

MEASURE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION OF YOUNG ADULTS IN THAILAND

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial Intention (EI) examines both internal motivation to start a new business for personal desires (meaning and purpose in life) and external motivation (monetary reward). Each motivation is influenced differently by demographic, attitude, and aptitude factors. This study focuses on the impacts of attitudes, aptitude, and demographic factors, which have an impact on entrepreneurial intention of young adults in Thailand. The survey sample includes 1,500 participants from Bangkok, northern, southern, northeastern, and central parts of Thailand. We equally divide the number of participant for each region into 300. The questionnaires are delivered to universities in these regions. We conducted surveys with 799 business students and 701 non- business students. We employed the multiple regression analysis to analyze the survey results. Our results showed that all attitude and aptitude factors have the strong relationship with Entrepreneurial Intention.

Keywords: entrepreneurial intention, young adult, Thailand

Introduction

Entrepreneurial intention has emerged as a foremost construct within the entrepreneurship literature over the last few decades (Drennan, Kennedy, and Renfrow, 2005) and continues to be of interest to researchers due to its important to the development for many countries (e.g: Karr, 1985; Hartand Harrison, 1992; Graham and McKenzie, 1995; Mazzarol, Volery, Doss and Thein, 1999; Nabi and Holden, 2008; Ismail, Khalid, Othman, Jusoff, Abdul Rahman, Kassim and Shekh Zain, 2009). The measure of entrepreneurial intention includes influencing factors which focus on demographic variables (Davidsson, 1995), Leadership Effectiveness Analysis (LEATM, 1987, 1998), the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), and entrepreneurial skills were measured through a five-item scale, partially based on Denoble et al. (1999). Most of these studies were conducted as research for measuring young adult intention to start business in Thailand.

Entrepreneurship has long been the main vehicle of Thai economic growth. However, entrepreneurship in Thailand is hampered due to ineffective enterprise education and a lack of qualified management. The economic crisis in mid 1997 had serious, negative impacts on the Thai economy. Thus, the government and other related agencies initiated several projects and activities to help strengthen and promote entrepreneurship in the country (internationalentrepreneurship.com, 2010, International Entrepreneurship). Thailand is ranked 12 out of 183 economies in the Ease of Doing Business. Thailand eased

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business start-up by merging the registration of memorandum and the application for company registration.

This paper emphasizes the entrepreneurial intention in young adults in Thailand. Therefore, the study contributes to the literature by methodology and empirical testing in some factors on entrepreneurial intention of young adults in Thailand. Results from this research may also have very important consequences for entrepreneurship education.

The organization of this paper is as follows: after this introduction the next section presents the methodology. Section three explains the results after collecting data from surveys and analyzing the results. Section four describes the conclusion of the overall project. And section five gives the discussion of the results.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurial Intention and Antecedents

Entrepreneurial Intentions (EI) are “the entrepreneur’s states of mind that direct attention, experience, and actions toward a business concept” (Bird, 1988). Intentions are considered to be the very first important step in the entrepreneurship process for people who want to start up a new business. In social psychology intention is noticed to be the most immediate and significant antecedent of behavior (Abraham and Sheeram, 2003). Following Low and MacMillan’s definition of entrepreneurship as “creation of new enterprise” (Low and MacMillan, 1988), we are able to define entrepreneurial intention (EI) as the intention to start a new business.

There are three main models of the antecedents of entrepreneurial intention (EI) that are widely cited in literature. First is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which considered three general antecedents of intention and behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

The second model is Entrepreneurial Attitudes Orientation (EAO). Robinson et al. (1991) described the attitude of the entrepreneur with more than personality and demographic characteristics. This is generated through four different sub scales (achievement, self-esteem, personal control, and innovation) and three types of reaction (affective, cognitive, conative).

The third model is Leadership Effectiveness Analysis (LEATM) (Web Page <http://www.leaonline.com>). This model is made to measure the aptitude of people who have the desire to start up a new business.

Research Model

There are 4 main demographic factors (Moderating variables) that have influence on the attitude and aptitude of people who want to start the new business. First is gender, which refers to different thoughts between males and females that lead to personal behavior to start-up a new business or not. Second is family background, describing people who decide to start-up their business and have impetus from family business. Third are regions (North, South, Northeast, Middle, and Bangkok) and refers to different regions that might possess different perspectives to start-up their new business or not. Forth is educational background in reference to the business program and non-business program students.

For attitude factors, we found from the antecedents journal that is called Situational Factors and Entrepreneurial Intentions (Kennedy, 2003). Situational variables, four demographic factors in our research model, are very important in the decision to start a

business. It is the convergence of attitudes and situational factors that leads to business start-ups (Shapero, 1982). Significant progress been made in understanding the impact of personal background factors such as prior experience, and family background on the development of perceptions of entrepreneurship and intentions of starting a business (Krueger, 1993 ;Davidsson, 1995 ;Autio, 1997). Aptitude refers to the entrepreneur's technical background, previous job positions and experience, technical knowledge of the nuts and bolts of the business idea, etc. are evaluated.

Hypotheses

- H1: Attitude factors affect Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H1a: Importance of Education affects Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H1b: Perceived Desirability affects Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H1c: Perceived Feasibility affects Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H1d: Importance of Family Background affects Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H1e: Personal Attitude affects Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H1f: Personal Behavioral Control affects Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H1g: Subjective Norm affects Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H1h: Future Unemployment affects Entrepreneurial Intention
- H2: Aptitude factor affects Entrepreneurial Intention.
- H3: Demographic factors (moderators) have an interaction with independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H3a: Gender is a moderator that has an interaction with independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H3b: Family Background is a moderator that has an interaction with independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H3c: Regions are a moderator that has an interaction with independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.
 - H3d: Educational Background is a moderator that has an interaction with independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.

Method

Our sample was derived from 4 regions (Middle, North, South, and Northeast) and Bangkok. Our sample will be an undergraduate student that consists of business program students and non-business program students. After we conduct our survey, we will use the multiple regression analysis to compare demographic factors (i.e. gender, family background, educational background, and regions) that referred respondents. For attitude and aptitude, we use the Entrepreneurial Intentions Questionnaire (EIQ) used for this study is a modified version of the one used by Linan and Chen (2009). By using the five-level Likert scales.

We conducted a survey on a sample of 1,500 young adults in Bangkok and 4 regions of Thailand which are Middle, North, South, and Northeast. The number of surveys was divided into 300 for each region and also with Bangkok. The category of young adults was targeted in students that we classified into two groups; business students and non- business students.

We collected the data in Bangkok and these 4 regions of Thailand: Middle, North, South, and Northeast. We conducted surveys with 799 business students and 701 non-business students. These students were asked to complete a survey instrument on paper only. The target areas to survey were universities that are located in different areas in Bangkok and 4 regions (Middle, North, South and Northeast of Thailand).

Results

As it is shown in Table 1, attitude factors have a significant relationship to affects intentions and motivations to start a new business. So, we support hypothesis 1 but there are 2 factors in attitude that have small relationship in Entrepreneurial Intention. Moreover, there is another factor of attitudes that have negative relationship with Entrepreneurial Intention, which is called Future Unemployment.

The results from Table 1 support hypotheses 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 1g. Importance of education ($b=0.533$, $p<0.01$), Perceived Desirability ($b=0.668$, $p<0.01$), Perceived Feasibility ($b=0.484$, $p<0.01$), Importance of Family Background ($b=0.421$, $p<0.01$), Personal Attitude ($b=0.704$, $p<0.01$), Personal Control Behavioral ($b=0.476$, $p<0.01$), and Subjective Norm ($b=0.310$, $p<0.01$), they have a positive relationship between response and predictors to affect Entrepreneurial Intention. However, we cannot support hypothesis 1h, because the relationship between Entrepreneurial Intention and Future Unemployment is not significant ($b=0.048$, n.s.).

From Table 1 the result indicate that hypothesis 2 is supported, Entrepreneurial Intention and aptitude have a positive relationship to affect dependent variable ($b=0.311$, $p<0.01$).

From Table 2 the results support Hypothesis 3 is that Demographic factors have an influence on independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention. The result support Hypotheses 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d. For Hypothesis 3a, Gender has interaction term with Perceived Desirability ($b=-0.253$, $p<0.05$) and Personal Attitude ($b=-0.243$, $p<0.05$) with significantly affect to Entrepreneurial Intention. For Hypothesis 3b, Family Background has interaction term with Importance of Education ($b=0.436$, $p<0.01$), Perceived Desirability ($b=0.376$, $p<0.01$), Importance of Family Background ($b=0.449$, $p<0.01$), Personal Attitude ($b=0.379$, $p<0.01$), Subjective Norm ($b=0.313$, $p<0.01$), and Future Unemployment ($b=0.225$, $p<0.01$). They have positive and significantly affect to Entrepreneurial Intention. For Hypothesis 3c, Region has interaction term with 3 factors of attitude that are Perceived Feasibility ($b=0.250$, $p<0.05$), Importance of Family Background ($b=0.451$, $p<0.01$), and Future Unemployment ($b=0.564$, $p<0.01$) with significantly affect to Entrepreneurial Intention. For Hypothesis 3d, factors that significantly affect to Entrepreneurial Intention of Educational Background are Perceived Desirability ($b=0.226$, $p<0.05$), Perceived Feasibility ($b=0.216$, $p<0.05$), Importance of Family Background ($b=0.598$, $p<0.01$), Subjective Norm ($b=0.642$, $p<0.01$), and Aptitude ($b=1.241$, $p<0.01$).

Table 1: Summary of Statistical Test of Attitudes and Aptitude

Variables	All factors of Attitude	Factor of Attitude								Aptitude
		Importance of Education	Perceived Desirability	Perceived Feasibility	Importance of Family Background	Personal Attitude	Personal Behavioral Control	Subjective Norm	Future Unemployment	
Independent Variable										
Attitude										
Importance of Education	0.18**	0.533**								
Perceived Desirability	0.265**		0.668**							
Perceived Feasibility	0.058*			0.484**						
Importance of Family Background	-0.003				0.421**					
Personal Attitude	0.369**					0.704**				
Personal Behavioral Control	0.112**						0.476**			
Subjective Norm	-0.004							0.310**		
Future Unemployment	-0.048**								0.048	
Aptitude										
										0.311**
R Square	0.608	0.284	0.446	0.234	0.177	0.496	0.226	0.096	0.002	0.097
Adjusted R Square	0.606	0.283	0.445	0.233	0.177	0.495	0.226	0.095	0.002	0.096

**p<0.01; *p<0.05

Table 2: Moderating Effect between Demographic Factors and Independent Variables

Moderator	Factor of Attitude								Aptitude
	Importance of Education	Perceived Desirability	Perceived Feasibility	Importance of Family Background	Personal Attitude	Personal Behavioral Control	Subjective Norm	Future Unemployment	
Educational Background	-0.025	0.226*	0.216*	0.598**	0.114	-0.073	0.642**	0.080	1.241**
Gender	-0.255	-0.253*	0.004	0.001	-0.243*	-0.119	-0.188	-0.188	-0.275
Region	0.097	-0.161	0.250*	0.451**	-0.085	0.112	0.195	0.564**	-0.118
Family Background	0.436**	0.376**	0.014	0.449**	0.379**	0.079	0.313**	0.225**	-0.022

**p<0.01, *p<0.05

Table 3: Sample Size and Means of Demographic Factors

Region					Educational Background		Family Background		Gender	
Middle	North	South	Northeast	Bangkok	Business	Non-Business	Yes	No	Male	Female
n=300	n=300	n=300	n=300	n=300	n=799	n=701	n=866	n=634	n=588	n=912
3.74278	3.70111	3.65556	3.76444	3.80889	3.70564	3.41735	3.77367	3.4728	3.60133	3.5513

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlations

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Entrepreneurial Intention	-													
2. Gender	0.017	-												
3. Region	-0.023	0.065	-											
4. Educational Background	-0.224**	0.009**	-0.083	-										
5. Importance of Education	0.533**	0.067	-0.089	-0.169**	-									
6. Perceived Desirability	0.668**	0.020**	-0.038	-0.187**	0.549**	-								
7. Perceived Feasibility	0.484**	-0.018	0.177	-0.284**	0.237**	0.522**	-							
8. Family Background	0.211**	-0.051	-0.048**	-0.141**	0.040*	0.150**	0.163**	-						
9. Importance of Family Background	0.421**	0.035*	0.051	-0.063**	0.401**	0.440**	0.379**	0.156**	-					
10. Personal Attitude	0.704**	0.013	-0.008	-0.201**	0.468**	0.635**	0.508**	0.181**	0.483**	-				
11. Personal Behavioral Control	0.476**	-0.048	0.186*	-0.283**	0.183**	0.419**	0.656**	0.195**	0.364**	0.546**	-			
12. Subjective Norm	0.310**	0.038*	0.127**	-0.024	0.258**	0.349**	0.344**	0.148**	0.279**	0.355**	0.372**	-		
13. Future Unemployment	0.048*	-0.028	0.302*	-0.057*	-0.058*	0.081**	0.262**	0.078**	0.082**	0.093**	0.335**	0.329**	-	
14. Aptitude	0.311**	0.046*	-0.087*	-0.051*	0.367**	0.357**	0.239**	0.094**	0.270**	0.330**	0.217**	0.240**	0.008	-

**p<0.01, *p<0.05

Discussion

Theoretical Implications

In this study we have attempted to develop and test an expanded interpartner learning frame of Entrepreneurial Intention. From the Entrepreneurial Intention Research Model, we can conclude that there are two main lines that connect the relationships between independent and dependent variables that are resulting from moderating effects. The independent variables of the research model are attitude factors and aptitude. The dependent variable is Entrepreneurial Intention. The moderators consist of 4 demographic factors which are gender, family background, regions, and educational background.

As it is shown in Table 5, the findings lead us to the conclusion that gender, region, educational background, and family background have significant relationship to independent variables which are attitudes and aptitude to affect Entrepreneurial. From hypothesis 1, it can be stated that most of attitude factors have the positive relationships to affect the Entrepreneurial Intention, except hypothesis 1h.

Form hypothesis 2, we want to see the possible interaction between aptitude and Entrepreneurial Intention. We found that these two variables have the positive relationship to impact on each other.

By looking at hypothesis 3 on Table3, we can conclude that all demographic factors (moderators) have an influence on independent variables, which are attitudes and aptitude, to have the possibility to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.

Table 5: Summary of results of hypotheses

Hypothesis	Result
H1. Attitude factors affect Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H1a. Importance of Education affects Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H1b. Perceived Desirability affects Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H1c. Perceived Feasibility affects Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H1d. Importance of Family Background affects Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H1e. Personal Attitude affects Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H1f. Personal Behavioral Control affects Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H1g. Subjective Norm affects Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H1h. Future Unemployment affects Entrepreneurial Intention	Not Supported
H2. Aptitude factor affects Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H3. Demographic factors (moderators) have an influence on independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H3a. Gender is a moderator that has an influence on independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H3b. Family Background is a moderator that has an influence on independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H3c. Regions are a moderator that has an influence on independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported
H3d. Educational Background is a moderator that has an influence on independent variables to affect Entrepreneurial Intention.	Supported

From the overall testing, we can state that the independent variables, which are attitudes and aptitude, have significant relationship with dependent variable, Entrepreneurial Intention. As a consequence, we can say that attitude factors and aptitude have the possibility to affect the intentions and motivations of entrepreneurship to start the new business.

Table 5 shows that the sample sizes and means of all four demographic factors. Since region has an interaction to affect attitudes and aptitude to affect Entrepreneurial Intention, by comparing the means of all 5 regions, we can say that the metropolitan area which is Bangkok has more intention to start up new business than other 4 regions. For the educational background, we can conclude that business students have more intentions to start new business. For family background, we can summarize that people whose family background is related to business have more intentions to start new business with the mean of 3.77367. And for gender, males have more intentions to start new business with the mean of 3.60133.

Pearson correlation use for find relationship between two or more variables. The number of beta value that means relationship between variable is the best should between 0.70 to 0.90 (Hinkle D. E. 1998, p.118). From Table 4, we can see two variables that have the best relationship which is Entrepreneurial Intention and Personal Attitude ($b=0.704$, $p<0.01$). For gender and region, they have few relationship all factors and between Aptitude and Future Unemployment ($b=0.008$, n.s.) also.

Conclusion

Considerable research has established the significance of perceptions of the desirability and feasibility of starting a business on intentions. Our study confirms that this conceptual model of Entrepreneurial Intentions has the positive possibility to affect each other. It also extends the model and finds that there are variables relating to attitudes and aptitude of people on intentions of entrepreneurship with the general demographic factors.

The results of this study help explain the factors that influence the development of Entrepreneurial Intention. The data from our study draws the main conclusion in entrepreneurial intentions to start a business of young adult in Thailand. Differences in sex, age, educational background and family background vary in intention that considered as the moderating effects that have an impact on intentions and motivations to start a new business. Family background plays an important role that leads to young adults to start a new business. This study shows that importance of educational background, perceived desirability, personal attitude, subjective norm and future unemployment effect on each other speak to entrepreneurial intention.

This paper has contributed to the entrepreneurship literature by introducing new relationship model to the intentions model and assessing their impact on attitudes and aptitudes to entrepreneurship. Further research should examine other specific aspects and also find the exact effect on each other in more depth to gain a greater results and understanding of how all the variables and factors are significantly related to each other. Such research would provide insight into how develop programs to develop specific attributes that lead individuals to be more entrepreneurial.

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