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Entrepreneurial Intention: Does Social Intelligence Matter?

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Abstract: In Malaysia, entrepreneurship has been viewed as one of the active economic activities, which could boost the growth of nation and develop the individuals. However, the interest in entrepreneurship among Malaysian students is still low, where most of them prefer to be "job seeker" or "employee" instead of "job creator". The role of education, generally, has been recognized as a crucial process in developing individuals by providing knowledge and skills. In order to support the creation of new venture among nascent entrepreneur, entrepreneurship education is viewed as crucial element that can encourage this happening which could help to reduce unemployment rate. The impact of social intelligence could be one of the crucial variables to be studied in order to predict the entrepreneurial intention among the students. Hence, this study examined the mediating effect of entrepreneurship motivation on the relationship between the variables. The study found there is a significant mediating effect of motivation on the relationship between education and entrepreneurial intention, but there is no significant mediating effect on the relationship between social intelligence and entrepreneurial intention. This paper discussed the implications and recommendations as well.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Intention, Entrepreneurship Motivation, Entrepreneurship Education, Social Intelligence

1. Introduction

In a nation, the development of entrepreneurship is viewed as the stimulator to the problems of nation's economy, where it can accelerate the development of technology and the growth of economic [1]. This led to many residents started to choose entrepreneurship as their potential career when they are at the age of working [2]. The trend of "job creators" has been emphasized among the students in university to promote entrepreneurship as one of their choices in career development [3]. The participation of younger generation in entrepreneurship may be crucial for the nation development. As graduates are seen to be the crucial group to be developed as nascent venture creators, developing countries (Malaysia) should encourage more entrepreneurship related modules in universities [4].

In Malaysia, entrepreneurship has been viewed as one of the active economic activities, which could boost the growth of nation and develop the individuals [5]. The Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia has made entrepreneurial modules as compulsory in some of the Malaysian universities to influence the thinking of students in the field of entrepreneurship [6, 7]. However, although effort was implemented, the interest entrepreneurship among Malaysian students is still low, where most of them prefer to be "job seeker" or "employee" instead of "job creator" [8]. This phenomenon could be due to several factors, which might include internal factor (oneself) or external factor (environmental factor). As explained by Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), intention is the strongest predictor in predicting the

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behavior of individuals [9]. Based on this theory, it can be not possible to engage someone in entrepreneurial activities when the individuals do not have the intention, which is known as entrepreneurial intention in this context. Thus, knowing the antecedents of affecting entrepreneurial intention could be useful to predict the actual behavior of entrepreneurs.

The role of education, generally, has been recognized as a crucial process in developing individuals by providing knowledge and skills. In order to support the creation of new venture among nascent entrepreneur, entrepreneurship education is viewed as crucial element that can encourage this happening which could help to reduce unemployment rate [10]. Universities are expected to boost students' entrepreneurial intention via a variety of relevant modules that could improve graduates' skills and abilities in entrepreneurship [11]. It was suggested entrepreneurship competence should be set as one of the graduates' capabilities in universities, which could train the graduates to become the next job creators instead of job seekers [10]. Therefore, it is vital to examine the effect of entrepreneurial education on students' entrepreneurial intention.

Although a number of past studies has been conducted to examine the effect of entrepreneurship education [12], 13, [14], 15], the inconsistencies of the results had caused confusion to readers. Some studies revealed that there is a significant and direct effect of entrepreneurship education to entrepreneurial intention [16, 17, 13, 18]; while some studies found that there was non-significant effect of entrepreneurship education to entrepreneurial intention [19, 13]. The potential reasons that led to non-significant effect of entrepreneurship education to entrepreneurial intention were examined widely among the scholars, however most of the studies focused on the environmental factor instead particularly focusing on the perspective of students [20].

As majority of the previous studies focused on environmental factor in affecting students' entrepreneurial intention, it was assumed that individual differences could have no effect on students' intention [21]. Psychologists argued that individuals' attitude could affect one's intention, which in turn affecting the behavior [22]. Other studies also supported that attitude could affect the behavior of starting a business among the graduates [23, 24]. Therefore, it is suggested that individual differences should be looked into to understand its effect on students' entrepreneurial intention [25]. In addition to that, it is highlighted that there is a need to extend the theory or the direct relationship of "education – entrepreneurial intention" to include individual characteristics or psychological characteristics [26].

The impact of social intelligence could be one of the crucial variables to be studied in order to predict the entrepreneurial intention among the students [25]. The relationship between social intelligence and entrepreneurial intention can be examined under this theory as entrepreneurial process is known as a continuing process that requires entrepreneurs to identify new opportunities in

business [27]. Hence, it will be worth to investigate the effect of social intelligence of students in predicting their intention to start a business as their social networks and intelligence could improve their capabilities in identifying opportunities.

Entrepreneurial motivation is a process that encouraging oneself to boost entrepreneurial intention with the help of either external or internal factor [19]. It is believed that entrepreneurial motivation could contribute to higher attainment of personal needs, satisfaction in business, and eliminating negative emotions in an enterprise [28]. The attitude of entrepreneurs is crucial because it can improve the readiness of entrepreneurs to get involved in business activities [29]. Entrepreneurial motivation is important to be examined as it might affect the actions and thinking of an individual, which in turn affecting their intention to do a new start-up [19].

As individual differences could be the influential factor in entrepreneurial intention, limited studies had empirically examined its effect on intention, particularly mediating effect [11]. Due to the problem statement above, this study intended to include potential mediator to explain the indirect relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention among the students. To do this, we expanded the theory of "entrepreneurship education – entrepreneurial intentions" to incorporating ""entrepreneurship education – social intelligence – entrepreneurs' motivation – entrepreneurial intentions".

In terms of contextual gap, more studies in entrepreneurial education are needed in Asia context, particularly Malaysia, as most of the past studies were conducted among western students [26]. In addition to this, most of the past studies focused on the investigation of entrepreneurial intention among business and management students only, neglecting those non-business students which caused a research gap here [30]. In this new era, entrepreneurship is no longer limited to business and management students. Other disciplines students such as students from technology program or even engineering program, they could be potential nascent entrepreneurs as well in their own discipline which could stimulate the economic growth of nation [31]. This research intended to research gap by investigating address this entrepreneurial intention among non-business students in Malaysian universities. Students from engineering and technology background are believed that these groups of future entrepreneurs could boost up the nations' economic if they startup new ventures related to technology.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Entrepreneurial Intention

Previous researcher has introduced several theoretical models to investigate the relationship between Entrepreneurial Intentions (EI) and its antecedents, which include Shapero (1985) [32] model of the entrepreneurial

event model (EEM); and Ajzen's (1991) [33] theory of planned behavior (TPB). In general, the Shapero model is used to describe an entrepreneurial process where intentionality is central [34] and entrepreneurial intentions stems from the perceived feasibility and perceived desirability, and this path is also affected by the cultural and social context. This perception of personal choice-making in cultural and social environments has been empirically tested by several researchers including Krueger et al. (2000) [35], Peterman and Kennedy (2003) [36] and others. On the other hand, theory of planned behavior (TPB) by Ajzen's (1991) [33] explained the three components that predict the formation of intention including the attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and the degree of perceived behavioral control (self-efficacy).

However, these two models did not take into consideration other constructs such as individual or internal factor (i.e., Social Intelligence) and organizational or external factor (i.e., Entrepreneurship Education) that could possibly influence entrepreneurial intentions in creating a new social venture, in which this study aim to investigate. Although there is growing research using entrepreneurial intention as a theoretical framework, there are currently call out for scholars to rethink the future of research on the matter [37, 38]. Besides, past scholars such as Krueger et al. (2000) [33] and Autio et al. (2001) [39] have identified contradicting findings in which they found no significant direct relationship between some of the variables introduced by TPB and entrepreneurial intentions (i.e., subjective norms). This again motivates the current study to explore and introduce different variables that have the potential to account for part of the variation in entrepreneurial intention among university students in Malaysia. For instances, Liñán and Fayolle (2015) [38] suggested new avenue for expanding research on entrepreneurial intention focusing on the role of personal-level variables in the configuration of entrepreneurial intentions (see Section 2.2 for details) as well as addressing the external factor on interrelationship among entrepreneurship education, institution's role, and the entrepreneurial intention of its participants (see Section 2.3 for details).

overcome the definitional challenges entrepreneurial intention [37, 38], this study defines and explain precisely what we mean by entrepreneurial intention. While previous research captures wide range of entrepreneurial scenarios including. corporate entrepreneurship intention [40, 41], social entrepreneurship intention [42, 43, 45], academic entrepreneurship intention [15, 46] and family entrepreneurship intention [47, 48]. the current study explores University entrepreneurship intention specifically among non-business students.

In particular, this study defines entrepreneurial intentions as university students' desire to create and form a new business and starting a career in entrepreneurship [49]. While Bird (1988) [34] defined entrepreneurial intention as the conscious state of mind that directs an individual's

attention to fulfilling the goal of venture creation. In other words, entrepreneurship is the dynamic process of creating ventures and entrepreneurial intention is crucial in this process as it can be strong predictor of behavior, where behavioral intention captures the degree to which individual display their willingness to execute the desired behavior [33] wherein the current research context is to become entrepreneurs. This is because entrepreneurial behavior such as startup decision does not take place overnight, entrepreneurs must first have the intention to launch a business.

Although there are few studies that examine entrepreneurial intentions among university students, the study often used business students as their sample [17, 50, 51], as well as tourism students [52, 53; 54, 55] and hospitality students [56]. Only a handful of studies have looked upon non-business students, however, they are often conducted in the developed countries such as European context (e.g., UK context [57]; and Spain context [13]) and non-Malaysian context (e.g., in Indonesian context [58]; China context [59]; and in Iranian context [60]). It would be much more interesting to examine non-business University students as their motivation to starts a venture might be differ as they are not expected to be on this business pathway as opposed to business students. Although there are few studies that empirically tested entrepreneurial intentions within Malaysian context, but their research is limited to demographics variables and variables suggested by TPB [61, 62].

Concurrent to the past study, who tested the model of entrepreneurial intent among engineering students at MIT, the current study will also consider the impacts of both internal factors (social intelligence and motivation) and external factors (perceived level of entrepreneurship education) on entrepreneurial propensity of university non-business students [63]. In the next few sections, we draw upon the internal and external factor in influencing entrepreneurial intentions.

2.2. Social Intelligence

In explaining the differences between entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs, past research characterized entrepreneurs based on individual differences such as demographic variables including gender [38, 64], entrepreneurial characteristics such as Big Five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, consciousness, openness, neuroticism), as well as psychological characteristics such as risk-taking propensity, tolerance for ambiguity, internal locus of control, innovativeness, and independence [11, 58, 65, 66, 67]; as well as entrepreneurial passion [59, 68]. More recently, a shift towards two constructs in affecting entrepreneurial intentions, which are perceived desirability that includes personal attitude and perceived social norms [17, 69, 70, 71], as well as perceived feasibility including self-efficacy [70, 72, 73, 74]. Whilst giving credit to these studies investigating the interface between individual

differences and entrepreneurial intention, some authors [75, 76] argued to what extent does the mentioned constructs can be used solely to predict the intention to start a business.

Although the definitions of an entrepreneur differ in their description, there is a consensus that an entrepreneur has a set of distinctive character and mindset, and this individual is devoted to conceptualizing his or her business ideas and implement it through business plan as well opportunity seeker that manifest through creativity and innovation [77]. Many factors are expected to influence entrepreneurship intention, therefore, further investigation on individual factors or personal-level constructs affecting entrepreneurial intention are needed.

In particular, there are limited studies on the effect of individuals entrepreneurial competency in influencing entrepreneurial intention. However, in the context of students' entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial competency is difficult to be measured as students are not fully developed as a real entrepreneur, therefore measuring social intelligence is more suitable within this context. This study aims to investigate the importance of entrepreneurial competency such as social intelligence in influencing entrepreneurial intention. This construct is often ignored as it is expected to relate closely to general intelligence but not so closely to personality traits such as extraversion. It is identified several aspects of social intelligence which includes 'perceptiveness of others' internal states and moods; general ability to deal with others; knowledge on social rules and social life; insight and sensitivity in complex social situations; use of social techniques to manipulate others; perspective taking; and social adaptation' [78].

It is defined social intelligence as 'the behavioral manifestations of the interpersonal awareness of others' emotions, needs, thoughts, and perceptions as well as navigate the larger social environment and working with others [79].' The role of social intelligence in the context of entrepreneurial intention are not widely used in the field. To the best knowledge of the researcher, there is only one study done in this area, who found that social intelligence is important predictor for entrepreneurial intentions of newly graduated university students [80]. This is because social intelligence involves individuals' ability to understand others and to act wisely in social situations [81]. This means that individuals who are good at social information processing, possess social skills, and socially aware have higher intentions to establish their own business as they can relate to other people's need and at the same time identify opportunity and execute solution that delivers value for others. Concurrent to this discussion, prior studies have also acknowledged the entrepreneurial mindset and competencies are required to equip a person to carry out entrepreneurial activities such as new product development opportunity identification, and entrepreneurial leadership [82].

Therefore, these 'people skills' are needed for individuals to develop as it might influence their intention to start a new business venture. This discussion also implies that entrepreneurs are a function of their personal competency in relation to others, and thus they are not born but rather made as a result of learning and social interactions. According to this argument, the students' specific competency depends on their social intelligence, which are not transferable from one to another. Hence, there is more possibility that entrepreneurship competency can be taught and learnt. When an individual possesses a strong social intelligence, they will be able to connect with others well. Therefore, they will be more likely know or be connected with other entrepreneurs, change the society through venture creation and have a higher intention to become entrepreneurs. We therefore form the following hypothesis on the impact of social intelligence on entrepreneurial intention:

Hypothesis 1: When students possess high social intelligence, they will be more likely to develop an entrepreneurial intention.

2.3. Entrepreneurship Education

Social science research expects a more holistic view to explain phenomena by considering the interactions of various factors, rather than considering the impact of a single factor. Research has emphasized that even if individual-level factors have some impact entrepreneurial intention, it may be better to consider the impact of some contextual factors [83]. For instances, some individuals might have a combination of internal factor and external factor that make them more likely to start a business venture. Consequently, the current study has adopted a holistic approach to investigate entrepreneurial intention in regard to the influence of social intelligence as well as organizational factor related to entrepreneurship education of individuals.

More recent studies have also acknowledged that entrepreneurship can be encouraged through education [13, 52, 53, 73, 84, 85, 86]. This is because entrepreneurship education specifically the entrepreneurial courses could influence individuals' entrepreneurship intentions as it indirectly increases one's entrepreneurial skills [87], and 'entrepreneurial universities' often take an active role in stimulating entrepreneurial behaviour and promotion of new business creation among students [88]. It is also confirm that student who follow entrepreneurship education indeed show a greater intention to start-up [89]. Regarding entrepreneurship education, the literature suggests the important role of entrepreneurship courses [88, 90]; business incubators such as executive education facilities and start-up accelerators [91]; as well as business and social support including executives networking and workshops [88].

Concurrent to these findings, this study examined the 'entrepreneurial push strategy' such as perceived educational support, perceived concept development support and perceived business development support, which are the three dimensions of entrepreneurship education that could potentially influence non-business students'

entrepreneurial intentions. This discussion led us to propose:

Hypothesis 2: When students perceive that they have sufficient entrepreneurship education, they will be more likely to develop an entrepreneurial intention.

2.4. Entrepreneurship Motivation

Other than the individual and organizational factors discussed previously, this study aims to examine the mediating effects of entrepreneurship motivation specifically on the motivation to learn and self-realization. In this case, individual factor (social intelligence) and organizational factor (entrepreneurship education) affecting entrepreneurial intention are further enhanced by another vital component which is the entrepreneurship motivation. This study argues that even though students might have high social intelligence and able to obtain a robust entrepreneurship education, these would not be possible without students' entrepreneurship motivation. Motivation to start a new venture is critical despite the challenges one might face in the process [92]. Motivation is defined as the aspiration to systematize, manipulate and master ideas or organizations as quickly and independently as possible [93]. Following this definition, entrepreneurial motivation is view as individuals' willingness to learn as much as possible to succeed in conceptualize their business ideas into a viable business venture, as well as having strong self-realization that they could grow and challenge themselves in fulfilling their vision.

Entrepreneurship motivation in particular motivation to learn is being explored in this research as past research suggested that this construct resulted in higher participation in the context of training and development [94]. Entrepreneurial motivation is the motivation factor for entrepreneur's willingness to learn in order to establish new venture and is viewed as the most basic driving force of the entrepreneurship behavior [95]. It is argued that opportunity entrepreneurial motivation is related to individuals pursuing the realization of the potential business opportunities [96]. In particular, the entrepreneurial motivation has a positive and significant influence on entrepreneurial performance and entrepreneurial ability [96]. Based on this discussion, the current study argued that this self-realization will then influence entrepreneurial intentions. Furthermore, it was found that entrepreneurial motivations significantly mediate individual 'entrepreneurial orientation-entrepreneurial intention' and 'entrepreneurship education-entrepreneurial intention' relationships [97].

Social intelligence and entrepreneurial intentions as well as entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions have been found to be positively related with each other (as discussed in Section 2.2 and 2.3). Social intelligence and entrepreneurship education is encouraged further by entrepreneurial motivations such as motivation to learn and self-realization. In particular, it was found that the direct

effect of entrepreneurship education was not sufficiently strong because entrepreneurial motivation factor did not influence students' entrepreneurial intention, generally entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial motivation appear to have a significant positive correlation with each other[97]. Based on the literature, this study suggests that entrepreneurial motivations serve as a mediator between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention: there is a strong correlation between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial motivations [98, 99], and these entrepreneurial motivations are in turn highly correlated with entrepreneurial intention [100]. This study therefore suggests that entrepreneurial motivations have a mediating effect as it can help to explain the entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention relationship. Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed:

Hypothesis 3a: Entrepreneurial motivations mediate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention.

Following similar arguments, this study also argues that entrepreneurial motivations have a mediating effect as it can also enable the explanation on the relationship between social intelligence and entrepreneurial intention. Although there is no specific research that has studied the influence of social intelligence on entrepreneurship motivation, which in turn influence entrepreneurial intentions, there are few researchers that has found other individual factors including entrepreneurial competencies in positively impacting students' entrepreneurial motivation [101, 102]. We therefore form the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3b: Entrepreneurial motivations mediate the relationship between social intelligence and entrepreneurial intention.

As such, we propose, and intention-based model as presented in Figure 1. First, we investigate the influence of the individual and organizational construct, which is illustrated by two observed constructs: Social Intelligence and Entrepreneurship Education), followed by examine the mediating effect of Entrepreneurship Motivation on Entrepreneurial Intentions.

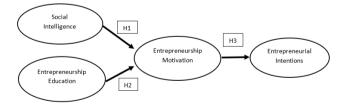


Figure 1. Research Framework

3. Methodology

The study collects data using online questionnaire and explore the contributions of entrepreneurship education, social intelligence, entrepreneurship motivation to predicting entrepreneurship Intentions among a sample of non-business students in a leading Malaysian city. The

study acquires participants by various means such as links to the Universities, the community, and the snowballing technique. The online questionnaire was accessible through a link sent to non-business University students by e-mail.

The introduction section of the questionnaire explained the aims of the study and the participants are fully aware of the research purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, the guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality in making sure that the research data is non-attributable, as well as secure methods for storing the research data. Participants' consent was also obtained prior to answering the survey.

In order, to ensure variability and representativity of respondents, we selected students from both private and public University in Malaysia. First, we selected Universities based on their provision of entrepreneurship program. This was done by examining at their websites and reviewing their course outline). Secondly, we contacted the students who had studied or were studying at least one entrepreneurial module. We also contacted the school representative to help disseminate the questionnaire and establish contact with those who agreed to participate in our study. The data collection process lasted around three weeks. The data collection procedure of this preliminary study resulted in 50 completed questionnaires. These respondents represent a range of ages, genders, and education background, including local and international students.

3.1 Measures

Respondents were asked to give their responses to the same set of items measuring the study variables, together with several demographic variables. Entrepreneurship Intentions was operationalized using a 15-items scales from a widely known scale [103, 104]. Consistent with prior research, all items were measured on five-point Likert-types scales where 1 is 'strongly disagree' and 5 is 'strongly agree'. This scale makes a distinction between Growth-oriented Intentions, Independence-oriented Intentions, Conviction-oriented Intentions, and Preparation-oriented Intentions; thus the entrepreneurial intentions was measured using four dimensions.

Entrepreneurship Education reflects the perceived university support in relation to entrepreneurship endeavors, capturing three dimensions of entrepreneurship education which are Perceived educational support, Perceived Concept Development Support, and Perceived Business Development Support. This scale was measured by 18-item [105].

Social Intelligence was assessed by 21-items based on prior research [106], where 1 is 'Never' and 5 is 'Very Often'. This scale was measured by four dimensions which consist of Social Information Processing, Social Skills and Social Awareness. Lastly, the mediating effects of Entrepreneurship Motivation was measured using 11-items scales encapsulating two dimensions which are Motivation to Learn and Self-Realization [107, 108].

4. Results

4.1. Sample Profile

The gender distribution is nearly equal, where 52% of the respondents were male, and 48% of them were female. As for the age range of respondents, more than half (66%) of them were in the age range of 20-22 years old which indicated that most of them are not final year students. Indeed, most of them are from 3rd year of study (40%), followed by 2nd year of study (34%). As most of them are very young, majority of them (96%) are still single. Due to majority (92%) of them are Malaysians, most of the respondents are Malays (40%), followed by Chinese (19%), Indian (7%) and others (4%). Among the respondents, students from private universities dominated the distribution of students, where 74% of them are from private universities. As this study intended to focus on non-business students, majority of them came from Engineering and Information Technology background, which were Electronic Engineering program (20%) and Mechanical Engineering program (16%), as well as Information Technology program (16%). Although they are not from business background, they had attended to certain modules that are related to entrepreneurship and management, such as Entrepreneurship module (42%), Social Entrepreneurship (20%), and Project Management (12%). When they were asked about their interest in entrepreneurship, most of them are interested to start a business in Food and Beverages (28%), Technology (22%), and Fashion and Apparel (18%). Below is the table of their demographic information in details.

4.2. Measurement Model

Table below showed the reliability of each construct. The reliability test was conducted via Smart PLS version 3.0, by examining their Cronbach Alpha value, where any value that more than 0.60 is considered as reliable. From the table, it can be seen that all constructs are reliable in this study.

Table 1. Reliability Value (Cronbach Alpha)

Constructs	Reliability Value
Entrepreneurial Education (EE)	0.92
Entrepreneurial Intention (EI)	0.92
Entrepreneurial Motivation (EM)	0.91
Social Intelligence (SI)	0.77

In addition to Table 1, discriminant validity test was also conducted based on Fornell-Larcker standard which was indicated in Table 2.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity (Fornell Larcker Criterion)

	EE	EI	EM	SI
EE	0.655			
EI	0.412	0.714		
EM	0.505	0.704	0.732	
SI	0.489	0.498	0.443	0.592

4.3. Path Coefficients and Mediation Effect

In this study, Hypothesis 2 is accepted, where there is a significant impact of entrepreneurial education (EE) on entrepreneurial intention (EI) among the university students (β = 0.280; t > 1.96). However, Hypothesis 1 was rejected as Social Intelligence (SI) did not show any significant impact on both EI (β = 0.191; t < 1.96). Other than path coefficients, this study intended to examine the mediating effect of EM in the relationships of EE – EI and SI-EI. For Hypothesis 3a, the result showed that there is a significant mediating effect of EM in the relationship of EE – EI (β = 0.280; t > 1.96), hence accepting the hypothesis. However, Hypothesis 3b was rejected as there is no significant mediating effect of EM in the relationship of SI – EI (β = 0.191; t < 1.96).

5. Discussion

5.1. Discussion on Findings

Entrepreneurship represents a driving force for the creation of new job opportunities, regional/national competitiveness, and growth, having substantial economic and social benefits. Although a vast variety of factors play a significant role in the decision to become an entrepreneur, our focus was directed towards the role of locus of control, need for achievement and entrepreneurial education on youth entrepreneurial intention. As shown in previous section, it was found that EE has significant impact on EI among the non-business students in Malaysian universities. Authors such as [109] and [110] have emphasised on the role of entrepreneurship education in preparing graduates so that they are able to take on the challenges of the entrepreneurial world, namely, enhancing their EIs to ideate, create and develop ventures. Entrepreneurial education provides students with knowledge, skills and additional capacities necessary to apply to the context of setting up a new company or business [110]. Thus, our hypothesis H2 is supported.

This study examined the impact of social intelligence on entrepreneurial intention as well. Studies in the field of social intelligence and entrepreneurship show that these two concepts have a meaningful and positive relation with each other [25]. It is revealed that there is a meaningful and significant relationship between social intelligence and entrepreneurial intention [111]. However, the finding of this study was contradicted with several past studies, where it was found that there is no significant impact of social

intelligence on entrepreneurial intention. An analysis of the social competence of engineering students indicates that they do not always correctly understand linguistic expression, experience difficulties in analyzing situational interpersonal interactions, make mistakes in finding the causes of certain behavior [112]. This is due to the specifics of professional activity - working with technology, and not with people [112]. Due to the respondents are majorly from engineering and IT background, the effect of SI might be weak in affecting their EI, hence hypothesis H1 was rejected.

Other than direct effect of variables, this study measured the indirect effect of EE on EI via EM among the non-business students in Malaysian universities. The finding revealed that there is a significant mediating effect of EM in the relationship between EE and EI. This result is consistent with the past findings [101,113], where the scholars discovered that the entrepreneurship education takes part as antecedent variable that contributing to affect directly on both entrepreneurial motivation entrepreneurial attitude, and its impact indirectly on entrepreneurial intention. the contribution of Expectancy Theory (also known as the Theory of Motivation or the Rational Intention Theory) as significant since rational prioritization influences the effect of individual intentions on the motivation-decision-action process [114]. Under this approach, people act more from anticipation than from deprivation, as put forward by the traditional theory that individuals have a natural tendency to meet their basic needs [115]. Hence, our hypothesis H3a is supported.

Lastly, this study also measured the indirect effect of SI on EI via EM among the non-business students in Malaysian universities. The finding showed that EM has no significant mediating effect on the relationship between SI and EI. To explain this happening in terms of methodology, the mediator could not be functioned when it has no significant relationship with independent variable [116]. In the earlier section, it was found that SI did not have significant impact on EM, hence it is expected that EM has no significant mediating effect on the relationship between SI and EI. In addition to that, students of 7th semester had higher level of social intelligence as compared to students of 1st semester who had medium or low level of social intelligence [117]. As most of the respondents are from Year 1 and Year 2, they might not have significant level of SI to influence their EM, hence our hypothesis H3b is rejected.

5.2. Limitations & Recommendation

Despite its contributions, this study is not without limitations which future research should bear in mind. Firstly, the use of a closed, structured questionnaire makes it impossible to explore in greater depth the nature of causal relations; something which is accentuated in cross-sectional studies. In addition, the sample only consists of 50 non-business students, which was considered as a small sample that the conclusions obtained cannot be generalized

to all. Future research should use more samples. We therefore call for further primary studies to contribute to these research areas so that more accurate conclusions can be drawn. In brief, further and ongoing research is required to investigate the immediate and longitudinal impact of the entrepreneurial training, using new, larger and more diverse samples. Future work with larger samples would provide useful information on the impact of social variables such as entrepreneurship gender age on the education-entrepreneurial intentions relationship. It is also that future studies could compare the entrepreneurial intention among business students and non-business students to provide more interesting findings.

5.3. Implications

These results have implications for policy makers and academicians. Our results show that policy makers should develop political initiatives that promote entrepreneurship programs, at least among those students who do not have entrepreneurial training (since our same group is made up of non-business or non-entrepreneurship students). Our findings also have implications for potential entrepreneurs, who can find how entrepreneurial education can help them decide to start a business. This type of educational programs, especially for those who do not have business training such as engineering students, can help them find the resources, techniques, and ideas that allow them to transform an idea or a project into a company. As for academicians, this study could significantly contribute to the discipline of entrepreneurship. Firstly, this study could improve the direct relationship of "education - entrepreneurial intention" by including Entrepreneurship Motivation as mediator. Secondly, instead of solely focusing on the environmental factor, this study measures the influence of social intelligence on entrepreneurial intention via entrepreneurs' motivation as well.

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