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# Entrepreneurial Intention of University Students

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**Abstract.** In entrepreneurship research, employment status choice models that centre on entrepreneurial intention have garnered considerable attention in recent years. These models posit that career intention serves as the direct precursor to behaviour, including initiating a business venture. Intention, in turn, is determined by attitude and attitude is affected by certain factors such as personality, education, demographics and other variables. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of students' personality traits and engagement in entrepreneurial education on their entrepreneurial intention and to understand the factors that shape students' inclination towards entrepreneurship. Questionnaires were collected from 150 university students in their final semester at the School of Social Science. Correlation analysis highlighted a significant relationship between attitude towards entrepreneurship, perceived behavioural control and subjective norm with entrepreneurial intention. The regression analysis, however, demonstrated that the student's attitudes towards entrepreneurship did not have the ability to impact their entrepreneurial intention. In contrast, the students' personality traits greatly influenced their attitude towards entrepreneurship. The study offers practical insights for educators and policy makers as the results can guide curriculum design and skill development program that aims to strengthen mindset in university students.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship intention, Personality traits, Theory of planned behaviour (TPB).

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial behaviour can be classified as a form of organisational behaviour, as stated by Bird (1989). It encompasses the actions and attitudes of persons engaged in establishing new enterprises, as highlighted by Gartner et al. (1992) and Gartner & Starr (1993). Establishing a new organisation is intrinsically a phenomenon that occurs at the individual level. The primary requisite for establishing an organisation is the behaviour of individuals. Entrepreneurial activity is contingent upon the presence of entrepreneurs, as it is through their initiatives that organisations are brought into existence. The process of organisational creation necessitates engagement in activity, which is facilitated by the behaviours of individuals (Acs & Audretsch, 2010). Initial research on entrepreneurship has predominantly centred around examining the distinct characteristics and behaviours exhibited by individuals with entrepreneurial intentions.

In recent years, research grounded in social psychology has shifted their attention towards investigating the underlying determinants of entrepreneurial intention and the extent to which these intentions and attitudes can accurately predict entrepreneurial intention (Al-Jubari, 2019; Armitage & Conner, 2001; Mueller et.al., 2014). According to Krueger et al. (2000), the necessity of predicting the behavioural intents of individuals has escalated in tandem with the expansion of new firms. The act of initiating a business entity is often undertaken prior to engaging in any entrepreneurial activities and is subject to several circumstances that can be influenced by different factors (Guzmán-Alfonso & Guzmán-Cuevas, 2012). In the present day, particularly in developing and underdeveloped nations, policymakers have also recognised the urgent necessity of educating students and young individuals early in various educational institutions (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015). This is achieved by implementing entrepreneurship education programmes within the education system to cultivate entrepreneurial intentions when contemplating future career paths. The inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum has the potential to provide students with a range of technical and soft skills (Rae, 2006), thereby fostering their development as self-assured entrepreneurs.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Küttima et al. (2014) conducted a study to identify the content of university entrepreneurship education and its impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions. The study employed a cross-sectional study design, with the sample comprising students from 17 European countries. These countries were categorised into two groups based on their level of economic development: efficiency-driven and innovation-driven economies, as defined by Porter et al. (2002). Their findings suggested that the current offerings in entrepreneurship education vary with students' preferences. While lectures and seminars are more commonly delivered, students express a greater need for networking and coaching activities. The study revealed that engaging in entrepreneurship education had a beneficial effect on individuals' inclination towards entrepreneurship, aligning with the study by Bae et al. (2014).

The study conducted by Anjum et al. (2022) revealed that the perceived support from the university positively moderated the association between attitude toward entrepreneurship (ATE) and entrepreneurial intelligence (EI). Lopes et al. (2002) observed that subjective norms exerted a positive influence on attitude toward behaviour and perceived behavioural control, which in turn played an important role in shaping entrepreneurial inclination.

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Remeikiene et al. (2013) confirmed in their study that personality traits, including self-efficacy, risk-taking propensity, need for achievement, proactiveness, attitude towards entrepreneurship, behavioural control, and internal locus of control, are significant determinants of entrepreneurial intention. Their study suggested that education can cultivate and enhance these traits, and that, regardless of their selected academic program, young individuals enrolled in higher education institutions tend to pursue entrepreneurship upon completing their studies. Their study also revealed that the selected academic programme had varying effects on students' intentions to pursue entrepreneurship; however, students enrolled in mechanical engineering expressed a contrasting perspective on this matter.

Prajapati (2019) explored the link between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention, considering a theoretical framework based on the planned behaviour model proposed by Ajzen (1991) and found a positive, albeit statistically insignificant relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. Entrepreneurship education has positively influenced individuals' attitudes and behaviours related to entrepreneurial intention and perceived behavioural control (Malebana & Mothibi, 2023). Yan (2010) found that three of the four entrepreneurial personality qualities, namely locus of control, risk propensity, and proactivity, had significant associations with the perception of new venture prospects, aligning with the anticipated trends.

## 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study integrates the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) with personality traits to explain how entrepreneurial intention develops among university students. TPB proposes that three cognitive components, attitude toward entrepreneurship, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, serve as the immediate predictors of entrepreneurial intention by shaping individuals' evaluations, social expectations, and perceived capability (Ajzen, 1991; Armitage & Conner, 2001; Schlaegel & Koenig, 2014). In this model, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control function as proximal predictors of a student's intention to pursue entrepreneurship.

Personality traits act as more distal antecedents and students with a proactive personality or strong risk-taking propensity are more likely to form favourable attitudes toward entrepreneurship because these traits influence how they interpret opportunities, uncertainty, and personal agency (Remeikiene et al., 2013; Yan, 2010; Mueller et al., 2014). By combining dispositional and cognitive predictors, the framework recognises that entrepreneurial intention is shaped not only by rational assessments of feasibility and social influence but also by deeper behavioural tendencies that guide how students perceive entrepreneurial pathways (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015). Thus, considering these influencing factors the following objectives have been formed based on the study:

1. To study if attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control of the students is positively related to entrepreneurial intention.
2. To study if personality traits have an impact on the attitudes of students towards entrepreneurship.

## 4. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

$H_a$: Attitude towards entrepreneurship as a career option, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control are positively related to entrepreneurial intention.

$H_b$: Students with proactive personality and high-risk propensity are more likely to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship.

## 5. RESEARCH METHODS

### 5.1. Research Measurement

Using a modified version of Wouter Dujin's (2004) questionnaire, the study adopted a descriptive and exploratory methodology to gather data from university final-year students and analyse it using the proper statistical techniques. For the study's objectives, primary and secondary data were both employed. A total of 160 questionnaires were sent out to departments at Manipur University out of which 150 were collected and utilised in the current study. Secondary data were gathered from accessible journals, papers, and websites.

### 5.2. Sampling

The population of interest for this study consisted of students in their final year who were enrolled in Manipur University within the School of Social Sciences. A total of 150 students, consisting of 61 men and 89 females, were included in the data collection process. A total of 38% of the student population hail from the hill area, while the remaining 62% of students are residents of the valley. A total of 14% of the student population was identified as currently engaged in self-employment, whereas the remaining 86% of students were not involved in any form of self-employment.

### 5.3. Analysis

The data collected were coded and processed using the Statistical Product and Service Solution (IBM SPSS-Statistics), the English version 21.0. The study used descriptive statistics, Percentage Analysis, Mean, Standard Deviation, Correlation and Regression analysis.

## 6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 6.1. Descriptive Statistics of the Respondents Profile

**Table 1.** Mean, S.D., Minimum and Maximum of Age, Average Monthly Family Income and Average Monthly Family Expenditure.

| Variables | Mean | S.D. | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age of the students | 23.23 | 1.854 | 21 | 30 |
| Average Monthly Family Income | 50853.3333 | 33835.84269 | 3000 | 200000 |
| Average Monthly Family Expenditure | 27986.6667 | 19043.92192 | 2000 | 100000 |

**Source:** Computed from Primary Data

Based on the data shown in Table 1, it can be inferred that the mean age of the participants in the study was 23. The mean monthly family income of a student is ₹50,853.33, whereas the mean monthly family expenditure amounts to ₹27,989.66.

**Table 2.** Cross-tabulation of Gender with Religion, Category, Department, Marital Status, and Residence

| Variable | Group | Gender | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Male | Female | |
| Religion | Hindu | 19 (31.1) | 40 (44.9) | 59 (39.3) |
| | Christian | 32 (52.5) | 34 (38.2) | 66 (44.0) |
| | Muslim | 1 (1.6) | 3 (3.4) | 4 (2.7) |
| | Others | 9 (14.8) | 12 (13.5) | 21 (14.0) |
| Category | General | 7 (11.5) | 6 (6.7) | 13 (8.7) |
| | EWS | 0 (0.0) | 2 (2.2) | 2 (1.3) |
| | ST | 30 (49.2) | 34 (38.2) | 64 (42.7) |
| | SC | 7 (11.5) | 12 (13.5) | 19 (12.7) |
| | Others | 17 (27.9) | 35 (39.3) | 52 (34.7) |
| Department | Commerce | 10 (16.4) | 20 (22.5) | 30 (20.0) |
| | Economics | 13 (21.3) | 17 (19.1) | 30 (20.0) |
| | History | 8 (13.1) | 22 (24.7) | 30 (20.0) |
| | MIMS | 14 (23.0) | 16 (18.0) | 30 (20.0) |
| | Political Science | 16 (26.2) | 14 (15.7) | 30 (20.0) |
| Marital Status | Unmarried | 57 (93.4) | 83 (93.3) | 140 (93.3) |
| | Married | 3 (4.9) | 6 (6.7) | 9 (6.0) |
| | Widowed | 0 (0.0) | 0 (0.0) | 0 (0.0) |
| | Divorced | 1 (1.6) | 0 (0.0) | 1 (0.7) |
| Residence | Hill | 30 (49.2) | 27 (30.3) | 57 (38.0) |
| | Valley | 31 (50.8) | 62 (69.7) | 93 (62.0) |

**Note:** Figures in the parenthesis indicates percentage

Table 2 presents the cross-tabulation outcome of gender with the students' religion, category, department, marital status, and residency. According to the data presented in the table, it can be observed that the Christian student population constitutes 44% of the total, making it the largest religious group. Additionally, the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category accounts for the majority of students at 42.7%, followed by the Hindu students at 39%, who form the second largest group. The remaining 34.7% of students fall into the "other" category. In relation to gender and department, it was observed that female students constituted the majority in all departments, with the exception of the political science department, where male students (26.2%) outnumbered their female counterparts. The table also revealed that a majority of the students, precisely 93.3%, reported being unmarried. Also, it was observed that a significant proportion, specifically 62%, of the student population resides in the valley.

**Table 3.** Cross-tabulation of Participation in Entrepreneurship Education with Gender and Department

| Variable | Group | Participation in Entrepreneurship Education | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Yes | No | |
| Gender | Male | 27 (39.7) | 34 (41.5) | 61 (40.7) |
| | Female | 41 (60.3) | 48 (58.5) | 89 (59.3) |
| Department | Commerce | 30 (44.1) | 0 (0.0) | 30 (20.0) |
| | Economics | 4 (5.9) | 26 (31.7) | 30 (20.0) |
| | History | 4 (5.9) | 26 (31.7) | 30 (20.0) |
| | MIMS | 30 (44.1) | 0 (0.0) | 30 (20.0) |
| | Political Science | 0 (0.0) | 30 (0.0) | 30 (20.0) |

**Note:** Figures in the parenthesis indicates percentage

Table 3 presents the cross-tabulation analysis of students' engagement in entrepreneurship education in relation to their gender. The study revealed that a majority of female students (60.3%) participated in entrepreneurship education, whereas a comparatively lower percentage of male students, specifically 39.7%, participated in entrepreneurship education. The table revealed that entrepreneurial education was present among all students in the Commerce (44.1%) and MIMS (44.1%) departments. However, it was notably lacking among students in the political science department. In the context of the Economics and History departments, a mere 5.9% of students from each respective department actively engaged in entrepreneurial education, while the remaining

majority abstained from such involvement.

### 6.2. Reliability Test

**Table 4.** Reliability Test of Entrepreneurial Intention, Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Personality Trait.

| Construct | Cronbach's Alpha | N items |
|---|---|---|
| Entrepreneurial Intention | .773 | 2 |
| Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship | .668 | 6 |
| Perceived Behavioural Control | .773 | 4 |
| Subjective Norm | .513 | 3 |
| Risk Taking Propensity | .719 | 4 |
| Proactive Personality | .702 | 5 |

The Cronbach's alpha is presented in Table 4. According to McKinley, Manku-Scott, Hastings, French, and Baker (1997), when comparing groups, it is generally considered adequate to have Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.7 to 0.8. However, lower thresholds are occasionally employed in the existing literature. Nunnally (1978) has asserted that a value of 0.5 is sufficient. However, a value of 0.7 is considered more appropriate for Cronbach's alpha. The "Subjective Norm" and "Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship" constructs have the lowest Cronbach's alpha values, precisely 0.513 and 0.668, respectively. While the obtained Cronbach's alpha value falls short of the commonly accepted threshold of 0.7, it meets the lower limit frequently employed in scholarly literature (Nunnally, 1978).

### 6.3. Correlation

**Table 5.** Pearson Correlation between Age, Entrepreneurial Intention, TBP and Personality Trait

| | | Age | ATE | PP | RTP | SN | PBC | EI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .155 | .106 | .055 | .031 | .223** | .026 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .058 | .195 | .504 | .711 | .006 | .754 |
| ATE | Pearson Correlation | .155 | 1 | .729** | .534** | .551** | .682** | .526** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .058 | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| PP | Pearson Correlation | .106 | .729** | 1 | .490** | .543** | .778** | .556** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .195 | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| RTP | Pearson Correlation | .055 | .534** | .490** | 1 | .511** | .483** | .363** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .504 | .000 | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| SN | Pearson Correlation | .031 | .551** | .543** | .511** | 1 | .506** | .458** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .711 | .000 | .000 | .000 | | .000 | .000 |
| PBC | Pearson Correlation | .223** | .682** | .778** | .483** | .506** | 1 | .574** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .006 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | | .000 |
| EI | Pearson Correlation | .026 | .526** | .556** | .363** | .458** | .574** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .754 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | |

**Note:** ATE= Attitudes Towards Entrepreneurship, PP= Proactive Personality, RTP= Risk Taking Propensity, SN= Subjective Norm, PBC= Perceived Behavioural Control, EI= Entrepreneurial Intention.

Table 5 presents the Pearson correlation test between age, entrepreneurial intention, TPB and personality trait, which is a commonly employed bivariate test in academic research to identify the relationship among the data. At a 0.01 significance level, a number of strong relationships can be identified. There is a significant relationship between attitude towards entrepreneurship (0.526), perceived behavioural control (0.574) and subjective norm (0.458) with entrepreneurial intention. There exists a significant correlation between the student's attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control with proactive personality.

### 6.4. Regression and Hypotheses Testing

**Table 6.** Model Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis.

Model Summary[b]

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .691[a] | .383 | .371 | 1.59129 | 1.783 |

**Note:** a. Predictors: (Constant), PBC, SN, ATE
b. Dependent Variable: EI

**Table 7.** ANOVA[a].

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 229.741 | 3 | 76.580 | 30.243 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 369.699 | 146 | 2.532 | | |
| | Total | 599.440 | 149 | | | |

**Note:** a.Dependent Variable: EI.
b.Predictors: (Constant), PBC, SN, ATE.

**Table 8.** Coefficients[a].

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficient | | Standardized Coefficient | t | Sig. | 95.0% Confidence Interval for B | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| 1 | (constant) | -.665 | .886 | | -.751 | .454 | -2.416 | 1.086 |
| | ATE | .067 | .034 | .185 | 1.965 | .051 | .000 | .134 |
| | SN | .113 | .052 | .174 | 2.180 | .031 | .011 | .216 |
| | PBC | .143 | .036 | .360 | 3.956 | .000 | .072 | .215 |

**Note:** a. Dependent Variable: EI.

The first model explains the antecedents of entrepreneurial intention and incorporates the TPB Model (Ajzen, 1991). Table 6 displays the model summary and the accompanying regression statistics and the output shows that subjective norms (β= 0.174) and perceived behavioural control (β= 0.360) both positively influence entrepreneurial intention. However, the regression table shows a weak positive influence of attitude towards entrepreneurship (β= 0.185) with entrepreneurial intention, providing a partial support for the first hypothesis.

*$H_a$: Attitude towards entrepreneurship as a career option, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control is positively related to entrepreneurial intention. Partially Supported*

**Table 9.** Multiple Regression of Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship onto Personality Trait.

Model Summary[b]

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .756[a] | .572 | .566 | 3.66835 | 1.946 |

**Note:** a. Predictors: (Constant), RTP, PP
b. Dependent Variable: ATE.

**Table 10.** ANOVA[a].

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 2641.642 | 1 | 1320.821 | 98.153 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 1978.152 | 147 | 13.457 | | |
| | Total | 4619.793 | 149 | | | |

**Note:** a.Dependent Variable: ATE
b. Predictors: (Constant), RTP, PP.

**Table 11.** Coefficients[a].

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficient | | Standardized Coefficient | t | Sig. | 95.0% Confidence Interval for B | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| 1 | (constant) | 11.149 | 1.692 | | 6.590 | .000 | 7.806 | 14.493 |
| | PP | .680 | .069 | .615 | 9.928 | .000 | .545 | .816 |
| | RTP | .222 | .059 | .232 | 3.755 | .000 | .105 | .338 |

**Note:** a. Dependent Variable: ATE

The second model examines the antecedents of attitude towards entrepreneurship. The findings indicate that both proactive personality (β=0.615, p<0.05) and risk-taking propensity (β=0.615, p<0.05) have a significant positive influence on students' attitude towards entrepreneurship as a career option.

$H_b$**:** Students with proactive personality and high-risk propensity are more likely to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship. *Supported*

## 7. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the influence of students' personality traits and their level of engagement in entrepreneurial education, as well as to gain insights into the factors that contribute to students' inclination towards entrepreneurship. The survey findings indicated that a significant proportion of the student population needed to engage in entrepreneurial education. The research findings also indicated a noteworthy correlation between individuals' attitudes towards entrepreneurship, perceived behavioural control, and subjective norms with their entrepreneurial intention. However, the regression analysis demonstrated that the student's attitudes towards entrepreneurship did not have the ability to impact their entrepreneurial intention. There is a notable association between a student's attitude towards entrepreneurship, their perceived behavioural control, and their proactive personality. Students who possess a proactive personality and exhibit a high propensity for risk are more inclined to hold a favourable attitude towards entrepreneurship. The study also found that it was highly probable that a majority of these students would pursue entrepreneurial endeavours within the next five years.

## 8. SUGGESTIONS

The findings highlight important implications for curriculum designers and policymakers. Since students' attitudes alone did not significantly influence entrepreneurial intention, institutions should prioritise strengthening

perceived behavioural control and social support systems, as these were strong predictors in the study (Ajzen, 1991; Schlaegel & Koenig, 2014). Increasing access to entrepreneurship education particularly in departments where participation is currently low can enhance students' confidence and skill readiness for entrepreneurial careers (Küttima et al., 2014). Since proactive personality and risk-taking propensity significantly shaped favourable entrepreneurial attitudes, targeted experiential learning activities such as incubators, mentoring programmes, and start-up competitions could be introduced to nurture these traits. These interventions could help translate positive attitudes into entrepreneurial action, thereby addressing the gap identified in the regression results.

## 9. FUTURE SCOPE OF STUDIES

Future research on entrepreneurial intention can build upon this study in several ways. Since the present study was limited to students from a single university and specific disciplines, future work could adopt a broader sample across multiple institutions or include students from professional, technical, and vocational programs to capture a more diverse set of entrepreneurial motivations. Longitudinal designs would also be beneficial in examining how intentions evolve over time and whether they translate into actual entrepreneurial behaviour after graduation. A comparative study can also be undertaken between north-east states and other regions of the country to identify contextual influences on entrepreneurial intention.

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