

Social Entrepreneurial Intention: A Pls-Sem Approach

Aisyah Bahiah Aidul Bahrein¹, Mohd Nazri Zakaria^{2*}, Noorshella Che Nawi³,
Azwan Abdullah⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Faculty of Entrepreneurship and Business, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia
*corresponding author: mnazri.z@umk.edu.my

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to examine the effects of perceived desirability and perceived feasibility on social entrepreneurial intention and the moderating role of culture. The study on culture as a moderator is still limited and this study can provide a better explanation regarding the moderating impact of culture. The data collected from 386 undergraduate and postgraduate students are analysed by using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The findings discover that perceived feasibility has a positively significant relation with social entrepreneurial intention while perceived desirability does not and culture is proven to not moderate the existing relationships in this study. Lastly, some limitations and several recommendations for future studies are discussed.

Keywords: Culture, perceived desirability, perceived feasibility and social entrepreneurial intention

1. INTRODUCTION

Social entrepreneurship, a new scope of entrepreneurship, has emerged since a few years ago and become one of the vital keys that offer a solution for sustainable and equitable economic growth in Malaysia (MaGIC, 2015). Social entrepreneurship serves as a platform to create social enterprises, new ventures that permit revenue generation with or without the employment of the disadvantaged (Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria, 2013). Social enterprises have the potential to provide solutions for pressing social and environmental issues, such as educational outcomes, access to healthcare and youth unemployment, in Malaysia and other countries in the world (MaGIC, 2015). Besides, social enterprises, as well as social entrepreneurs, create innovative initiatives and solutions to unresolved social problems, putting social value creation at the heart of their mission in order to create a benefit to different individuals, communities and other groups (Sekliuckiene & Kisielius, 2015).

Even the issue regarding unemployment among youth can be overcome through social entrepreneurship (Bosch, 2015; Catford, 1998; MaGIC, 2015), Malaysia is still having a difficulty to dealing with the rising number of unemployed people from year to year. For instance, the number of unemployed people on April 2018 is 510,000 (Mohd Uzir, 2019b) and this number is kept rising to 523,300 on April 2019 (Mohd Uzir, 2019a). The rising of this number has proven that, currently, many people are unable to secure the job and indirectly this issue may affect the growth of the nation. However, since the Malaysian social entrepreneurial sector is still lacking participation and involvement from Malaysians, especially among students, some efforts need to be done by many parties, agencies, organizations or institutions in order to encourage them to see this sector as one of the job opportunities as well as their future career.

Due to that, several researches have been studied on social entrepreneurial intention to provide a fruitful information and knowledge regarding the tendency of the university students to involve in social entrepreneurship agenda. Students' intention towards social entrepreneurship is important since they are the future social entrepreneurs and may be able to shape the future human capital and leaders in nation development (Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010). Besides, little is known about the underlying motivations of social entrepreneurial intention formation among students (Noorseha, Ching Seng, Dewi, & Md Zabid, 2013).

Therefore, this paper aims to address the factors influencing social entrepreneurial intention by establishing the role of moderator. It is crucial to study on this matter in order to have some insight regarding students' social entrepreneurial intention. Specifically, the objectives of this paper is: a) to examine the influence of perceived desirability and perceived feasibility on social entrepreneurial intention; and b) to explore the moderating role of culture towards the relationships between perceived desirability and social entrepreneurial intention as well as perceived feasibility and social entrepreneurial intention.

Basically, this paper is divided into several sections. Section 2 reviews the literature on social entrepreneurial intention, perceived desirability, perceived feasibility and culture. Section 3 describes the methodologies used in the present study. Section 4 reports the results of the study and Section 5 provides the discussion of the findings. Lastly, Section 6 concludes with a summary of the findings, implications, limitations and recommendation for future studies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Entrepreneurial Intention

In the field of entrepreneurship, the most common intention discussed by many scholars is known as entrepreneurial intention. The entrepreneurial intention is believed as the particular best predictor and strongest existing indicator of entrepreneurial behaviour (Ajzen, Czasch, & Flood, 2009; Kolvereid & Isaksen, 2006; Krueger, 1993; Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000). This form of intention can be considered as very important to the entrepreneurial process which eventually forming the first step in a series of actions (Bird, 1988). In the previous study, it had been proven that the strong association existed between entrepreneurial intentions and actual entrepreneurial behaviour (Krueger et al., 2000).

The encouragement of entrepreneurial intention towards entrepreneurial behaviour has given a new outlook regarding the applicability of social entrepreneurial intention to lead towards social entrepreneurial behaviour, in which this kind of entrepreneurship is getting more attention from many countries in the globe. Social entrepreneurial intention is quite similar with entrepreneurial intention but it is solely focusing on social entrepreneurship agenda. Social entrepreneurial intention was claimed by Prieto (2011) as an intention of a person in launching a social enterprise to advance social change through innovation or starting a social venture that would positively transform society and give beneficial impact to the community. Thus, individuals who possess social entrepreneurial intention will be

more motivated to become social entrepreneurs and eventually set up their own social enterprises.

Perceived Desirability

Perceived desirability is measured as the attractiveness of creating an entrepreneurial event which is forming a company or firm (Forster & Grichnik, 2013; Mair & Noboa, 2003, 2006). In the context of social entrepreneurship, desirability was considered by Urban and Teise (2015) whether an individual is attracted by the social opportunity as he or she needs to address and overcome social problems that exist in the society. Individuals with high perceived desirability will ultimately be able to find appropriate solutions for any societal issues arising in the nation as well as worldwide.

Besides, according to Jiao (2011), the desirability of social entrepreneurs in making a decision will be positively linked to social entrepreneurship activities conducted in especially the countries having several societal challenges. As the desirability of social entrepreneurs can influence the beginning of social entrepreneurship agenda, it is not impossible if perceived desirability is considered as one of the essential aspects to form social entrepreneurial intention (Forster & Grichnik, 2013). Based on the findings in the previous studies, perceived desirability was proven to have a positive and significant relationship with social entrepreneurial intention (Barton, Schaefer, & Canavati, 2018; Chikha & Jarboui, 2017; Forster & Grichnik, 2013; Noorseha et al., 2013; Ormiston & Seymour, 2011; Urban & Kujinga, 2017). Thus, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1: Perceived desirability is positively related to social entrepreneurial intention.

Perceived Feasibility

According to Sutha and Sankar (2016), perceived feasibility is as the degree to which individual believes that he or she is personally able of performing any entrepreneurial activity or forming a firm or company (Mair & Noboa, 2003, 2006). Feasibility, especially in the context of social entrepreneurship, refers to whether an individual feels capable of creating and starting up a social venture or enterprise which may provide a social impact to the society (Urban & Teise, 2015). Individuals without high perceived feasibility will face some difficulties in running their social enterprises as well as coping with societal challenges existed in most of the countries nowadays.

Furthermore, the feasibility of individuals, especially social entrepreneurs in the process of decision making will be positively connected to social entrepreneurship activities (Jiao, 2011) involving many parties, agencies, organizations and institutions in the public as well as private sectors. This means that it is important to be feasible in order to enhance individual's social entrepreneurial intention. Even the previous studies conducted by several scholars also revealed that the relationship between perceived feasibility and social entrepreneurship intention was positively significant (Barton et al., 2018; Chikha & Jarboui, 2017; Forster & Grichnik, 2013; Kedmenec, 2015; Noorseha et al., 2013; Ormiston & Seymour, 2011; Urban & Kujinga, 2017). As such, the following hypothesis is established:

H2: Perceived feasibility is positively associated with social entrepreneurial intention.

Culture

Culture is related to “the collective programming of the mind that distinguished the members of one group or category of people from another” (Hofstede, 2001). Different individuals who possess different cultural backgrounds will have a slightly dissimilar way of thinking. Due to that, a few empirical evidences had emerged for differences across regions or countries in terms of individual beliefs, motives and values associated with entrepreneurial behaviour (Hayton & Cacciotti, 2013; Hayton, George, & Zahra, 2002). Entrepreneurial behaviours will be shaped according to the beliefs, motives and values of the particular individuals. Besides, according to Liñán, Urbano, and Guerrero (2011), intentions are also differed between regions, in which are underlined by altered degrees of development in each region. The changes that occurred in each region can affect the establishment of intentions regardless of any field either intentions towards entrepreneurship or social entrepreneurship.

In order to study students’ social entrepreneurial intentions, some aspects such as culture need to be explored since it varies and differs across the regions and countries. This is also argued by Hayton and Cacciotti (2013) that: very little studies focusing on the influence of culture towards intentions to behave entrepreneurially. Moreover, as culture can shape career choice decisions (Iakovleva & Solesvik, 2014), also acknowledges as entrepreneurial intentions, Cristina and Dwayne (2009) had suggested culture to act as a moderator to influence the intention formation of individuals in the field of entrepreneurship as well as social entrepreneurship. One of the first studies that examine the moderating role of culture was done by Yang, Meyskens, Zheng, and Hu (2015), whereby they found that culture moderated the positive relationship between determinant factors and social entrepreneurial intentions. This stresses that the individuals are influenced by their culture when forming social entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3: The relationship between perceived desirability and social entrepreneurial intention is moderated by culture.

H4: The relationship between perceived feasibility and social entrepreneurial intention is moderated by culture.

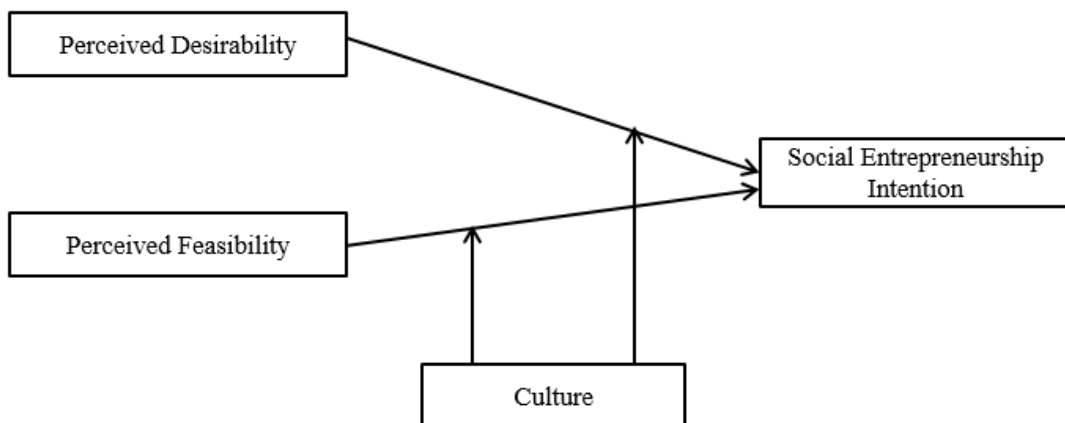


Fig. 1 Research Framework

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The respondents of the present study were undergraduate and postgraduate students from public universities. A non-probability sampling method was emphasized to select the targeted respondents. Specifically, a judgmental sampling approach was used, in which a certain criteria was set to ensure an appropriate sample was selected. In this study, a quantitative approach using self-administered questionnaire was adopted to collect the data from selected respondents. The measurements for perceived desirability and perceived feasibility were adopted from Hockerts (2015) with three items respectively. The measurement for culture was based on three cultural dimensions, namely, perceived appropriateness, perceived consistence and perceived effectiveness, with seven items, six items and eight items respectively. This measurement was adopted from Adekiya and Ibrahim (2016), in which was modified from the original work of De Pillis and Dewitt (2008) and De Pillis and Reardon (2001). Meanwhile, social entrepreneurial intention measurement was adopted from Liñán and Chen (2009) with six items. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Apart from that, the data collected throughout the survey was analysed using SPSS version 25 and partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The software of SmartPLS version 3.2.8 was utilised to assess measurement and structural model (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015).

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 presented the demographic profile of the respondents. Among 386 university students, 29 percent was male while 71 percent was female. They were Malay (91.7%), Chinese (6.5%), Indian (1%) and others (0.8%). Besides, they were aged 20 years and below (36%), between 21 and 25 years (46.1%), between 26 and 30 years (11.7%) and 31 years and above (6.2%). Moreover, they were taking diploma (23.1%), bachelor degree (48.4%), master degree (16.1%) and PhD (12.4%). In addition, most of them were students in a non-business stream (65.5%) whereas 34.5 percent were in a business stream and they were full-time (90.2%) and part-time (9.8%) students.

Table 1: Respondents Profile

Demographic Profile		Frequency (n=386)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	112	29.0
	Female	274	71.0
Ethnic Group	Malay	354	91.7
	Chinese	25	6.5
	Indian	4	1.0
	Others	3	0.8
Age	20 years and below	139	36.0
	21 - 25 years	178	46.1
	26 - 30 years	45	11.7
	31 years and above	24	6.2
Current Study Program	Diploma	89	23.1

Demographic Profile		Frequency (n=386)	Percentage (%)
	Bachelor Degree	187	48.4
	Master Degree	62	16.1
	PhD	48	12.4
Stream of Study	Business	133	34.5
	Non-Business	253	65.5
Mode of Study	Full-time	348	90.2
	Part-time	38	9.8

Measurement Model Analysis

A reflective measurement model was assessed through convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is the degree to which several items measuring the similar constructs are in agreement (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). As recommended by Hair et al. (2017), factor loadings and AVE were used to assess convergent validity. In this study, most of the loadings exceeded the threshold value of 0.708 (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019) whereas the loadings that did not exceed the threshold value still be retained since they met the threshold value for AVE (Hair et al., 2017). Furthermore, the AVE value of each construct also exceeded the threshold value of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2019). Figure 1 and Table 2 presented that the result for measurement model exceed the threshold value, in which indicating adequate convergent validity.

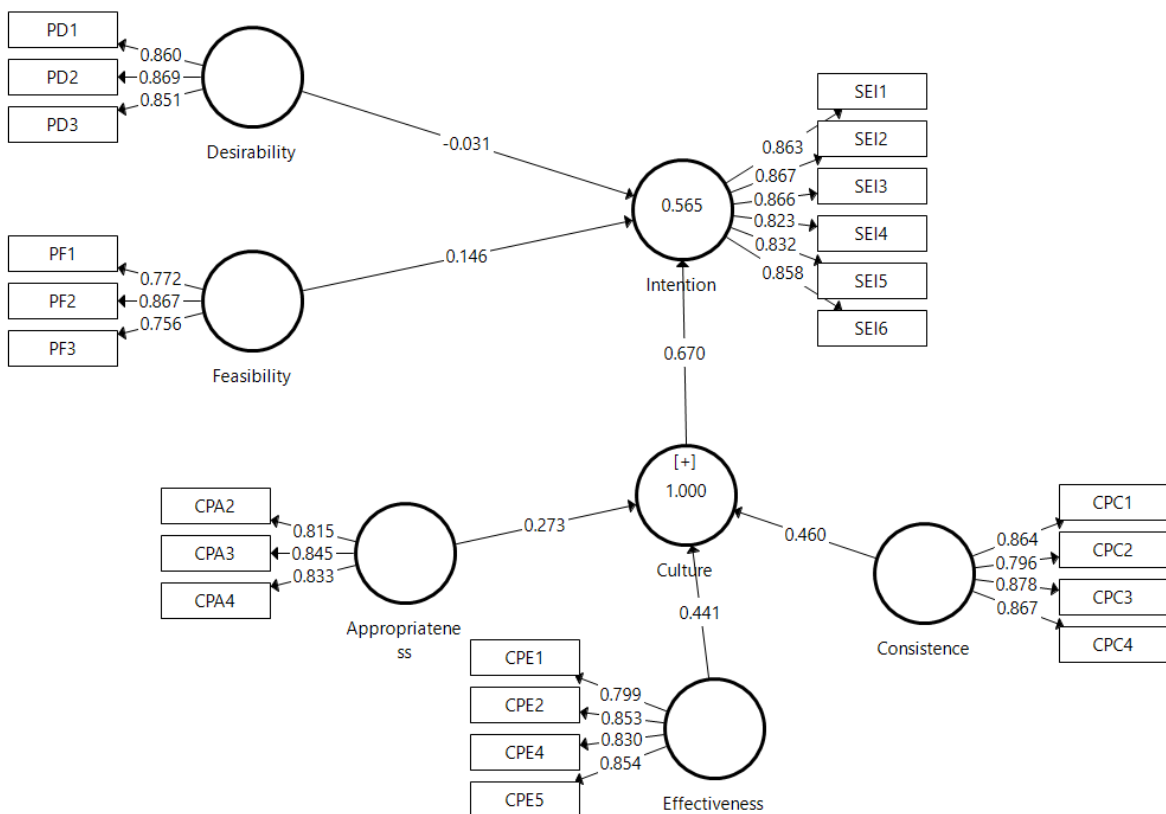


Figure 1: Measurement Model

Table 2: Results of Measurement Model

1st Order Construct	2nd Order Construct	Items	Loadings	CR	AVE
Desirability		PD1	0.860	0.895	0.740
		PD2	0.869		
		PD3	0.851		
Feasibility		PF1	0.772	0.841	0.640
		PF2	0.867		
		PF3	0.756		
Appropriateness		CPA2	0.815	0.870	0.690
		CPA3	0.845		
		CPA4	0.833		
Consistence		CPC1	0.864	0.913	0.725
		CPC2	0.796		
		CPC3	0.878		
		CPC4	0.867		
Effectiveness		CPE1	0.799	0.901	0.696
		CPE2	0.853		
		CPE4	0.830		
		CPE5	0.854		
		Culture	Appropriateness Consistence Effectiveness		
Intention		SEI1	0.863	0.940	0.725
		SEI2	0.867		
		SEI3	0.866		
		SEI4	0.823		
		SEI5	0.832		
		SEI6	0.858		

Notes: CR – Composite Reliability; AVE – Average Variance Extracted

Discriminant validity is the degree to which a construct is dissimilar from other constructs (Hair et al., 2019). HTMT technique developed by Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015) was used to assess discriminant validity. Table 3 presented that all the values fulfil the criteria of HTMT_{.85}(Henseler et al., 2015), in which reporting less than 0.85. This indicated that discriminant validity had been attained.

Table 3: HTMT Criterion

	1	2	3	4
1 Culture				

2	Desirability	0.625		
3	Feasibility	0.763	0.609	
4	Intention	0.802	0.447	0.662

Structural Model Analysis

Prior to assessing the structural model, the model is examined to address collinearity issues by using variance inflation factor (VIF). For this study, the VIF values for all constructs ranging from 1.472 to 1.832, in which less than the threshold value of 5.0 (Hair et al., 2017). This indicated that lateral multicollinearity is not a concern in this study.

After addressing for collinearity issues, the structural model is further assessed by using bootstrapping procedure. Table 4 presented the results of structural model and hypothesis testing. Based on the results of hypotheses testing, perceived desirability was found to be not significantly related to social entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = -0.031$, $p > 0.05$), thus H1 was not supported. Meanwhile, perceived feasibility was found to be significantly associated with social entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = 0.146$, $p < 0.05$), as such H2 was supported.

In addition, the model is also assessed to determine the values of coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2). From the results in Table 4, perceived desirability and perceived feasibility explained 56.5 percent of variance of social entrepreneurial intention. Apart from that, the effect size is evaluated to examine the substantive effect of the constructs (Cohen, 1988). According to Cohen (1988), the effect size of 0.02, 0.15, 0.35 represented small, medium and large effects respectively. Perceived desirability and perceived feasibility were found to have a small substantive effect on social entrepreneurial intention with 0.001 and 0.029 respectively. Besides, the predictive relevance of the model is also evaluated based on the value of Q^2 (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). As mentioned by Hair et al. (2017), if the Q^2 value is larger than zero, it indicated that the model has predictive relevance for a certain endogenous constructs. Accordingly, the Q^2 value for social entrepreneurial intention was 0.380, in which more than zero. This indicated that the model has sufficient predictive relevance.

Table 4: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Std Beta	Std Error	t-value	p-value	BCI LL	BCI UL	R2	f2	Q2
H1: Desirability → Intention	-0.031	0.046	0.667	0.252	-0.108	0.043	0.565	0.001	0.380
H2: Feasibility → Intention	0.146	0.048	3.035	0.001	0.068	0.224	0.565	0.029	0.380

Moderation Analysis

The bootstrapping procedure, with a 5000 bootstrap resampling of the data, is used to test the moderating effect of culture. Table 5 presented the results of hypothesis testing on moderation. The interaction effect between Desirability*Culture ($\beta = -0.184$, $p > 0.05$) was found to be not significant, indicating that culture did not moderated the relationship between perceived desirability and social entrepreneurial intention. Thus, H3 was not

supported. Meanwhile, the interaction effect between Feasibility*Culture ($\beta = -0.116$, $p > 0.05$) was also found to be not significant. This indicated that culture did not moderated the relationship between perceived feasibility and social entrepreneurial intention, as such H4 was not supported.

Table 5: Hypothesis Testing on Moderation

Hypothesis	Std Beta	Std Error	t-value	p-value
H3: Desirability*Culture → Intention	-0.184	0.200	0.920	0.358
H4: Feasibility*Culture → Intention	-0.116	0.155	0.751	0.453

4. DISCUSSION

Social entrepreneurship is becoming one of the significant agendas in numerous countries in the worldwide. Its capability to provide a beneficial alternatives in dealing with the existing social ills has raising attention to the scholars to conduct some researches in the social entrepreneurship field since social entrepreneurial intention can lead to social entrepreneurial behaviour. In detail, the objectives of this study was to examine the influence of perceived desirability and perceived feasibility on social entrepreneurial intention, and to explore the moderating role of culture towards the relationships between perceived desirability and social entrepreneurial intention as well as perceived feasibility and social entrepreneurial intention. In a nutshell, the results of this study revealed that the relationship between perceived desirability and social entrepreneurial intention was not significant (H1 was not supported). This study, thus, was contrary with the previous studies whereby perceived desirability was positively related to social entrepreneurial intention (Barton et al., 2018; Chikha & Jarboui, 2017; Forster & Grichnik, 2013; Noorseha et al., 2013; Ormiston & Seymour, 2011; Urban & Kujinga, 2017). However, perceived desirability was found to have a positive and significant relationship with social entrepreneurial intention (H2 was supported), as such in line with the studies done by Barton et al. (2018), Chikha and Jarboui (2017), and Urban and Kujinga (2017). Other than that, the findings revealed that culture was not successfully moderated the relationships between perceived desirability and social entrepreneurial intention as well as perceived feasibility and social entrepreneurial intention, hence H3 and H4 were not supported. In this study, culture was proven to not play a role of moderator, in which was dissimilar with the findings reported by Yang et al. (2015) that culture moderated the positive relationship between determinant factors and social entrepreneurial intentions. Generally, in order to participate in social entrepreneurship, the students are not necessarily needed to have the desire to start up their own social enterprise to help others. Regardless of who they are, if they think they can help others with their own effort, they will do so. Besides, they still can contribute something worthy to the societies even they do not perceived the desirability to establish a social enterprise. On the other hand, the students who think that they are feasible to start up the social enterprise have high tendency to involve in social entrepreneurship. They may have high confidence that they can contribute towards the societies if they have their own social enterprises since these kind of organization has played a vital role in the growth of social entrepreneurship. In fact, the growing number of students' inclination towards social entrepreneurship also is not depended on the culture of any region. There is no different between the students in any country because every

individuals will feel that they have the right and responsibility to help their societies and bring changes in their communities.

5. CONCLUSION

The study on social entrepreneurial intention had highlighted the influence of perceived desirability and perceived feasibility on students' intention towards social entrepreneurship as well as the existing of culture as a moderator between perceived desirability, perceived feasibility and social entrepreneurial intention. This study revealed that perceived feasibility is important to forming social entrepreneurial intention among university students. The university should take this opportunity to polish students' potential in establishing their own social enterprises and guide them towards social entrepreneurship prospect. Since there is no perfect research, this study also has some limitations. This study is only focusing on students in public universities and involves the students from various stream of study. Future studies should involve the participation of students from private universities and students who have studied social entrepreneurship courses. Future studies also can make a comparison between students who have social entrepreneurship education and students who are without social entrepreneurship education.

Acknowledgement A

The project is funded by the Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS) 2017, Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia (R/FRGS/A01.00/00998A/001/2017/000430).

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