Evaluating Entrepreneurial Intentions of TVET Students Through the 'Business Start Pro' Workshops Using the Theory of Planned Behavior

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship education has become more important in developing entrepreneurial skills and aspirations among students, especially within Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions. The 'Business Start Pro' workshops were specifically developed to enhance entrepreneurial intentions among students at Polytechnic Kuching Sarawak. This research evaluates the impact of these workshops on the entrepreneurial intentions of TVET students, using the Theory of Planned Behavior as the underlying framework. A quantitative approach was adopted, surveying 15 students who attended the workshops. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire and analyzed via descriptive statistics and regression analysis to determine how entrepreneurial attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influenced entrepreneurial intentions. The results showed significant improvements in entrepreneurial attitudes (mean score: 4.47), subjective norms (mean score: 4.29), and perceived behavioral control (mean score: 4.20), with perceived behavioral control showing the strongest correlation with entrepreneurial intentions ($r = 0.746$). These results emphasize the importance of well-structured entrepreneurship education programs in fostering entrepreneurial mindsets, offering valuable ideas for TVET educators and policymakers. Future research could explore the long-term effects of these workshops on students' entrepreneurial success and investigate the scalability of such programs across different educational contexts and demographics.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial intentions, Business Startup Pro, Theory of Planned Behavior, Polytechnic Kuching Sarawak

1.0 Introduction

Entrepreneurship is key to driving innovation and economic growth in today's economy (Anjum et al., 2024). Educational programs increasingly aim to equip students with entrepreneurial skills, especially in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, where they can shape career paths (Tian, 2023; Muchira et al., 2022). However, many TVET students still exhibit low entrepreneurial intention and self-efficacy, which are critical for business success (Kunene, 2020). Targeted educational approaches, such as practical workshops, are needed to nurture these mindsets. This study evaluates the impact of 'Business Start Pro' workshops

on the entrepreneurial intentions of TVET students at Polytechnic Kuching Sarawak using the Theory of Planned Behavior. It examines how workshops influence attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control to foster entrepreneurial mindsets.

2.0 Literature Review

Research increasingly links entrepreneurship education with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), showing how well-designed programs influence entrepreneurial intentions. According to TPB, behavior is driven by intentions shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). Studies show that entrepreneurship education positively impacts these factors, increasing students' entrepreneurial intentions (Kunene, 2020). Societal attitudes, peer influence, and social networks also play important roles in shaping these intentions (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2024). Confidence in handling business tasks, or perceived behavioral control, is critical for entrepreneurial success (Tian, 2023). Practical training enhances students' ability to manage challenges (Chen, Tang, & Han, 2022). Strong entrepreneurial intentions often lead to real actions (Ghouse, Barber III, & Alipour, 2024). Evaluations of entrepreneurship programs highlight their lasting positive effects on students' attitudes (Rodrigues, Silva, & Franco, 2023), with structured workshops significantly enhancing entrepreneurial mindset (Shahriar et al., 2024). However, many students in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions still show a low level of entrepreneurial intention and self-efficacy, which are essential for achieving success in business. This gap highlights the need to focus educational interventions that can successfully cultivate entrepreneurial mindsets. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the overall effect of the workshops on students' entrepreneurial intentions.

3.0 Methodology

This study focused on students from Polytechnic Kuching Sarawak who attended the "Business Startup Pro" workshop. A cross-sectional survey with a quantitative approach was used to collect measurable data. The sample included all workshop participants, and data was gathered on May 14, 2024, via a questionnaire shared through WhatsApp using Google Forms. A census sampling method ensured every participant's response, yielding 11 completed surveys. The questionnaire, based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, was adapted from frameworks by Saufi et al. (2024) and Trif (2022). The questionnaire items were developed using an adopt and adapt approach, which involved selecting relevant items from established scales and adjusting them to suit the specific context of this study. The scales used in this research were based on the work of Saufi et al. (2024), who developed and applied a scale for measuring entrepreneurial intentions across different cultural contexts, as well as Trif (2022), who examined the impact of contextual factors on entrepreneurial intentions.

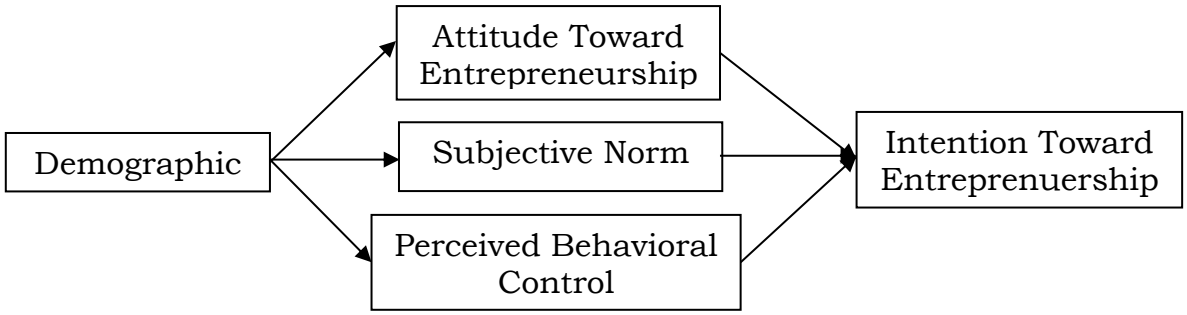

Figure 1: Research Framework Model

The research framework, based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), explores factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions through three key constructs: attitudes toward entrepreneurship, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. The independent variables (IV) in this study include attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, all of which are hypothesized to influence the dependent variable (DV), entrepreneurial intentions. These constructs are indirectly influenced by demographic factors such as age, gender, semester, and field of study.

Attitudes toward entrepreneurship refer to whether an individual views starting a business positively or negatively. Subjective norms involve perceived social pressure from people like family and friends, which can encourage entrepreneurial intentions. Perceived behavioral control reflects the individual's confidence in their ability to start a business, including belief in their skills and resources. The survey included demographic questions and 11 items measuring the constructs on a five-point Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha tested the reliability of the questionnaire (Bujang et al., 2024), while Pearson correlation analysis examined relationships between the variables. Multiple regression analysis using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) evaluated how well attitudes, norms, and control predicted entrepreneurial intentions. The data analysis was conducted using SPSS for statistical tests and descriptive statistics, while Python was utilized for data manipulation and visualization, allowing for a comprehensive examination of the relationships between the variables.

4.0 Results and Discussion

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Demographic Data and Categorical Responses

Variable		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	11	73.3
	Female	4	26.7
Semester	2	3	53.3
	3	3	20.0
	4	8	20.0
	5	1	6.7
Field of Study	Commerce	7	46.7
	Building Services Engineering	2	13.3
	Information and Communication Technology	2	13.3
	Accountancy	2	13.3

	Civil Engineering	2	13.3
Age	17-20	12	80.0
	21-24	3	20.0

The demographic data in Table 1 shows that 73.3% of the participants were male (11 out of 15), and 26.7% were female (4 out of 15). Most participants (53.3%) were in their 4th semester, followed by 3rd and 2nd semesters (20% each), and one 5th-semester student (6.7%). Commerce students represented the largest group (46.7%), while students from Building Services Engineering, ICT, Accountancy, and Civil Engineering each made up 13.3%. Most participants were aged 17-20 (80%), with 20% aged 21-24. The higher male participation could be due to gender trends in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and entrepreneurship (Tandrayen-Ragoobur & Gokulsing, 2022). The dominance of 4th-semester students suggests that those nearing graduation may prioritize entrepreneurship workshops for career readiness. The strong representation of Commerce students may reflect their curriculum's focus on entrepreneurship (Lyu, Shepherd, & Lee, 2024). Interest in entrepreneurship across other programs suggests broad appeal, though the small sample size limits conclusions. Younger students' participation aligns with their greater involvement in exploratory activities (Jiang et al., 2023). Cronbach's alpha was used to assess reliability, yielding high scores: Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship (0.915), Subjective Norms (0.815), Perceived Behavioral Control (0.856), and Intentions Toward Entrepreneurship (0.843), all above the accepted benchmark of 0.7 (Hadiyanto et al., 2021). Table 2 provides the mean score interpretations.

Table 2: Mean Score Interpretation (Hadiyanto et al., 2021)

Mean Score Range	Level
4.21 – 5.00	Very High
3.41 – 4.20	High
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
1.81 – 2.60	Low
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low

The high Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs (Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioral Control, and Entrepreneurial Intentions) indicate strong internal consistency, ensuring accurate and reliable measurements that strengthen the study's findings.

Table 3: Interpretation of Mean Scores for Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
A1. I believe entrepreneurial skills are important for my future career.	4.47	0.52	Very High
A2. I am interested in starting my own business.	4.47	0.52	Very High
A3. I believe starting a business will benefit me.	4.47	0.52	Very High

Table 3 shows the mean scores and standard deviations for participants' attitudes toward entrepreneurship, with consistently high positive responses. The first statement, " I believe entrepreneurial skills are important for my future career." had a high mean score of 4.47 (SD = 0.52), indicating participants value these skills for career development. The statement "I am interested in starting my own business." also received a high mean of 4.47 (SD = 0.52), reflecting strong entrepreneurial interest. Similarly, the statement " I believe starting a business will benefit me." scored 4.47 (SD = 0.52), highlighting participants' belief in the personal and financial rewards of entrepreneurship. Overall, participants demonstrated highly positive attitudes, acknowledging the importance of entrepreneurial skills, expressing interest in business creation, and recognizing its potential benefits. This aligns with findings from (Anderson, 2023; Chen et al., 2022; Supramaniam, Razak, & Veliapandian, 2022) indicates that when individuals perceive entrepreneurship positively, they are more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activities and pursue business opportunities.

Table 4: Interpretation of Mean Scores for Subjective Norms

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
B1. I feel support from my family regarding starting a business.	4.33	0.49	Very High
B2. My friends have a significant influence on my decision to start a business.	4.20	0.68	High
B3 Society has a positive view of entrepreneurship as a career path.	4.33	0.62	Very High

Table 4 highlights the mean scores for subjective norms related to social support for entrepreneurship. Family support scored highest (M = 4.33, SD = 0.49), reinforcing its crucial role in shaping entrepreneurial decisions (Palmer et. al., 2021). Peer influence also scored well (M = 4.20, SD = 0.68), emphasizing the importance of social networks. Lastly, societal respect for entrepreneurship was strongly endorsed (M = 4.33, SD = 0.62), showing the positive societal view toward entrepreneurship as a career. Overall, family, friends, and societal views play significant roles in influencing entrepreneurial intentions.

Table 5: Interpretation of Mean Scores for Perceived Behavioral Control

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
C1. I am confident in my ability to create a business plan.	4.13	0.64	High
C2. I am confident in my ability to manage the financial aspects of a business.	4.33	0.62	Very High
C3 I am confident in my ability to overcome obstacles to starting a business.	4.13	0.64	High

Table 5 highlights participants' confidence in their entrepreneurial skills. Confidence in creating a business plan scored high (M = 4.13, SD = 0.64),

showing participants feel capable in this critical skill. Managing business finances received an even higher score (M = 4.33, SD = 0.62), indicating strong financial literacy. Confidence in overcoming obstacles also scored well (M = 4.13, SD = 0.64), reflecting a belief in problem-solving abilities. Overall, participants exhibit strong perceived control, especially in financial management and overcoming challenges, which supports their entrepreneurial intentions.

Table 6: Interpretation of Mean Scores for Intentions Toward Entrepreneurship

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
D1. I am likely to start a business within the next year.	4.00	0.76	High
D2. I have taken any steps to start a business since attending the workshop.	4.07	0.70	High

Table 6 shows high mean scores for participants' entrepreneurial intentions. The statement, "I am likely to start a business within the next year," scored 4.00 (SD = 0.76), indicating strong intent to start a business soon. The statement, "I have taken steps to start a business since attending the workshop," scored slightly higher at 4.07 (SD = 0.70), suggesting participants are already taking concrete actions. These results emphasize the effectiveness of entrepreneurship workshops in fostering both intent and action toward starting a business.

Table 7: Correlation Between Demographics and Entrepreneurial Constructs

Construct / Demographic	Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship	Subjective Norms	Perceived Behavioral Control
Age	0.157	0.157	0.119
Gender	0.008	-0.054	-0.087
Field of Study	-0.191	-0.155	-0.209
Semester	-0.048	-0.048	-0.111

Table 7 highlights the relationships between demographic factors (age, gender, field of study, and semester) and entrepreneurship elements (attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control). Most correlations are weak to moderate. Age has a weak positive correlation with attitudes (r = 0.157), subjective norms (r = 0.157), and perceived behavioral control (r = 0.119), suggesting that older students hold more favorable views of entrepreneurship, supporting previous research (Paray & Kumar, 2020). Gender shows minimal correlation with attitudes (r = 0.008) and weak negative correlations with subjective norms (r = -0.054) and perceived control (r = -0.087), indicating gender's limited role in entrepreneurial intentions, consistent with Hutasuhut et al. (2024). The field of study shows negative correlations with all constructs, with the strongest being on perceived control (r = -0.209), suggesting that students from some disciplines lack confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities (Boldureanu et al., 2020). Semester has weak negative correlations with all factors, slightly more with perceived control (r = -0.111), which may be due to increasing academic pressures (Kuckertz et al.,

2020). Overall, demographic factors show a slight influence on entrepreneurial perceptions, contributing to discussions on the impact of education and background on entrepreneurship.

Table 8: Correlation Between Entrepreneurial Constructs and Intentions

Independent Variable / Dependent Variable	Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship	Subjective Norms	Perceived Behavioral Control
Intentions Towards Entrepreneurship	0.607	0.590	0.746

Table 8 highlights the relationships between Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control with entrepreneurial intentions. All three factors positively influence intentions, with Perceived Behavioral Control showing the strongest correlation (r = 0.746). This suggests that individuals confident in their ability to start a business are more likely to pursue entrepreneurship. Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship also show a strong correlation (r = 0.607), indicating that those with a positive outlook on entrepreneurship are more inclined to start a business. Subjective Norms have a weaker yet still significant correlation (r = 0.590), meaning social support can influence intentions, though less than personal attitudes or perceived control. Overall, Perceived Behavioral Control and Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship are the strongest predictors, suggesting that entrepreneurship programs should focus on building confidence and fostering positive views of business creation. This is supported by research indicating that individuals who feel capable of managing entrepreneurial challenges are more likely to pursue business opportunities (Tian, 2023; Kunene, 2020).

Table 9: Multiple Regression Analysis

Independent Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error (SE)	t-Value	p-Value
Intercept	-2.412354	0.865	-2.79	0.012
Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship	0.391486	0.154	2.54	0.021
Subjective Norms	0.303005	0.165	1.84	0.078
Perceived Behavioral Control	0.747913	0.202	3.7	0.003

The multiple regression analysis results highlight the relationship between three independent variables (Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control) and the dependent variable (Entrepreneurial Intentions) presented in Table 9. The analysis provides valuable understanding into how each factor influences entrepreneurial intentions. The intercept value is -2.41 (SE = 0.865, t = -2.79, p = 0.012), indicating that when all other predictors are set to zero, the predicted value for entrepreneurial intentions is negative. This suggests that additional

factors, beyond those analyzed, might be important in shaping entrepreneurial intentions. The coefficient for Attitudes Toward Entrepreneurship is positive (β = 0.39), with a standard error of 0.154, and it is statistically significant (t = 2.54, p = 0.021). This shows that as attitudes toward entrepreneurship become more positive, a person's intention to start a business increase. This finding aligns with the Theory of Planned Behavior, which emphasizes the role of attitudes in shaping intentions (Ajzen, 1991). Similarly, Perceived Behavioral Control has a strong positive coefficient (β = 0.75), with a standard error of 0.202, and is also statistically significant (t = 3.7, p = 0.003). This indicates that individuals who feel confident about their ability to manage the challenges of starting a business are more likely to have strong entrepreneurial intentions. Recent research supports this, showing that perceived control is a key factor in entrepreneurial intent (Kobylińska, 2022; Vamvaka, Stoforos, Palaskas, & Botsaris, 2020). However, Subjective Norms did not show a statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions (β = 0.30, SE = 0.165, t = 1.84, p = 0.078). This suggests that while social influence may matter, it doesn't significantly increase entrepreneurial intentions in this sample. Previous studies have found that the effect of subjective norms can vary based on cultural and situational contexts (Anderson, 2023; Bagozzi, Widjaja, Arifin, & Setini, 2020). Overall, the analysis highlights that attitudes and perceived control are the strongest predictors of entrepreneurial intentions, suggesting that these factors should be prioritized in entrepreneurship education and support programs (Duong, 2022).

5.0 Conclusion

This study aimed to explore how the 'Business Start Pro' workshops influenced TVET students' entrepreneurial intentions, using the Theory of Planned Behavior as a framework. The results showed that students who took part in the workshops developed more positive entrepreneurial attitudes, felt stronger social support, and had a better understanding of their own capabilities, which all contributed to a greater likelihood of pursuing entrepreneurial ventures. This suggests that well-designed programs like 'Business Start Pro' play a crucial role in developing an entrepreneurial mindset in TVET students and preparing them to start their own businesses. These findings provide valuable ideas for the field of entrepreneurship education, highlighting the effectiveness of targeted programs in boosting students' entrepreneurial intentions. However, the small sample size may restrict the applicability of these results, as previous research has pointed out the necessity for larger studies to confirm findings across different contexts (Shahriar et al., 2024; Faber & Fonseca, 2014). Future research should explore the long-term impacts of such workshops on students' business success and assess how similar initiatives perform in various educational settings, which is essential for developing strong entrepreneurship education frameworks (Pham et al., 2023). Finally, this research highlights the potential of focused educational programs to promote entrepreneurial intentions, aligning with the objective of supporting entrepreneurship among TVET students, as demonstrated by the favorable outcomes reported in several

studies (Ghouse et al., 2024).

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Jamaah S.: Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review, Discussion, Conclusion, Writing; **Hayati I.:** Methodology, Result, Editing, and Writing; **Ratu Fenny M.:** Data collection, Editing, Reviewing, Proofreading, and Writing.

Conflicts Of Interest
The manuscript has not been published elsewhere and is not being considered by other journals. All authors have approved the review, agree with its Submission, and declare no conflict of interest in the manuscript.

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