur education and entrepreneurial intention

Entrepreneurship education is well-defined and applicable across backgrounds and cultures (Rodrigues, 2023). The links between education and entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial intentions, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial skills have been discussed from different cultural perspectives (Rodrigues, 2023). The existing literature emphasises the need to develop multiple skills such as innovation, autonomy, creativity, communication, critical thinking, adaptability, planning and management, financial and technological literacy, teamwork and problem-solving through entrepreneurial Education (McCallum et al., 2018; O'Brien & Hamburg, 2019; Reis et al., 2020; Tittel & Terzidis, 2020). Furthermore, incorporating entrepreneurship into education has recently become a trend (Anjum et al., 2022).



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It shows that entrepreneurship education is essential for students to prepare themselves with knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards entrepreneurial intention in different business contexts. Hence, encouraging students to pursue entrepreneurial education will assist them in growing independently and starting a business in the future.

Further, numerous studies found that entrepreneurial education enhances entrepreneurial intention development, the economy's growth and the start of businesses. According to (Mwasalwiba, 2010), entrepreneurial education is a method to enhance skills and concepts to explore opportunities and provide self-confidence and ideas to move on to action where others are reluctant.

Entrepreneurial education helps increase students' awareness of entrepreneurship as a professional choice while studying and after graduation (Anjum et al., 2022). Moreover, as Adelowo and Henrico (2023) mentioned, many studies emphasised that entrepreneurship education is essential in instilling entrepreneurial mindsets and skills among young people.

Paray and Kumar (2020) stated that entrepreneurship education positively impacted interdisciplinary students in certain higher educational institutes in India to start a new business. This study also verifies that an individual intention to start a new business is based on the theory of planned behaviour and student background (Paray & Kumar, 2020). It is further elaborated by Piperopoulos and Dimov (2015). According to them, entrepreneurship education supports the development of students' entrepreneurial attitudes, competencies and skills while helping them to identify new entrepreneurial opportunities (Piperopoulos & Dimov, 2015). Mei et al. (2020) also endorsed it and said that entrepreneurship education positively affects entrepreneurial intention (Mei et al., 2020). Hence, the first hypothesis was developed to investigate whether entrepreneur education inspires students in Malaysian Universities to become entrepreneurs.

H1: There is a significant relationship between entrepreneur education and the intention to become an entrepreneur.

H2 Age and entrepreneurial intention

Age is another essential element contributing to entrepreneurship. Some studies emphasise older age as the potential factor in becoming an entrepreneur, as experience is the key to entrepreneurship. For instance, Gielnik et al. (2018) said that older people gain skills and assets like human, social, and financial capital over the years. However, most studies on entrepreneurship recommend a young age as the potential to become an entrepreneur. Young people are very good at risk-taking (Hart et al., 2004; Kautonen, 2008). Herranz et al. (2011) also emphasise young age as the potential to become entrepreneurs as they are more likely to be involved in the entrepreneurial process. They also hastily engage in entrepreneurial initiatives by adapting strategies and applicable ways (Hulsink & Koek, 2014). Therefore, the second hypothesis was developed to investigate whether age inspires students to become entrepreneurs in Malaysian Universities.

H2: There is a significant relationship between age and intention to become an entrepreneur.

H3 Personal traits and entrepreneurial intention

The entrepreneurial intention is connected to personal traits. Fragoso et al. (2020) perceived that personality traits are the most relevant factors to describe entrepreneurial intention. Before starting any business, an individual must consider these essential factors: self-confidence, self-efficacy, self-management, and independence (Fragoso et al., 2020). Uceda et al. (2022) further elaborated that personality traits influence entrepreneurial intention. Ayalew and Zeleke (2018) also stated that personal traits are necessary since they communicate an individual's intention to initiate a business.

Adelowo and Henrico (2023) found that personal entrepreneurial characteristics or personal traits and perception of the university environment positively contribute to students' interest in entrepreneurial intention. Studies



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highlight specific personality traits such as responsibility and self-knowledge (Uceda et al., 2022).

The personal traits comprise psychological variables and demographic characteristics. According to Uceda et al. (2022), innovativeness or creativity, optimism or positive thinking, risk-taking propensity, self-confidence, strategic thinking, interpersonal skills, ability to use mutual interconnectedness, conflict management, internal locus of control and competitiveness or need for achievement are examples for psychological variables that contribute to entrepreneurial intention. As discussed before, age, culture and social background are examples of demographic characteristics. Therefore, the third hypothesis was developed to investigate whether personal traits inspire students to become entrepreneurs in Malaysian Universities.

H3: There is a significant relationship between personal traits and the intention to become an entrepreneur.

H4 Culture and Entrepreneurial Intention

The culture of an individual is closely connected to entrepreneurship. The spirit of entrepreneurship differs in various cultural contexts. Since an individual's culture helps to construct entrepreneurial behaviour and attitudes (Porfirio et al., 2016; 2018) by articulating a shared worldview and goal, individuals are motivated to gain entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and attitudes in a specific community.

The entrepreneurial culture includes a group or personal norms, practices and skills that enhance creativity and innovation (Yousaf et al., 2022). Since the culture impacts students' perceptions, standards, rules and behaviours, which support changing students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship, it is an essential factor for entrepreneurial activities (Yousaf et al., 2022). This study also includes a positive university environment in culture and said that the students acquire new knowledge and information for entrepreneurial activities from the institutional culture (Yousaf et al., 2022). Hence, culture influences students' intentions to become entrepreneurs.

The Sikh community and their entrepreneurship are examples of the role of culture in advancing and promoting entrepreneurial intention. According to George and Chaze (2016), the Sikh community in Canada are self-employers compared to any other migrated community. This research found that culture is the main factor contributing to this situation (George & Chaze, 2016). Hence, the culture plays a pivotal role in promoting entrepreneurial intention.

The cultural values are embedded in individuals in a cultural community. The concept of Halal, for instance, in a Muslim society, impacts the entrepreneurship practices that contribute to individual attitudes and entrepreneur intentions (Bogatyeva et al., 2019). Thus, cultural values are the basis of entrepreneurship. Guan and Qi (2013) elaborated on this aspect and said that culture significantly promotes entrepreneurship in the United States of America.

The regional context, formal and informal country-level institutions and capital access influence entrepreneurial intention (Fragoso et al., 2020). In addition, the stage of economic development, financial availability, and government regulations are also factors that contribute towards entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, culture in this study is considered one of the predicting factors for entrepreneurial intention. Thus, the fourth hypothesis was developed to investigate whether culture inspires students to become entrepreneurs in Malaysian Universities.

H4: There is a significant relationship between culture and intention to become an entrepreneur.

METHODOLOGY

This research focuses on Malaysian university students' entrepreneurial intention. The sample of this research involves undergraduate students in government and private universities, mainly first-year to fourth-year students at public and private universities. The researcher selected this sample based on convenience. The survey link was distributed among the selected population to collect the data.



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This study used a simple random sampling technique for the data collection where each person in the population has an equal probability of being chosen as a survey respondent. The instrument for this study is adopted from (Shamsuddin et al., 2018; Jie & Harms, 2017).

The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A involves the demographic profile of respondents, such as faculty and department, gender, current level of study and CGPA. These data assist in explaining the basic details of the respondents. Section B includes parts (i) and (ii). Part I consists of questions related to predicting factors towards entrepreneurship, and Part II provides questions on the entrepreneurial intention of Malaysian University students.

The respondents were requested to answer the questionnaire based on the following scale. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the predicting factors that inspire business students to become entrepreneurs. The scale ranges from 1 to 5, that is, Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither Disagree nor Agree (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5), through Google Forms. The sample size for this study was calculated using G* power, which shows the minimum sample for this study is 55 for the multiple regression analysis. As for an effect size of 0.15 with an alpha of 0.05 and power of 80.0%, the minimum sample size is 55. Based on the developed questionnaire, 90 responses were collected through Google Forms; the researcher used 90 responses to identify predicting factors for entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students in one public and one private university in Malaysia.

Validity and Reliability

The instrument's validity was determined through five sources: content, response process, internal structure, relation to other variables, and consequences. Content validity is the extent to which elements of instrument assessment are relevant and represent the fulfilment of the targeted assessment purpose (Almanasreh et al., 2019). Before distributing the questionnaire among respondents, the researcher checked the content validity of the questionnaire based on experts' reviews. The content validity of the survey instrument was completed based on Lynn (1986). The process involves two phases. Phase one focuses on the development stage, which consists of survey indicators. Phase two involves judgment and evaluating the indicators (Halili et al., 2022). In phase one, the researcher focused on adopting and developing the instrument from the research. The questionnaire was adopted from Shamsuddin et al. (2018) and Jie & Harms (2017) for this study. In phase two, the researcher approached the expert panel to validate the previously used variables in different contexts. Hence, six experts consist of three entrepreneurs in the industry and three academicians. These experts were chosen based on their area of expertise and industrial experience (Lynn, 1986). The researcher sent the instrument to these experts through email after the communication and was requested to validate the instrument indicators (Halili et al., 2022).

These six experts validated the instrument for relevance, clarity, and simplicity using a 1-4 scale of scores such as 1 = the item is not relevant to the measured domain; 2= the item is somewhat relevant to the measured domain; 3= the item is quite relevant to the measured domain; 4= the item is highly relevant to the measured domain (Yusoff, 2019). Further, based on this, before calculating CVI scores, the researcher recorded the relevance rating 1 as (a relevance scale of 3 or 4) or 0 as (a relevance scale of 1 or 2). The CVI findings indicate that the item-level content validity index (I-CVI) is 0.95. Using six experts, the acceptable cut-off point for i-CVI is 0.78 (Lynn, 1986). The S-CVI/Ave and S-CVI/UA scores of 0.95 and 0.82 meet satisfactory levels, and the questionnaire scale has achieved acceptable content validity.

Ethical Consent

The researcher distributed the survey link among the selected data collection population. The survey questionnaire includes the ethical consent that the respondents have to agree and to proceed to answer the questionnaire. Participants' privacy has been guaranteed in the same questionnaire. Participation in this survey was voluntary, and they could withdraw from answering the questionnaire anytime they felt uncomfortable.



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Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Demographic profile	Category	Frequency	Percent
Name of Institution	Private	39	43.3
	University Public	51	57
Faculty	University Business	45	50
	Education	21	23.3
	IT	6	6.7
	Law	12	13.3
	Engineering	6	6.7
Gender	Female	50	56
	Male	40	44
Current level of study	1 st year	25	28.1
	2 nd year	31	34.4
	3 rd year	22	24.4
	4 th year	12	13.3
CGPA	> 3.5	34	38
	3.0 – 3.5	37	41.1
	2.6 – 2.9	14	16
	2.0 -2.5	5	5.6

Table 1 revealed that public university had the highest number of responses, 51, with a percentage of response rate of (57%). Followed by this, private university had 39 responses (43.3%).

Faculty-wise, most of the respondents were from the Faculty of Business. It was 45 respondents representing 50%, followed by education with 21 representing 23.3%, next faculty of Law, IT and Engineering representing 13.3 %, 6.7 % and 6.7% of respondents respectively.

Gender-wise, there were more female respondents than males, which indicates 50 female respondents, 56% of the respondents, and the male respondents are 40 with 44 % of the respondents.

Regarding the current level of study in respondents, most students are in 2nd year, representing 34.1%. Further, 1st-year students with 25 responses represented 28.1%, 3rd-year and 4th-year students represented 22, and 12 with 24.4 % and 13.3% of all respondents.

As for the CGPA, most of the students have a CGPA level of 3.0- 3,5, which represents 41.1%, followed by a CGPA > 3.5 with 34 responses representing 38%, and 14 students with a CGPA of 2.6- 2.9, which means 16% and finally, CGPA with 2.0-2.5,5 students represented 5.6% respectively.

DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

This section describes the data analysis and findings of this research. Data analysis includes descriptive statistics and correlation analysis using SPSS software (version 23). Findings include the demographic profiles of the respondents,



descriptive statistics, and correlation analysis results.

Demographic Profile Analysis

The demographic profile analysis shows that 57% of respondents were from a public university, and 43.3% were from a private university. In terms of academic background, most of them were from the Business faculty compared to other faculties like education, computer science, Law, and Engineering. Further, Female students represent 56% of the respondents, and second-year students represent 34.4% of the respondents.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics projects a summarised version of the provided data set; it helps to explore, define, present and provide necessary information to conclude data; it describes the characteristics of a data set. Descriptive statistics consists of three categories of measures, namely : (i) Measures of frequency, (ii) measures of central tendency and (iii) measures of variability.

Frequency measures include frequency and percentage; measures of central tendency include mean, median and mode, while measures of variability include standard deviation, variance, minimum and maximum variables, standard error, quartile, interquartile range, and percentile (Mishra et al., 2019). The participants for this study are undergraduate business degree students in Malaysian Universities.

There are three major types of descriptive statistics: Measures of frequency (frequency, percentage), measures of central tendency (mean, median and mode), and measures of dispersion or variation (variance, SD, standard error, quartile, interquartile range, percentile, range, and coefficient of variation [CV]) provide simple summaries about the sample and the measures.

Further, a reliability test was conducted to verify the consistency and reliability of the constructs for measuring the variables. The results found that Cronbach" 's alpha value of overall items is 0.918 and reflects the strong reliability of the measuring instrument (Taber, 2018). Further, it indicates a high internal consistency towards the provided sample.

Moreover, the researcher conducted the skewness and kurtosis test to determine the data normality. Based on the results, the skewness and kurtosis results show the data was typically distributed as the value of skewness for all items was within ± 2 , and the kurtosis values of all items were also within ± 2 that fulfil the requirement of (Hair et al., 2006). Further, Bryne (2010) claimed that data is average if skewness is between -2 to +2 and kurtosis is between 7 to +7.

Table 2: Factors that inspire students to become Entrepreneurs.

	Max.	Min.	Mean	Std.Deviation
Entrepreneur Education	1	5	3.85	.911
Entrepreneurial subject is crucial (EE1)				
Entrepreneurship	2	5	3.88	.795
should be taught in University (EE2)				
Entrepreneurship courses should be made	1	5	3.62	.983
compulsory in order to stimulate				
entrepreneurial spirit on campus (EE3)				
The policies in my university promote	1	5	3.86	0.819



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entrepreneurship education (EE4)				
More entrepreneurial and business educational programs on campus would help students start businesses (EE5)	1	5	3.92	0.902
The university provides resources to assist students in entrepreneurship (EE6)	2	5	3.82	0.847
Total Average Mean			3.83	
Age				
Age plays a vital role in entrepreneurship career (Age1)				
	1	5	3.33	1.122
Priority should be given at a young ages to venture into an entrepreneurship career (Age2)	1	5	3.68	1.110
Chances should be given to young generation to be involved in entrepreneurship (Age3)	1	5	4.01	0.846
The Government provides facilities for students to be involved in entrepreneurship early on. (Age4)	1	5	3.64	0.975
The university gives young people early exposure to becoming entrepreneurs. (Age5)	1	5	3.82	0.829
The older generation is contributing to the increase in the number of entrepreneurs in the country. (Age6)	2	5	3.58	0.821
Young people need to gain knowledge of entrepreneurship (Age 7).	1	5	3.51	0.910
Young people are less patient in facing failures in entrepreneurship as compared to older people (Age8)	1	5	3.66	0.985
Total Average Mean			3.7	



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Personal traits

I think that I have an entrepreneurial spirit (PT1)	1	5	3.34	0.929
I will start my own business if I obtain an opportunity. (PT2)	1	5	3.50	0.939
As an entrepreneur, I have to face many challenges, unlike working as an employee (PT3)	1	5	3.82	0.978
I am confident of my skills and abilities to start a business (PT4)	1	5	3.40	0.958
I have the abilities and capabilities to become a successful entrepreneur (PT5)	1	5	3.53	0.958
I earn more when I am self-employed than when I am paid by an employer (PT6).	1	5	3.34	1.018
I like to be an entrepreneur because of its competitive nature (PT7).	1	5	3.27	1.003
I find working in a stable and routine environment is boring (PT8)	1	5	3.37	1.086

Total Average Mean

3.44

Culture

In interacting with others, country of origin has an impact on whether or not I assign equal status to them (Cul1)	1	5	3.33	0.960
I find myself excited in a new cultural setting (Cul 2)	2	5	3.68	0.859
I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures (C3)	1	5	3.87	0.968
I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures (C4)	1	5	3.74	0.919
I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures (C5)	1	5	3.38	0.890



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I am conscious of the cultural knowledge when interacting with other people with different cultural backgrounds (C6)	1	5	3.62	0.955
I regard my values to be a hybrid of values acquired from multiple cultures (as opposed to just one culture) (C7)	1	5	3.61	0.831
I consider myself as open to ideas from other countries and cultures as I am to ideas from my own country and culture of origin (C8)	1	5	3.86	0.931
Total Average Mean			3.64	

Table 2 shows the level of predicting factors that inspire students to become entrepreneurs. The mean scores indicate the levels of factors that encourage students' intention to select entrepreneurship as a future profession. The average mean of the first independent variable, entrepreneur education, is 3.83. This points out that many students in Malaysian universities understand the importance of entrepreneur education and can accept it to plan their future profession. Further, age is the second factor that inspires students to select entrepreneurship as a future profession. The total average mean for age is 3.7. This indicates that Malaysian university students consider age necessary for business ventures. The third factor is personal traits. The total average mean for this factor is 3.41. This means many students think that personal traits influence them to select entrepreneurship as their future profession. The fourth variable, culture, is also essential for the students' entrepreneurial intentions. The total average mean for this is 3.64. This shows that many students agreed that culture plays a vital role for students to elect entrepreneurship as a future profession.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis for Entrepreneurial Intention

	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Entrepreneurial intention	1	5	3.20	0.914
My professional goal is to become an Entrepreneur (E1)				
Being an entrepreneur is an excellent way of becoming rich (E2)	2	5	3.51	0.877
I never thought of entrepreneurship as a career of choice (E3)	1	5	3.267	1.0789
If I pursue a career involving self-	1	5	3.40	0.849



employment, the chances of failure rate will be high (E4).				
I have to bear losses if I choose entrepreneurship as a career (E5)	1	5	3.63	0.977
I would start a business upon completion of my studies (E6)	1	5	3.00	0.983
I will enter the apprentice program in order to learn more about entrepreneurship (E7)	1	5	3.43	0.925
I probably choose entrepreneurship if the government provide more aid (E8)	1	5	3.57	0.900
Total Average Mean			3.41	

Table 3 indicates the intention of students in Malaysian universities to become entrepreneurs. The total average mean is 3.41. This shows that undergraduate students in Malaysian universities have a moderate intention of becoming entrepreneurs in the future. Since this study is based on students from various fields, their intention to become entrepreneurs can be a possible way to reduce unemployment in the country. According to Table 3, these students have moderate intentions to become entrepreneurs. The mean score for the individual statement is between 3.00 (minimum) and 3.63 (maximum). These results indicate that students in Malaysian universities have moderate intentions to become entrepreneurs in the future.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 4: Output of Regression Analysis

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.298 ^a	.089	.082	.937

a. Predictors: (Constant), Ctotal, EEtotal, PTtotal, Atotal

The multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the proposed hypothesis. The analysis indicated that the adjusted R Square (R2) was .082, and the F-Ratio was 13.061 (Table 5). This means 30% of the variance in entrepreneurial intention was significantly described by the three independent variables: entrepreneur education, age, and personal traits towards entrepreneurship. Therefore, this supported the proposed model’s validity in predicting students' entrepreneurial intention to become entrepreneurs.



Table 5: *Regression of Entrepreneurial education, age, personal traits, and culture against entrepreneurial Intention*

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.995	.235		8.497	.000
	EEtotal	.094	.044	.97	.1923	.006
	Atotal	.116	.044	.120	2.656	.008
	PTtotal	.230	.044	.237	5.295	.000
	Ctotal	-.009	.047	-.009	-.187	.852

Based on Table 5, entrepreneur education was significantly influenced by the entrepreneurial intention among students as the p-value for this is less than 0.05 ((p-value < 0.05), which is .006. Therefore, H1 was supported. Further, other independent variables, such as age and personal traits, showed similar findings. Hence, H2 and H3 were supported in this study. However, the culture variable is not supported in this study as the p-value for this is more than 0.05 ((p-value >0.05), which is 0.852. So, H4 was rejected.

Furthermore, among the three supported variables, personal traits are shown as the most crucial factor that inspires students to have entrepreneurial intention as it indicates the highest Beta value compared to the other two variables—followed by age and entrepreneur education towards entrepreneurship.

DISCUSSION

This research investigates the prediction of contextual factors and environmental characteristics for entrepreneurial intention among tertiary students in Malaysia. Four hypotheses were developed to examine this objective. This section discusses the findings of this study and its significance.

Table 6: *Research Matrices*

RQ 1	Hypothesis	Finding
What are the predicting factors for entrepreneurial intention among students in Malaysia?	H1: There is a significant relationship between entrepreneur education and the intention to become an entrepreneur.	Supported
	H2: There is a significant relationship between age and intention to become an entrepreneur.	Supported
	H3: There is a significant relationship between personal traits and the intention to become an entrepreneur.	Supported
	H4: There is a significant relationship between culture and intention to become an entrepreneur.	Not Supported



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Table 6 shows the hypothesis and its response. The analysis performed in this current study revealed that undergraduate students showed positive towards entrepreneurship. It means the students demonstrated a moderate level of becoming entrepreneurs. The mean score for the entrepreneurial intention was 3.41. According to Sandhu et al. (2011), a mean score of more than >3.70 is considered high.

Referring to Table 6, this research's first Hypothesis (H1) has been supported. It means there is a significant relationship between entrepreneur education and entrepreneurial intention. It means that an entrepreneur's education is essential to entrepreneurial intention. Hence, this finding supports previous studies like Koe (2016) that discussed university students' need to be equipped with entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, and competencies. Morland et al. (2021) also discuss that entrepreneur education helps to enhance participants' awareness of entrepreneurial openings before and after graduation by empowering skills development for new business creation. Further, this study highlights that entrepreneur education assists participants in understanding their entrepreneurial potential to be involved in entrepreneurship in the future (Morland et al., 2021).

Indeed, this finding is familiar; this factor has been identified as the primary factor in determining an entrepreneur's intention for over a decade. For instance, Skudiene et al. (2010) stated that entrepreneurial education promoted entrepreneurial intention among young people. Further, Liu (2011) also found that entrepreneurship education positively affects employment. Moreover, Martin et al. (2013) emphasised that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and human capital outputs.

The positive relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention is universal. According to a study in Turkey, a university education positively influences entrepreneurial intention (Türker & Selçuk, 2009). Hence, entrepreneurship education is a capable way of attaining knowledge on entrepreneurship. The study conducted in Malaysia also endorsed that entrepreneur education will boost students' ability to be entrepreneurs (Mumtaz et al., 2012). Hence, the finding of this study that emphasises the positive contribution of entrepreneurial education to entrepreneurial intention is fundamental and universal and has never changed over the last two decades.

The second Hypothesis (H2) was the relationship between age and intention to become an entrepreneur. The data analysis found it supported. This indicates a significant relationship between age and entrepreneurial intention. Hence, young people have more potential to become entrepreneurs than older adults. Although this finding supports the data analysis of Israr and Saleem (2018), who said that the students in the age group < 20 are more motivated to become entrepreneurs compared to other age groups, current research emphasises the firm entrepreneur intention among ages 20-22 compared to other groups. This finding elaborated on the finding of Pauceanu et al. (2018). According to Pauceanu et al. (2018), entrepreneurial intention is stronger among those aged 20 -25 years compared to individuals younger than 20 years old.

It should be noted that studies (Ayalew & Zeleke, 2018; Nguyen, 2018) found that age does not impact an individual's decision to become an entrepreneur. This might be because age is not a limitation to choosing self-employment in their research. Although self-employment is an indicator of entrepreneur intention (Chienwattanasook & Jermittiparsert, 2019), this is not the only indicator discussed above. Further, family background is sometimes more influential than other factors, including age. Hence, individuals from entrepreneurial backgrounds may start or continue a business even though they are older or younger than 20 years (Chilenga et al., 2022). According to the findings of this research, age is an important and influential factor for entrepreneur intention in general conditions. Notably, the current study's findings show that age is an essential factor that impacts entrepreneurial intention in Malaysia.

The third hypothesis (H3) predicts the relationship between personal traits and the intention to become an entrepreneur and is also supported by data analysis. According to this finding, self-confidence, self-efficacy, self-



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management, independence in mind, responsibility and self-knowledge, innovativeness or creativity, optimism or positive thinking, risk-taking propensity, strategic thinking, interpersonal skills, ability to use mutual interconnectedness, conflict management, internal locus of control and competitiveness or need for achievement are essential to becoming an entrepreneur.

Among these traits, self-efficacy, proactiveness, innovativeness, locus of control, and risk-taking attitude are more important than others. For instance, Anwar and Saleem (2019b) found entrepreneurial self-efficacy to be highly connected with the attitude toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention. Koe (2016) highlighted that their proactiveness and innovativeness influenced the students' entrepreneurial intention. Yasir et al. (2019) identified the high-level need for achievement, locus of control, innovativeness and risk-taking attitude as influential factors in entrepreneurial intention among Pakistani university students. Hameed and Irfan (2019) found that innovativeness, need for achievement, locus of control, risk-taking propensity, positive attitude, motivation, and fortitude are vital factors towards entrepreneurial intention in the Saudi Arabian context. Fisher et al. (2018) highlighted that harmonious and obsessive passion positively relates to entrepreneurial intention. Furthermore, Al-Harhi (2017) found that the ability to handle initial challenges while starting a business will enhance commitment, which will turn towards entrepreneurial intention. These studies indicate that personal traits are important factors, particularly self-efficacy, proactiveness and innovativeness, locus of control, and risk-taking attitude, which are more critical than else for entrepreneurial intention in many Asian countries, including Malaysia, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

The fourth Hypothesis (H4) in this research is not supported. It indicates that there is no significant relationship between culture and entrepreneurial intention. According to this research findings, culture does not play a pivotal role in determining entrepreneurial intention. Although the entrepreneurial intention is inspired by the perceived culture and the supportive environment, this research shows that culture is optional for the entrepreneurial intention.

Cruz (2022) previously emphasised cultural values and found them positively impacting entrepreneurial intention. Moreover, Kyriakopoulos et al. (2023) addressed the vital role of the cultural context in the association between passion and entrepreneurial intentions. Moreover, Nieuwenhuizen and Swanepoel (2015) compared entrepreneurial intentions among Polish and South African MBA students and found that South Africans prefer entrepreneurship careers more than Poles. According to this study, the country impacts entrepreneurial intention by involving certain ethnic groups with various values and attitudes.

Similarly, Davely et al. (2011) investigated entrepreneurial intention among university students in a few European countries. The findings show that students from developing countries show more intention to become entrepreneurs in the future than students from European countries. Their perception of entrepreneurship is positive. Students in developing countries prefer to become entrepreneurs as it is a way to reduce the unemployment rate in a country. The challenge of job placement is another reason for this situation (Davely et al., 2011). It shows that culture plays a role in entrepreneurial intention.

As far as cultural values are intensely entrenched in everyone in a society, it is an emblem that impacts entrepreneurship. (Bogatyreva et al., 2019). Bosma et al. (2008) also discussed the cross-cultural variances that influence the individual's preference to become an entrepreneur. Similarly, Güney et al. (2006) stated that entrepreneurial culture empowers and raises entrepreneurial activities with a positive social approach.

However, the present study found the culture insignificant, which is consistent with the findings of Shamsuddin et al. (2018). Although Shamsuddin et al. (2018) have focused on accounting students in a particular university for data collection, this research also found similar findings in terms of culture. However, this research involves undergraduate students from various disciplines, including business, IT, Education, Law and Engineering. Hence, culture in some places plays a significant role in determining one's worldview and future career intention, it is not



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significant in Malaysia.

This research revealed that entrepreneurial education, age, and personal traits are inspiring factors among Malaysian tertiary students to become entrepreneurs in future. However, like the finding of Shamsuddin et al. (2018), culture is insignificant in determining entrepreneurial intention among tertiary students in Malaysia.

CONCLUSION

This research investigated predicting contextual factors for the entrepreneurial intention among students in two Malaysian universities. For this purpose, this research used four hypothesis and quantitative data collection methods and employed descriptive statistics and correlation analysis using SPSS, version 23.

This research indicated that Malaysian university students are moderately interested in becoming entrepreneurs after their studies, and their entrepreneurial intention towards entrepreneurship is positive. The entrepreneur's education, age, and personal traits predict contextual factors and environmental characteristics for them to become an entrepreneur. Among the four intention-predicting factors, personal traits show vital factors that inspire entrepreneurial intention, followed by age group and entrepreneurial education. According to this research, culture is insignificant in developing entrepreneurial intention among Malaysian students.

Further, the output of this research will assist in gaining knowledge on entrepreneurship among various faculty students. Based on the findings, it is suggested that the policymakers of The Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (MOHE) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) highlight the importance of entrepreneurship education, develop policies and motivate students for entrepreneurship programs or activities from various disciplines, such as computer science, Science, and Law. This will support enhancing entrepreneur culture in Malaysia and may contribute to the country's economy.

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