

**Ministry of Education
Department of Higher Education
Yangon University of Economics**

စာကြည့်တိုက်
ရန်ကင်းပညာရေးတက္ကသိုလ်

**Yangon University of Economics
Research Journal**

Vol. 7, No. 1

February, 2020

Yangon University of Economics Research Journal

Vol. 7, No . 1
February, 2020

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The Antecedents of Entrepreneurial Intentions among University Students

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of three components of Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) on entrepreneurial intention (EI) such as attitude towards behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavior controls. The sample of this study consisted of 263 final year students in Yangon University of Economics (YECO). The sample was taken by simple random sampling method. The findings of multiple linear regression analysis revealed that attitude towards behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavior controls have positive impact on entrepreneurial intention of university students. Among them, attitude towards behavior was the stronger predictor. The study makes theoretical contributions to body knowledge of entrepreneurial intention by using theory of planned behavior in different culture. Practically, the study provides useful knowledge for policymakers to improve the entrepreneurship in our country.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial intention, Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).

I. Introduction

‘Entrepreneurship is a means of economic growth; a mechanism that assists employment generation, innovation and competitiveness; and stimulus of social development. Promotion of entrepreneurship is now accorded national priorities by many countries, specifically among developing ones’ (Grid & Bagraim, 2008). In facing with high unemployment and low poverty rate in developing countries in the world, entrepreneurship becomes a means to achieve the dreams of these countries.

In a country’s general population, they may be varied like students, workers, housewives, businessmen, administrators and intellects depend upon their occupation and status. Among these groups, attention pays on the students to become entrepreneurs for future. This is because the end of period of education is one of the three window periods to become entrepreneur throughout a person’s life. Therefore, the study focuses on entrepreneurial intention of final year students in Yangon University of Economics (YECO). The current study is significant in that government authorities may use its results to develop initiatives to promote entrepreneurship amongst people in younger generations, particularly those who are enrolled in university.

Objectives of the Study

The study mainly focuses on the following objectives:

- (1) To identify the entrepreneurial intention (EI) among the university students.

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- (2) To analyze the effect of three components of Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) on entrepreneurial intention (EI) of the university students.

Conceptual Framework of the study

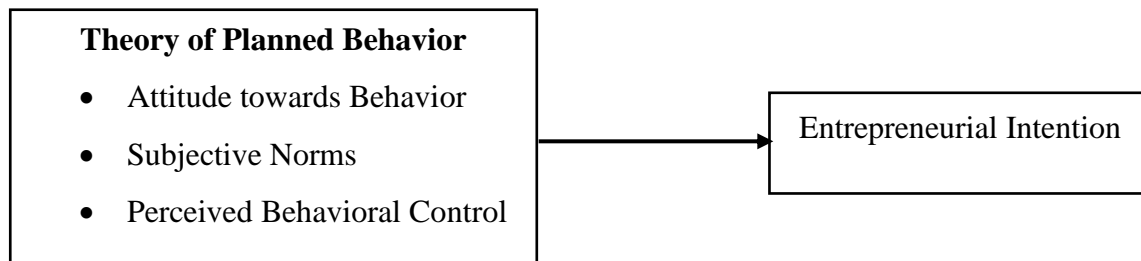


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

II. Scope and Method of the Study

This study focuses on TPB of final year students and their intention to become entrepreneur. This empirical research used descriptive and causal research design. Study identify the EI among university students and analyze the effect of three components of TPB on EI of the university students. Data has been collected from final year students in Yangon University of Economics (YECO) who are attending in the 2018-2019 academic year. A total of 278 students were randomly selected. After that all filled questionnaire were collected by author and found 263 total valid questionnaires. A self-structured questionnaire was used for data collection. All variables of TPB were identified and selected through literature review. Response are collected on five-point Likert scale that range from 1 = strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The questionnaire is divided into three parts: demographic characteristics, three components of TPB and EI. The three components of TPB were adapted from previous studies such as Solesvik et al. (2012), Souitaris et al. (2007) and Linan & Chen (2009). EI scale was adapted from Linan & Chen (2009). For demographic characteristics questions are not with Likert scales type. Entrepreneurship theoretical concepts were studies through secondary data. The secondary data were previous studies in this field on the internet.

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences version 25 (SPSS 25). Descriptive statistics were used for analyzing the demographic profile of respondents. The multiple linear regression was used for analyzing the effect TPB on EI.

III. Results

1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Descriptive analysis was utilized to understand the overall profile of respondents. As for demographic data, the frequency and percentage were used for analysis. Table (1) shows the demographic data of the respondents of this research.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Attribute	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	41	16
	Female	222	84
Age (years)	Below 20	66	25
	21 – 23	194	74
	23 and above	3	1

Source: Survey Data (2019, July)

According to Table 1, the data was collected from 263 final year students in YECO. Among the total of 263 respondents, 84 percent are females while the other 16 percent are male. Most of the respondents are 21 – 23 years old with 74 percent, followed by 25 percent of the respondents who are below 20 years old and 1 percent who are 23 years old and above.

2. Descriptive Statistics

The following section contains descriptive statistics for each scale. It was used to analyze the mean and standard deviation of independent variables and dependent variable. Using SPSS, the mean and standard deviation was calculated for each variable (see Table 2).

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of EI and three components of TPB

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Entrepreneurial Intention	3.43	0.71
Attitude towards Behavior	3.67	0.63
Subjective Norm	3.14	0.79
Perceived Behavioral Control	3.32	0.58

Source: Survey Data (2019, July)

According to Table 2, it is found that the standard deviations for all variables are less than 1. So as to ‘normal distribution the value of standard deviation must be ranging from 0 to 1’ (Cohen, 2011). The deviation for EI is 0.71 from its mean, attitude towards behavior is 0.63, subjective norm is 0.79 and perceived behavioral control is 0.58. So, it can be concluded that data of this study is normally distributed.

3. Effect of three components of TPB on Entrepreneurial Intention

Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to find out the effect of three components of TPB on EI of final year students in YECO. In the regression analysis, EI was regarded as dependent variable and three components of TPB as independent variables.

The results of three components of TPB on EI was reported in Table 3.

Table 3 Effect of Personality Traits on Entrepreneurial Intention

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	.023	.205	.114	.000
Attitude towards Behavior	.532***	.058	9.128	.000
Subjective Norm	.121***	.043	2.792	.006
Perceived Behavioral Control	.324***	.062	5.213	.000
R ²	0.527			
Adjusted R ²	0.521			
F-value	96.104 ***			
Sig.	0.000			

Source: Survey Data (2019, July)

According to Table (3), the results showed that together attitude towards behavior, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control explained by 52.1 percent (Adjusted R²) of the variance of EI. the F-value shows the independents variables statistically significantly predict the dependent value, $F(3,263) = 96.104$, $p < 0.000$ that is the regression model is a good fit of the data.

The results also show that all components of TPB have positive and significant association with EI: attitude towards behavior (beta = .532, $p < .01$), subjective norm (beta = .121, $p < .01$) and perceived behavioral control (beta = .324, $p < .01$). The analysis also indicated that attitude towards behavior (beta = .532) was a stronger predictor. These results suggest that the EI of final year students can be significantly predicted by attitude towards behavior, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control.

Attitude towards behavior has the expected positive sign and highly significant coefficient because significant value is less than 1 percent level. The positive relationship means that the increase in attitude towards behavior leads to more EI. If there is an increase in forces of attitude towards behavior by 1 unit, this will also raise the EI by 0.532 unit.

Subjective norm has the expected positive sign and significant coefficient value at 1 percent level. The positive relationship indicates that the increase in subjective norm leads to raise EI of final year students in YECO. An increase in subjective norm by 1 unit will raise the students' EI by 0.121 unit.

Perceived behavioral control has the expected positive sign and significant coefficient value at 1 percent level. The positive relationship indicates that the increase in perceived behavioral control leads to raise EI of final year students in YECO. An increase in perceived behavioral control by 1 unit will raise the students' EI by 0.324 unit.

In summary, the results show that all factors have significant value and the main determination of students' EI in YECO is found to be the attitude towards behavior. It indicates that the students have favorable of being self-employed.

IV. Conclusion

This study focuses on analyze the effect of three components of TPB on EI of the final year students in YECO. 263 respondents of final year students completed questionnaire composed of three parts.

The study contributes to the body of knowledge of EI by using the TPB. The results also show that all components of TPB have positive and significant association with EI: attitude towards behavior, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control. Among them, attitude towards behavior was the most influential factor.

The key contribution of this study is the empirical evidence of the factor affecting students' intention to become an entrepreneur. In the future, the fact that undergraduates are important source of emerging entrepreneurship. The implication of this study to policy makers and educators is, apart from offering entrepreneurship courses; the university should consider other factors to motivate the students to become an entrepreneur. It may require additional syllabus or programs for entrepreneurship study.

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