
MASCULINITY BEHAVIOUR AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship is traditionally considered masculine, so male gender tends to have higher intention to pursue an entrepreneurial career. This study argues that, it is the masculinity attitude and behaviour that shapes the entrepreneurial intention. A research model was developed based on the masculine behaviour model and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). The masculine behaviour model consists of four constructs, namely success dedication, restrictive emotionality, inhibited affection and exaggerated self reliance. The constructs drawn from TPB are attitude towards entrepreneurial, perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention. Based on the developed model, a total of 10 hypotheses representing the relationship among constructs were established. Using a survey research methodology, the study collected data from 355 students of the Faculty of Information Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia. The relationship between the masculine behavioural constructs and the constructs drawn from TPB, show mix results. The success dedication and exaggerated self reliance are found to have significant effect on attitude towards entrepreneurial and perceived behavioural control. In addition, both attitude towards entrepreneurial and perceived behavioural control have significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention. This study adds to the research that studies entrepreneurial intentions and clarifies how to stimulate entrepreneurial behaviour.

Keywords: Gender, Masculine behaviour, Entrepreneurial intention, Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

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1. INTRODUCTION

For a long time entrepreneurship has been hailed as the economic engine of a country. Entrepreneurship promotes capital promotion, creates large-scale employment opportunities, promotes balanced regional development, reduces concentration of economic power, creates wealth, increases Gross National Product and Per Capita Income (Dhaliwal, 2016). The presently advanced countries like USA, United Kingdom, Germany, Russia and Japan clearly indicates the significant roles of entrepreneurship in driving economic development.

While the origins of an enterprise are often associated with Industrial Revolution, entrepreneurship activities had however started on a much earlier dates. Historical evidence suggests that it was during the Medieval times that mankind has started with to engage in entrepreneurship activities. Shane and Venkataraman (2000) defined entrepreneurship as an activity that involves the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities to introduce new goods and services, ways of organising, markets, processes and raw materials through organising efforts that previously had not existed. The one who does such activity is called an entrepreneur. Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, Carlos Slim are among the most successful entrepreneurs of all time.

Recognising the importance of entrepreneurship, many countries including Malaysia has taken the initiative by integrating entrepreneurship subjects into universities' curriculum. The increased number of unemployment and under employment in developing countries is another reason why entrepreneurship education has become very essential to tertiary education. According to Panigrahi and Joshi (2015), every year thousands of graduates are passing out from various universities and higher learning institution "but unfortunately they remain as literate unemployed because they lack the required skill as per the industry standard and ultimately become a burden for the society instead of economically contributing to the society and nation".

Evidence from the literature indicates that entrepreneurship is male-typed, such that "entrepreneurs are usually described in masculine terms and feminine qualities are considered antithetical to an entrepreneur" (Gupta et al. 2018). Gender stereotype theory suggests that men are generally perceived as more masculine than women, whereas women are generally perceived as more feminine than men. The required traits and characteristics of successful entrepreneur such as passion, strong work ethics, strong people skills, determination, creativity, competitiveness, self starter, open minded, confidence, and disciplined are more connected to masculine traits as compared to feminine traits. Contemporary definitions on masculinity and femininity suggest that it is possible that men and women may simultaneously possess both masculine and feminine attributes. Both genders, men and women, as long as they demonstrate masculinity attributes, may have the inclination towards entrepreneurship. On the basis of this argument, a study was conducted with the aim examining the relationship between masculine behaviour and entrepreneurial intention. In addition, it also examined gender in terms of attitude towards entrepreneurial, perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention. The study also compared between male and female in terms of their masculinity behaviour.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The enormous amount of literature on studies on entrepreneurial intention indicates that this topic has and will continue to attract the interest of many scholars and researchers. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 2005) has been shown to be the most dominant theory used in studying entrepreneurial intention. TPB explains that the intention of the human being is being influenced by the combination of three factors, which are attitude towards the behavior (AT), social norm (SN) and perceived behavioural control. TPB defines intention as the degree that an individual is willing to try or exert effort to perform the behavior. AT is defined as a product of belief about consequences and evaluation of the importance of consequences (Ajzen, 2005). AT is also described as the degree to which an individual evaluates the behaviour as positive or negative. SN is viewed as the level of social pressure or influence to perform or not perform the behaviour (Ajzen, 2005). PB relates to the amount of confidence a person has about his/her ability to perform the behavior and the amount of control an individual perceives he/she has over performing the behaviour (Ajzen, 2005).

Many empirical studies on entrepreneurship have tested TPB and found that the three antecedents are strong predictors of entrepreneurial intentions. In addition to the three variables, researchers have also examined various exogenous variables such as gender, education level, family entrepreneurial background, individual's creativity etc. However, none had examined the influence of masculinity behaviour on entrepreneurial intention. Masculinity, relates to "traits which are stereotypically attributed to men, is typified by the image of a strong, technically competent, ambitious, self-sufficient and authoritative leader who can maintain control of his emotions" (Drydakis et al. 2017). Forseth (2005) argued that it is imperative to understand that, individual men and women are not passively shaped by gender-typical behaviour, as they also have the capacity to develop atypical gender behavioural traits. Berger et al. (1995) further explained that men and women are not born with masculinity and femininity as part of their genetic make-up; rather, it is a concept into which they are acculturated. Accordingly, Drydakis et al. (2017) suggested that some women might develop and adopt masculinity behaviour, and maximize their use based on gender-atypical behaviours. In the field experiment, Drydakis et al. (2017) discovered that women who exhibited masculine personality traits had a 4.3% greater likelihood of gaining access to occupations than those displaying feminine personality traits. A study by O'Neill and O'Reilly (2011) showed that women who demonstrated masculinity attributes were good at self-monitoring and had a higher likelihood of being promoted than those women who were not as successful at self-monitoring. In another study, Miracle (2016) examined masculinity and health behaviour and found that the masculine behaviour score of respondents was not found to correlate with identified gender as expected. In other words, the male gender did not identify with the masculine behaviours more than the female respondents.

On the basis of the aforementioned discussion, the present study also argued masculinity behaviour should have bearings or influence on certain TPB constructs and Figure 1 demonstrates the theoretical framework that has been developed. Following TPB and previous studies, both AT and PB are hypothesized to have significant relationship with EI.

- *H1: There is a positive relationship between AT and EI*
- *H2: There is a positive relationship between PB and EI*

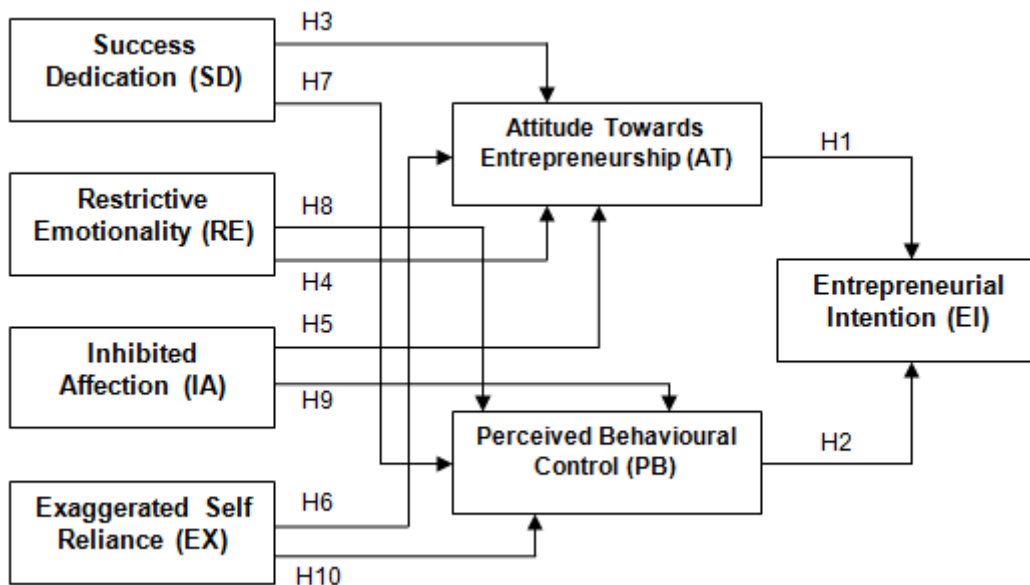


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework

Studies by Miralles, Giones and Gozun (2017) suggest that SN did not significantly predict entrepreneurial intention. Other studies by Yurtkoru, Kuscu and Goganay (2014); Ismail and Hassan Azahari (2017) had excluded SN when adopting TPB for studying entrepreneurial intention. To this effect, this study also excludes this construct from the theoretical framework.

Snell (2003) developed an instrument to measure masculinity behaviour. The instrument dimensionalized masculinity behaviour into four constructs which are SD, RE, inhibited affection and EX. SD refers to being dedicated to the pursuit of success in one's life; RE which deals with the public restriction of privately felt emotions; inhibited affection, which is concerned with the inhibition of feelings of love and tenderness for loved ones; and EX, the tendency to be preoccupied with being self-reliant and maintaining independent control over one's life. According to Snell (2003), the restrictive emotionality and inhibited affection dimensions, relate to the "antifemininity" aspect of the masculine role and these two components admonishes males to avoid anything identified as feminine.

All of these four dimensions are hypothesized to have significant relationship with attitudes towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control. To this effect, the following hypotheses are put forward:

- *H3: There is a positive relationship between SD and AT*
- *H7: There is a positive relationship between SD and PB*
- *H4: There is a positive relationship between RE and AT*
- *H8: There is a positive relationship between RE and PB*
- *H5: There is a positive relationship between IA and AT*
- *H9: There is a positive relationship between IA and PB*
- *H6: There is a positive relationship between EX and AT*
- *H10: There is a positive relationship between EX and PB*

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the survey research method. A questionnaire was used for collecting the research data. The questionnaire was developed based on the instruments used in past studies (Snell, 2013; Pawlak, 2016). Each of the construct used several items. For each item, a Likert scale of five anchoring was used. The respondents were required to indicate the extent which they agree or disagree with the items by ticking the Likert scale labeled as 1 = “strongly disagree”, 2 = “disagree”, 3 = “undecided”, 4 = “agree” and 5 = “strongly agree”. The questionnaire was then pre-tested with two experts and prospective respondents. Several respondents, who were students, were requested to review the questionnaire. Based on the feedbacks of the experts and users, the questionnaire was revised accordingly.

The population of the study was students of the Faculty of Information Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia. Using a convenient sampling technique, a total of 500 questionnaire was distributed. The justification for choosing the university students is because university students are considered a population highly inclined toward entrepreneurship (Zhang et al. 2014). Several students and faculty members were engaged to assist in reaching the targeted samples. The study set the data collection period to be eight weeks. At the end of the data collection, a total of 352 questionnaires successfully collected. However, during the data cleaning, 53 responses had to be removed because more than 20% of the questions were not answered.

This study used Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) for analyzing connection between constructs and for testing the research hypothesis. The reason for choosing this approach was because of the exploratory nature the study. The use of PLS-SEM analysis involves two steps, the assessment of measurement model and followed by the assessment of the structural model. Measurement model in SEM is of two types, namely reflective model and formative model. In this study, a reflective measurement model was adopted for all constructs. The measurement model is assessed in terms of the convergent validity and discriminant validity. The convergent validity is assessed in terms of composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). Both Cronbach’s Alpha and composite reliability (CR) measures the internal consistency of a scale (i.e. the questionnaire) while the average variance extracted (AVE) measures the total amount of variance in the items or indicators accounted for by the latent constructs. The Fornell and Larcker (1981) was used to assess the discriminant validity of the model. The assessment of the structural model is done by (i) evaluating the lateral collinearity using the VIF (ii) assessing the significance and relevance of the structural model relationship (iii) assessment of level of R^2 (coefficient of determination) (iv) assessment of the level of effect size (f^2) and (v) assessment of the predictive relevance (Q^2) respectively. Both R^2 and Q^2 assess the predictor power of the model.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Common Method Variance

Considering that this study collected data from single source i.e. one respondent answer all questions in the questionnaire, there is a need to examine whether the threat of common method bias is present in the dataset. Harman single factor test was executed and the results showed that when all items were constrained to one factor, the total variance explained was 31.5% suggesting that the dataset is free from common method bias.

4.2. Demographic Profiles

Out of 355 students who participated in the study, 77.7% were female while the remaining were male. In terms of age, the break down is as follows: between 22 and 24 (87.0%), between 19 and 21 (9.9%), between 25 and 27 (2.8%) and between 28 and 30 (0.3%).

4.3. Measurement Model

As shown in Table 1, there is no issue on convergent validity as all the indicators, namely, factor loadings, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) met the benchmark values. The factor loadings exceeded the recommended value of 0.6, while CR and AVE surpassed the recommended value of 0.7 and 0.5 respectively.

Table 1 Convergent Validity Assessment

	Items	Factor Loadings	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship (AT)	AT1	0.772	0.886	0.565
	AT2	0.790		
	AT3	0.700		
	AT4	0.763		
	AT5	0.759		
	AT6	0.722		
Perceived Behavioural Control (PB)	PB1	0.773	0.900	0.563
	PB2	0.735		
	PB3	0.654		
	PB4	0.752		
Exaggerated Self Reliance (EX)	EX1	0.807	0.852	0.59
	EX2	0.762		
	EX3	0.743		
	EX4	0.759		
Inhibited Affection (IH)	IH1	0.855	0.907	0.662
	IH2	0.833		
	IH3	0.726		
	IH4	0.812		
	IH5	0.837		
Entrepreneurial Intention (IN)	IN1	0.784	0.820	0.533
	IN2	0.692		
	IN3	0.735		
	IN4	0.771		
	IN5	0.743		
	IN6	0.745		
	IN7	0.777		
Restrictive Emotionality (RE)	RE1	0.795	0.877	0.588
	RE2	0.806		
	RE3	0.714		
	RE4	0.788		
	RE5	0.726		
Success Dedication (SC)	SC1	0.803	0.887	0.612
	SC2	0.845		
	SC3	0.642		
	SC4	0.788		
	SC5	0.817		

Drawing upon the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion of assessment, the results as depicted in Table 2 clearly show that the square root of the AVE of the construct is larger than the correlation values between constructs. With these results, it can be concluded that there is no issue of discriminant validity.

Table 2 Fornell & Larker Discriminant Validity Assessment

	AT	IN	EX	IH	CR	RE	SC
Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship (AT)	0.751						
Entrepreneurial Intention (IN)	0.721	0.75					
Exaggerated self-reliance (EX)	0.567	0.424	0.768				
Inhibited Affection (IH)	0.310	0.248	0.470	0.814			
Perceived Behavioural Control (PB)	0.744	0.699	0.517	0.327	0.73		
Restrictive Emotionality (RE)	0.309	0.196	0.403	0.515	0.183	0.767	
Success Dedication (SC)	0.565	0.403	0.68	0.373	0.543	0.362	0.782

4.4. Structural Model

In order to ascertain that the model is free from the problem of multicollinearity, the VIF assessment was performed and the results are revealed that none of the scores exceed 3.00, indicating that issue of lateral colinearity is not present in the model.

In order to assess the structural model, Hair et al. (2017), suggested the use of bootstrapping procedure with a resample of 5,000. Following this suggestion, the results are presented in Table 3. The t-values, p-values and standardized coefficient beta values were used as the deciding criteria for either accepting or rejecting the hypothesis. If the t-value was larger than the critical value (i.e., $t \geq 1.96$, $p \leq 0.05$), the hypothesis would be supported. On the other hand, if the the t-value was larger than the critical value (i.e., $t \geq 1.67$, $p \leq 0.10$), the hypothesis would be marginally supported. Both AT ($\beta = 0.450$, $p < 0.001$) and PB ($\beta = 0.364$, $p < 0.001$) were found to be strong predictors of EI, hence, supporting H1 and H2.

Regarding the antecedents of AT, the impact of SD was the strongest ($\beta = 0.323$, $p < 0.001$), followed by EX ($\beta = 0.319$, $p < 0.001$), giving support to H3 and H6. However, the impact of RE ($\beta = 0.059$, $p > 0.05$), and inhibited affection ($\beta = 0.009$, $p > 0.05$), were weak and non significant, rejecting H4 and H5.

The results for PB are almost consistent with AT. Out of the four antecedents, SD and EX were found be significant predictors. The later ($\beta = 0.363$, $p < 0.001$) was found to be stronger than the later ($\beta = 0.255$, $p < 0.001$), thus supporting H7 and H10. The results for RE ($\beta = -0.120$, $p > 0.05$), and IH ($\beta = 0.133$, $p > 0.05$), were weak and non significant, rejecting H8 and H9.

Along with the t-values, p-values and standardized coefficient beta, the assessment of the structural model also looked into the R^2 and Q^2 . R^2 is the measure of the model's predictive accuracy and can be viewed as the combined effect of exogenous variables on endogenous variables while Q^2 can be considered a type of model fit indicator. Urbach & Ahlemann (2010) stated that R^2 values should be high enough to achieve a minimum level of explanatory power and according to Cohen (1988), a value of 0.3 or above is considered substantial. As shown in Table 3, the score of all R^2 were well above 0.3, suggesting that the model has a substantial predictive power. In the same vein, the score of Q^2 were larger than zero, indicating that the exogenous constructs of the model have predictive relevance for the endogenous construct (Fornell & Cha, 1994).

As stated in previous section, the assessment of the structural model would also looked into f^2 , which measures the relative impact of a predictor construct on endogenous construct. Specifically, it assesses how strongly one exogenous construct contributes to explaining a certain endogenous construct in terms of R^2 . According Cohen (1988), f^2 values of 0.35, 0.15 and 0.02 represents large, medium and small effect sizes respectively. The results as shown in Table 3, suggests that small effect size could be observed in most of the relationship. A

moderate effect size ($f^2 = 0.215$) could be observed on the relationship between attitude towards entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention.

Table 3 Hypothesis Testing

	Std Beta	Std Error	t Value	Decision	R²	Q²	f²
H1: AT → IN	0.450	0.071	6.368	Supported	0.579	0.302	0.215
H2: CR → IN	0.364	0.068	5.388	Supported			0.140
H3: SC → AT	0.323	0.077	4.223	Supported	0.385	0.199	0.090
H4: RE → AT	0.059	0.081	0.721	Not Supported			0.004
H5: IH → AT	0.009	0.083	0.112	Not Supported			0.000
H6: EX → AT	0.319	0.072	4.442	Supported			0.079
H7: SC → CR	0.363	0.078	4.670	Supported	0.351	0.170	0.107
H8: RE → CR	-0.12	0.084	1.429	Not Supported			0.015
H9: IH → CR	0.133	0.081	1.641	Not Supported			0.018
H10: EX → CR	0.255	0.071	3.599	Supported			0.048

5. DISCUSSION

This study has examined three constructs of the TPB, namely AT, PB and EI in the context of university students in Malaysia. Consistent to previous studies Yurtkoru, Kuscu and Goganay, 2014; Teemu, Marco & Matthias, 2015, it was found that both attitudes towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control jointly predicts entrepreneurial intention. This finding is also comparable to similar study done in Malaysia (Ismail & Hassan Azahari, 2017 and Al-Jubari, Hassan & Linan, 2018). The positive AT and confidence that they have the ability to execute entrepreneurial activities may be linked to the fact that these respondents were already exposed to entrepreneurship education.

Surprisingly, contrary to our expectation, RE and IA do not relate to either attitude towards entrepreneurship or perceived behavioural control. By definition, RE deals with the public restriction of privately felt emotions while IA is concerned with the inhibition of feelings of love and tenderness for loved ones. Grasso (2014) found that RE was strongly correlated to psychological distress. Emotionally restrictive individuals are not likely to deal with their distress through increased expression and they may be using alternative ways of coping that can be maladaptive. Cohn et al. (2010) noted that men who endorsed more RE have been found to be more non-accepting of their emotions. An ability to cope and handle with one’s emotion, termed as emotional intelligence is an important skill for a successful entrepreneur (Fakhreldin, 2017). Perhaps, it is because of this RE was not found to have significant influence on either AT or PB.

As expected, SD and EX was found to have significant influence on AT or perceived behavioural control. SD simply means that the person is fully devoted to his or her efforts for the attainment of the dreams and aspirations. A masculine individual who exhibits SD quality will dedicate a great deal of time and effort pursuing his or her ambition. The person is normally equipped with positive attitude and skills and competencies needed for the job. In the same light, the person is also very independent and do not rely much on others (EX). As shown in this study, the higher is the SD and EX of the person, the higher will be his or her AT and PB.

6. CONCLUSION

This study provides several theoretical implications and complements the existing literature in the area of entrepreneurship by identifying and empirically examining the synergistic effects of masculinity behaviour on the behavioural intention of university students towards

entrepreneurship. Although there have been numerous studies on students' behavioural intentions towards entrepreneurship, very few have attempted to connect between masculinity behaviour and TPB. This study complements the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the influence of masculinity behaviour on TPB constructs, which are attitude towards entrepreneurial and perceived behavioural control.

Although this study has successfully achieved its objectives, there are several limitations that are worth mentioning, several of which present promising directions for future research. First, this study examined entrepreneurs in only one national context (i.e. Malaysia). Future study should consider investigating the masculinity behaviour - TPB link in several national contexts. Second, is the sample of the study. All of the respondents were university students from the same university. The relationship between masculinity behaviour and TPB may be different for individuals with different levels of education. Hence, future study should expand the scope of sample by engaging respondents from different level of education.

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