

Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Intention: A Study of Fourth Year Students, Faculty of Management Science, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University in the Academic Year of 2017

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to examine the relationship between attitude toward entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial intention of fourth year students, Faculty of Management Science, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University, Thailand, in the academic year of 2017. The sample consists of 250 students from each field of study among the Faculty of Management Science. The model was based on the Theory of Planned Behavior as the main theoretical framework to examine the impact that attitude toward entrepreneurship has on entrepreneurial intention. The survey instrument was comprised of a demographic questionnaire, an attitude toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention questionnaire. Data analysis was used for the production of descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, and regression analysis. The results indicate that attitude toward entrepreneurship is correlated with entrepreneurial intention. As such, the Faculty of Management Science has an important role to play in changing the attitude towards entrepreneurship by providing more effective strategies. Moreover, limitations and suggestions for future research are also presented.

Keywords: Attitude, Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Intention and Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University.

1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Faculty of Management Science at Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University was to foster student learning and development by supporting students in their academics and providing experience in all aspects of business. Consequently, this faculty has introduced various initiatives to cultivate entrepreneurial spirit among students such as creating an entrepreneurial education subject and also setting up a business incubator unit. These activities were expected to instill stronger entrepreneurial attitudes in students. Sharma and Chrisman (1999:12) classifies the meaning of entrepreneurship into two distinct groups. One group focuses on the

characteristics of entrepreneurship (e.g. innovation, growth, uniqueness) while the other group focuses on the outcomes of entrepreneurship (e.g. the value creation).

Previous research found there to be great potential for university graduates with rising entrepreneurial opportunities (Kolbre, Piliste, and Venessar, 2005). The research results reveal that students have the knowledge but often lack the motivation to start their own businesses (Kolbre, Piliste, and Venessar, 2005). Therefore, an entrepreneurial mindset must begin developing at a very young age. Hamidi, Wennberg, and Berglund (2008) provide that, with a proper education, graduates are better capable of thinking outside of the box and generating new and innovative ideas, which can lead them to become more entrepreneurial. Additionally, personality is another factor that might influence student's entrepreneurial intentions. Zal and Akmaliah (2009) conclude that there is a need for universities to improve their teaching strategies if they wish to cultivate desire and self-efficacy amongst their students to follow entrepreneurship as a career choice.

This article takes a new approach to gain a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between attitude toward entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial intention of fourth year students of the Faculty of Management Science at Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University. We decided to focus on attitude toward entrepreneurship to better predict student's intention to become a business founder in the future.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to evaluate the relationship between attitude toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention for fourth year students, Faculty of Management Science, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University, Thailand, in the academic year of 2017.

3. LITERATURE REVIEWS

3.1 ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Attitude towards entrepreneurship means an individual's perception of the personal desire to engage in entrepreneurial behavior. According to Nicolaides (2011), attitude towards entrepreneurship is defined as the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of entrepreneurial behavior. Consequently, the attitude towards entrepreneurship is a subjective conscious phenomena. This definition could be summarized in that the attitude towards entrepreneurship refers to the degree to which individuals hold a positive or negative valuation of entrepreneurial behavior (Miralles, Riverola and Giones, 2012).

For entrepreneurship, there is a relationship between entrepreneur and entrepreneurship. Carland et al. (2002:48) summarizes that the entrepreneur is the bedrock of entrepreneurship. Veciana (2007:42) states the following as reasons for becoming an entrepreneur: aspiration to acquire economic freedom, aspiration to be independent, aspiration to exert authority and aspiration of self-actualization.

Entrepreneurship is recognized as a key means for economic competitiveness (Kitson, Martin and Tyler. 2004). Van Praag and Versloot (2007) addresses the benefits of entrepreneurial activity in terms of job creation and economic growth.

Khanka (2002) defines the definition of entrepreneurship as functions performed by an entrepreneur in establishing an enterprise. Another definition of entrepreneurship is the art of converting an idea into a new business by self-employment. In conclusion, researchers refer to entrepreneurship as a way of thinking, one that takes a new idea and transforms it into a new venture while taking risks and seeking reward (Hisrich and Peters, 2002; Henry, Hill, and Leitch, 2005, p.99; Makgosa and Ongori, 2012, p.249).

Identifying the factors influencing attitude toward entrepreneurship was based on Robinson's Model of Entrepreneurs Attitude Orientation Scale (Robinson, and Haynes, 1991) and other investigation factors of attitude toward entrepreneurship (Tkachev and Kolvereid 1999, Ibrahim, Devesh, and Ubaidullah 2017). These studies show that factors of attitude toward entrepreneurship are family and personal experiences, innovativeness, self-efficacy, risk taking and independence. Hatala (2005) asserts that family and personal experiences have a positive influence on an entrepreneurial career. In addition, research demonstrates that most entrepreneurs have greater initiative and innovation (Bateman and Grant, 1993), a high level of self-efficacy (Shane, Locke, and Collins, 2003), and a positive attitude toward risk and independence (McMullen and Shepherd, 2006).

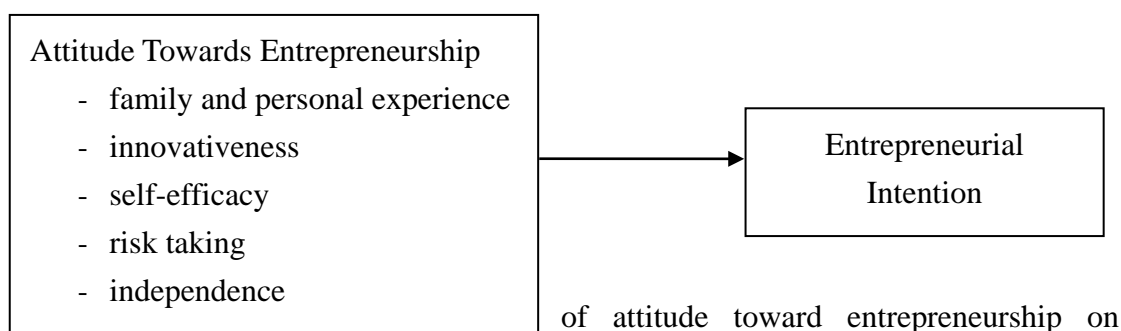
3.2 ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION

The definition of entrepreneurial intention can be defined as the state of mind of a person to start a new business or create a new innovative in an existing organization (Remeikiene and Startiene, 2013). Entrepreneurial intention is a way of thinking that emphasizes opportunities over threats. Therefore, identifying opportunities is clearly an important process underlying entrepreneurial intention and a source of entrepreneurship (Krueger, Reilly, and Carsrud, 2000). Entrepreneurial intention has been used as a dependent variable in many studies (Souitaris, Zerbini, and Al-Laham, 2007).

Krueger, Reilly and Carsrud (2000:5-6) states that intention has proven to be the best predictor of entrepreneurial behavior in several literatures in past decades. Intention can predict behavior and intention itself was predicted by "certain specific attitude". The Entrepreneurial Intentions Questionnaire (EIQ) was based on the study of Nieuwenhuizen and Swanepoel (2015) on the attitude toward entrepreneurship.

4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1, Conceptual Framework of This Study



entrepreneurship intention. The attitude toward entrepreneurship is the independent variable and entrepreneurial intention is the dependent variable.

Based on the conceptual framework, the multivariate regression model was used to identify the factors influencing the entrepreneurial intention of the respondents.

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 \text{ with the restrictions}$$

$$\beta_1 > 0; \beta_2 > 0; \beta_3 > 0; \beta_4 > 0; \beta_5 > 0$$

where

- Y = Entrepreneurial Intention
- X₁ = Family and business background
- X₂ = Innovativeness
- X₃ = Self-efficacy
- X₄ = Risk taking
- X₅ = Independence

5. RESEARCH DESIGN

This research is a descriptive study and a non-experimental analysis that uses a questionnaire as its survey instrument for collection of data and information. The data was collected from respondents, with a sample consisting of 250 of the 671 total students by using the formula of Yamane (1973). The questionnaire allocation was distributed by field of study, including general management, marketing, banking and finance, accounting, business computer, business economics, public administration, communication arts and logistics. The survey aims at the personal level students of the Faculty of Management Science as the unit of analysis. Questionnaires for each field of study are as follows:

Table 1, Number of students in the Faculty of Management Science, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University, academic year of 2017

Field of Study	Total of Students	Sample
General Management	149	56
Marketing	29	11
Banking And Finance	44	16
Accounting	107	40
Business Computer	62	23
Business Economics	22	8
Public Administration	182	68
Communication	31	11
Logistics	45	17
Total	671	250

The questionnaires were returned to the authors with a responding rate of 100 percent. According to Aaker, Kumar and Day ((2001, the effective response rate should be more than 20 percent, a range that is considered acceptable for data analysis.

The questionnaire was designed to collect demographic information, attitude toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention. The composition of attitude toward entrepreneurship was made up of five elements: family and business background, innovativeness, self-efficacy, risk taking and independence.

As for entrepreneurial intention, five items were applied from Nieuwenhuizen and Swanepoel (2015) to determine the level of entrepreneurial intention. A Likert scale was used to measure the entrepreneurial intention elements, which used the anchors of 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The questionnaire was separated into three sections: the respondent's demographic data, attitude toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention.

Reliability analysis was conducted to check stability and consistency of measurement, and Cronbach's alpha was calculated and exceeded 0.70 (Malhotra, 2004). The reliability analysis of attitude toward entrepreneurship (family and business background, innovativeness, self-efficacy, risk taking and independence) and entrepreneurial intention were above 0.70, which is above the acceptable minimum level of 0.6.

Table 2, Reliability analysis of attitude toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention

Items	Construct	Alpha Coefficient
Attitude toward entrepreneurship		
	Family and business background	0.786
	Innovativeness	0.851
	Self-efficacy	0.765
	Risk taking	0.875
	Independence	0.825
Entrepreneurial intention	Entrepreneurial intention	0.852

6. RESULTS

The survey instrument was distributed to the respondents, who were selected earlier as the 250 respondents of the study. The respondents of the study consist of 58 males (23.2%) and 192 females (76.8%). There were 9 fields of study; however, most of the respondents came from 2 major fields of study, general management and public administration. In addition, 17.6% of respondents had parents who were business owners and 82.4% of the respondents' parents were not business owners.

Table 3 shows the attitude level toward entrepreneurship among the respondents. The overall average score of attitude was 4.03. The students showed high levels of self-efficacy and potential risk taking after graduation.

Table 3, A mean score of attitude toward entrepreneurship

Attitude Toward Entrepreneurship	Mean	S.D.	Level
Family And Business Background	2.67	.58	Low
Innovativeness	3.91	.60	High
Self-Efficacy	4.35	.95	High
Risk Taking	4.42	.91	High
Independence	3.82	.84	High
Total	4.03	.78	High

Table 4 presents the level of entrepreneurial intention of the students from each field of study.

Table 4, A mean score of students' entrepreneurial intention

Field of Study	Mean	S.D.	Level
General Management	3.74	.58	High
Marketing	3.91	.60	High
Banking and Finance	3.35	.75	High
Accounting	3.69	.69	High
Business Computer	3.71	.65	High
Business Economics	3.81	.80	High
Public Administration	3.85	.70	High
Communication Arts	4.35	.22	High
Logistics	4.12	.58	High
Total	3.84	.51	High

Table 4 indicates that communication arts had the highest mean of entrepreneurial intention, while students from the field of banking and finance had the lowest mean of entrepreneurial intention. However, overall mean of entrepreneurial intention among all fields of the Faculty of Management Science was at a high level.

The correlation analysis was a statistical analysis to measure the strength of association between two metric variables (Malhotra, 2004). It indicated the strength and direction of linear association between the two variables.

Table 5, Correlation Analysis

	EI	X ₁	X ₂	X ₃	X ₄	X ₅
EI	1.000					
X ₁	0.375*	1.00				
X ₂	0.437*	0.324*	1.00			
X ₃	0.612*	0.512*	0.553*	1.00		
X ₄	0.501*	0.575*	0.640*	0.660*	1.00	
X ₅	0.542*	0.580*	0.534*	0.610*	0.660*	1.00

* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 5 reveals the significant positive correlation between the independent variables and dependent variable. According to Hair et al. (2006), multicollinearity occurs if the r-value between each pair of independent variables in Pearson's correlation exceeds 0.90. Thus, there is no multicollinearity problem in this study. The correlation analysis indicates that all independent variables significantly influence entrepreneurial intention, the dependent variable. Further examination was done to determine the most significant factor influencing entrepreneurial intention by using multiple linear regression tests. Table 6 shows the results of this multiple regression analysis.

Table 6, Result of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	β	SE	β			Tolerance	VIF
Constant	0.857	1.217		0.635			
X ₁	0.069	0.053	0.067	3.285	.561	0.917	4.534
X ₂	0.320	0.061	0.231	4.478	.001*	0.611	1.657
X ₃	0.327	0.069	0.224	5.731	.000*	0.558	1.594
X ₄	0.287	0.047	0.185	3.105	.000*	0.458	1.774
X ₅	0.489	0.058	0.355	2.05	.002*	0.470	1.810
Adjusted R ²	0.510						
Sig F.	0.000						
F-Value	80.108						

Note: $p < 0.01$ * dependent variable: Entrepreneurial Intention

Table 6 indicates that there are only four independent variables (innovativeness, self-efficacy, risk taking and independence) significantly predicting entrepreneurial intention. The four factors included in the model can explain 51% of the variations in entrepreneurial intention. The F-value of the model of 80.108, and sig F of 0.000 shows that the model as a whole was in a significant level at .000 and could be the appropriate explanation of entrepreneurial intention. It shows that innovativeness ($\beta = 0.231$), self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.224$), risk taking ($\beta = 0.185$) and independence ($\beta = 0.355$) has a positive impact on entrepreneurial intention.

7. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The level of entrepreneurial intention of the respondents was high. This finding was consistent with Karr (1985) and Huefner and Hunt (1994).

The new policy should foster students by better understanding and appreciating their attitudes and promoting an entrepreneurial culture among them. Further, students development of entrepreneurial intention should begin in the early stages of their education in order to make them more aware of entrepreneurship as a career alternative. However, any uneasiness of students to become entrepreneurs could partly be attributed to currently used course syllabuses, which perhaps were not effective in imparting entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and attributes to the students.

Our finding confirms that attitude toward entrepreneurship is significant in predicting entrepreneurial intention. This result is consistent with previous studies that analyzed the relationship between antecedents and entrepreneurial intention (Ammal and Mathi, 2014).

This study implies that encouraging students to engage in internship programs or new startup ventures could shape their attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Administrators should understand their students' attitudes, provide appropriate training and also inspire them to launch new businesses (Chau, 2018).

Future research should study a larger sample size. It should also examine whether attitudes lead to entrepreneurial success. This study was conducted based on certain factors, and its scope should be broadened to assess the relationship between attitude and entrepreneurial activities.

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